

MARTYRDOM
of
THE SERBS

41 Jagobno

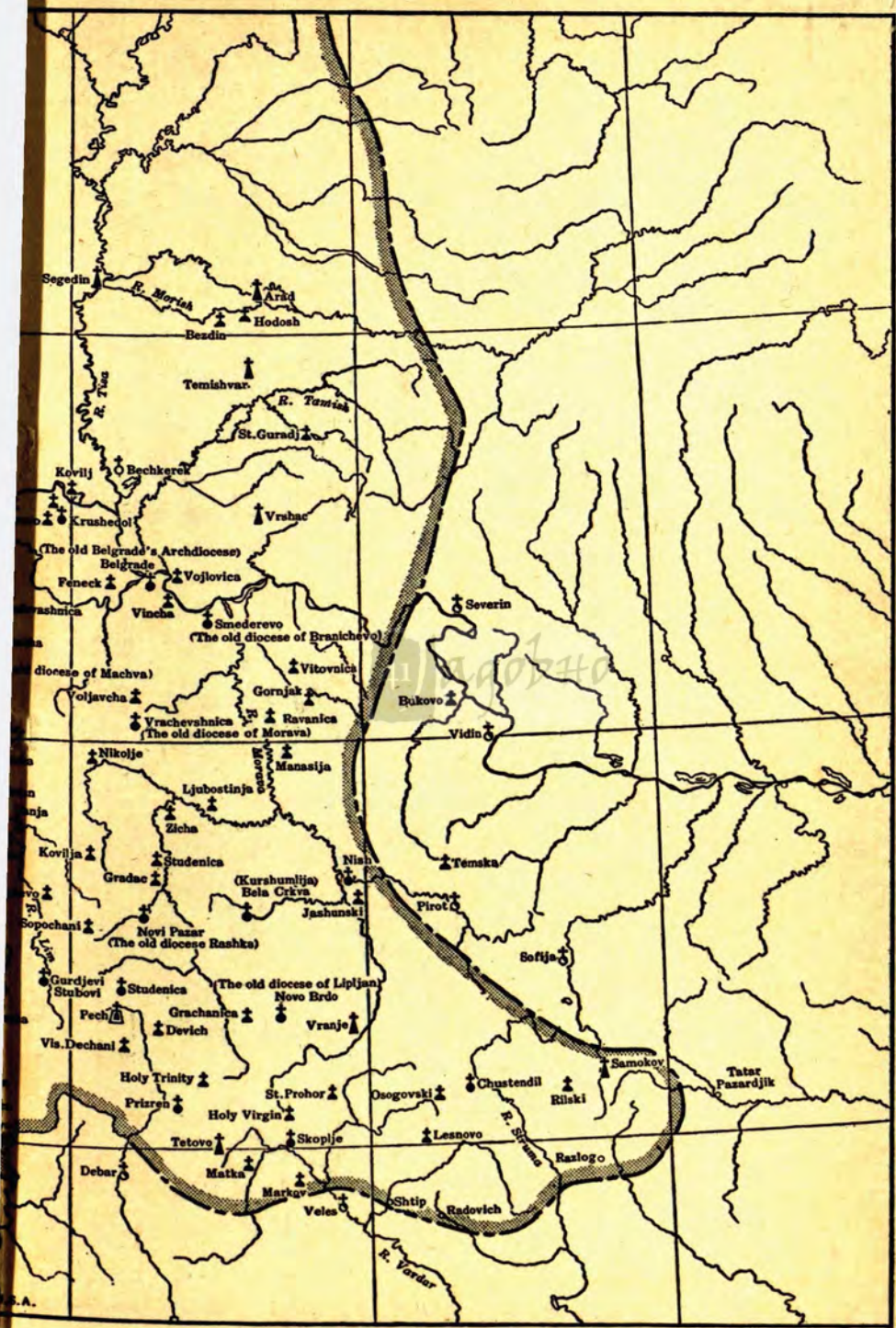


SERBIAN PATRIARCHATE OF PECH - YEAR 1557

Territory of the Serbian Orthodox Church throughout the Balkans and the Danube basin, when the Old Serbian Patriarchate of Pech was restored within the borders of the Turkish Empire.

- ✙ The Old Residence of Patriarchate.
- ✙ The Old Serbian Dioceses before restoration.
- ✙ The Serbian Dioceses founded in 1557 year
- ✙ The Serbian Dioceses during the 17th Century.
- ✙ The Serbian Dioceses outside of borders of the Patriarchate.
- ✙ The famous Serbian monasteries founded between XII to XVII centuries

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MARTYRDOM OF THE SERBS

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MARTYRDOM *of* THE SERBS

PERSECUTIONS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX
CHURCH AND MASSACRE OF
THE SERBIAN PEOPLE

Documents and reports of the trustworthy United
Nations and of eyewitnesses



PREPARED AND ISSUED BY
THE SERBIAN EASTERN ORTHODOX DIOCESE FOR
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA

41 Ягобно

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword by Bishop William Manning.....	1
The Martyred Serbian Church, a Brief Historical Summary by Bishop Dionisije.....	5
Our Purpose: not Vengeance but Justice.....	15
I. A Million Victims. Report by Gen. Draza Mihailovich...	21
Latest Report of Gen. Draza Mihailovich.....	25
II. Observations of a Neutral Diplomat.....	31
III. Religious Persecutions.....	37
IV. Persecutions of the Orthodox Church in the Present State of Croatia.....	43
V. Massacre of the Serbs in Ustashi Croatia, from April 1941, to April 1942.....	47
Report furnished by Mihailovich's Guerrillas in Yugoslavia and Confirmed by Yugoslav Military Headquarters in London	
VI. Further Report of Atrocities. Testimony of a Trust- worthy Eyewitness.....	69
VIII. Atrocities in Srem.....	75

	Page
VIII. Persecutions and Massacres of the Serbs by the Germans	79
Including Nazis Directions for Mass Murder	
IX. The Wave of Terror Continues.....	91
Ruthless extermination of the Serbs by German and Bulgarian Invaders	
X. Hungarian Atrocities.....	97
XI. Bulgarian Atrocities.....	119
XII. Persecutions of the Serbs by the Italians and the Albanians	131
XIII. Report by a Committee of Belgrade.....	137
The Disaster; The Independent State of Croatia; The Wave of Bloody Terror; Province of Slavonija; Deportations; The Camps; Who are the Ustashi?; The Bloody Hands of the Catholic Priesthood in Croatia; Just a Few Examples; The Catholicizing of Serbian Orthodox People; The Bluff of the "Croatian Orthodox Church"; The Present Condition of the Serbs in the Present State of Croatia.	
XIV. Serbs not Alone in Suffering.....	183
In Yugoslavia, the Slovenians and the Jews suffer alike	
Appendix	185
XV. The Laws and Customs of War on Land. Fourth Hague Convention	187
XVI. The Memorandum of the Serbian Orthodox Church...	191
Presented to General Dunkelman, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in Serbia, in August 1941, by His Eminence Bishop Valerian, Vicar of His Holiness, Serbian Patriarch Gavrilko—with explanation	

	Page
A—Letter of Bishop Valerian.....	195
B—Murders	200
C—Tortures	234
D—Arrests	237
E—Forcible Conversion of the Serbian Orthodox People to Catholicism and Destruction of Orthodox Churches.	241
F—Blackmail and Extortions.....	242
G—Declarations of the Representatives of Croatian Authorities	244
H—Revolt Against the Ustashi Government.....	247
XVII. Memorandum of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese for the United States of America and Canada.....	251
In Re: The Quisling-Created "Croatian Orthodox Church"; An Appeal to Secretary Hull	
XVIII. An Official Memorandum of Hungarian Atrocities...	265
XIX. Document regarding intolerance toward the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia.....	269
XX. Official Decree of Croatian Catholic Bishops in Refer- ence to Forcible Conversion of Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism	273
XXI. A Bulgarian Rector's Appeal.....	277
Sent to the Bishop of the German Protestant Church in Berlin	
XXII. Confession of a Croatian Ustasha.....	284
XXIII. A Croat's Plea which Remains Unheeded.....	289
XXIV. Comments by American Statesmen.....	295

41 Ягобно

ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Gavriilo	Frontispiece
The Right Reverend William T. Manning, D. D.	3
The Right Reverend Bishop Dionisije	13
General Draza Mihailovich	19
Hangings by Nazis and Croatian Ustashi of Defenseless Serbs, among whom are women	23
Serbian Priests being Hanged in a Church Yard by the Croa- tian Ustashi	29
One of the Many Serbian War Victims Hanged in Belgrade by the Nazis	35
Reproduction and Translation of a Croatian Ustashi Procla- mation	41
One of the many group hangings of Serbian patriots. This one in the vicinity of a church	45
Serbian Victims being Hanged in a Cemetery while a Ger- man Officer looks upon the Crime	53
The hangings enmasse of the Serbian Patriots in Bosnia by the Croatian Ustashi	59
German Soldiers and Croatian Ustashi shooting enmasse Ser- bian War Victims	67
Bodies of the Massacred Serbian Victims left in a field by the Croatian Ustashi to Decay	73
The Gestapo counting the Serbian Victims of Pavelich's Croats, who were killed on the Banks of a River	77

	Page
Bloated Serbian corpses beside a river, victims of the Nazis and Croatian Ustashi.....	83
Serbian Victims in Machva, Germans would not permit burial	89
The Graves of More than 200 Serbian Prisoners of War, who had been executed in Jernvannet, Norway.....	95
The Serbian Prisoners of War, Suffering from Typhus, arriving at Beisfjord in Ofoten, Norway.....	101
One of the Thousands of Serbian Victims killed by the Ustashi	107
Serbian Victims, killed by the Nazis, washed up by the Sava River	117
One of the Thousands of Serbian Victims killed by the Nazis and the Croatian Ustashi	123
A Serbian Victim of the Croat Ustashi whose Brain was Extracted	129
A Tortured and Beheaded Serbian Victim of the Croatian Ustashi	135
The Well-Known Serb, Teslich, whose Heart the Croat Ustashi extracted through the holes in his Chest.....	141
Croat Ustashi gathered around the Corpse of the Serbian Martyr, Teslich.....	149
The Son of the Serbian Martyr, Teslich, massacred by the Ustashi	155
Corpses of massacred Serbs in the Village of Gudovac, near Belovar, in April, 1941.....	161
Part of the Prison Camp by Jernvannet, Norway, Barbed Wired, where many Serbs were shot to death.....	168
The prison camp near Jernvannet after the Serbs had been sent to Beisfjord, Norway, where they were shot.....	181
Map of Yugoslavia showing the main places where the Serbian People suffered horrible atrocities.....	176-177

*Dedicated to the millions of Serbian heroes
throughout the Balkans, who have sacrificed
their lives for the "Sacred Cross and
Golden Liberty" fighting for the
freedom of the Serbs, Democ-
racy and Christianity*

41) Ягобъно



HIS HOLINESS SERBIAN PATRIARCH GAVRILO

41) Ягобно

FOREWORD

I feel it a great honor to be asked to write a Foreword for this officially prepared and issued Book of Martyrs of the Serbian Church in Yugoslavia.

The heroic people of Serbia have passed through many experiences of grievous trial, and persecution, but never before in their history have they endured such sufferings, such barbarities and such well nigh incredible cruelties as have been afflicted upon them by the Axis powers and their satellites during the present World War.

The spirit shown by the Serbian people and the part which they have played, and are still playing, in this World Struggle call for the highest tribute of honor, admiration, and brotherly appreciation, from America and her Allies, and from all who respect courage and fortitude and love Justice, Right and Freedom.

Let us not forget that small and unprepared as she was, Serbia took her stand at once on the side of Liberty knowing well what this would cost her; that she has never been completely overcome by the overwhelming force of the invader, and is still battling on the side of Right; that her unceasing resistance has been of incalculable service to the Allied Cause and will be of even greater service when the day comes for the final advance upon the Forces of Evil and the liberation of the enslaved Nations of Europe.

And let us remember that in honoring the Serbian people we must pay full honor and reverence to the

Serbian Orthodox Church, for the whole life of the Serbians is built around and upon their Church. It is the Orthodox Church of Serbia, which has inspired in the Serbians that love of Justice and Liberty, and that unfaltering fortitude, which makes them so noble a people, and which they have shown so truly in this World War. It is for this reason that the full fury of the Nazi invaders has been visited upon the Church and that the Bishops and Clergy have been treated with such special ferocity.

The martyrdoms and sacrifices of the Serbian Church and People are far greater than can ever be told, but this volume gives the record in part. As a historic record, as a reminder of the hideous evils for which Nazism stands, and as a testimony to the spirit, the character, and the heroism of the Serbian people, in this World Conflict, this volume has great importance.

May God grant a speedy end to the War, with victory for the Right and with liberation for Serbia and all the invaded countries.

May the Serbian Church which has been so greatly served by its martyred Patriarch, Bishops, Priests and People ever continue its noble ministry and its unwavering witness to the Faith of Christ, and when this War is ended, may the heroic people of Serbia be given the high place to which they are entitled in that better and more Christian world, that World of Justice, Peace, and Brotherhood, which we all hope and pray may be established.

March 8th, 1943

William T. Manning
Bishop of New York



THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM T. MANNING, D.D.

41 Ягобно

THE MARTYRED SERBIAN CHURCH

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Serbian Orthodox Church has always risen to defend Serbian national interests whenever they have been imperiled. When it became necessary to raise the flag of liberty, she has been the inspirer and spiritual guide. For her ever faithful services to the Serbian nation the Church has been rewarded by the love of her people, but she has also been severely persecuted by her enemies. In the very bosom of the church all the great and noble traditions of the Serbs have been preserved: the faith, the language, the nationality, and the customs, as well as the love for liberty and true Christian democracy.

The enemies of the Serbs have relentlessly persecuted them through centuries. They have persecuted their leaders, their patriarchs, their bishops, their priests and their monks, killing them, hanging them and thrusting them alive upon sharp pointed posts, while at the same time, Serbian churches and monasteries have been plundered and then razed or burned. The Turks hanged the Serbian Patriarch John because of a national Serbian movement for liberation, while Bishop Theodore of Vršac was skinned alive for the same reason. During those dark days Sinan-Pasha, a ruthless Turkish governor in Serbia, burned the holy remains of Saint Sava. In the latter part of the XVII century, the Serbian Patriarch Gavriilo was strangled to death by the Turks because he was seeking for his people aid from Russia. In the beginning of the XVIII century

much suffering from persecution was endured by the Serbian Church and its people in Dalmatia which was then under the domain of the Venetian Republic. Two leaders in a revolt for national rights, one an abbot of the monastery Dragovich, Isaia, and the other a priest, Peter Jagodich-Kuridza, of the village of Biovice (Dalmatia), were seized and tortured for fully forty years. Kuridza was imprisoned in the ancient Venetian dungeons, but stoically and persistently refused to renounce either his faith or the national ideals for the liberty of his people.

Similar tribulations appeared in the heroic struggle of the Serbs for their liberation from the Turks in the beginning of the XIX century, when many of the noblest Serbian priests and clergy were either thrust upon sharp pointed oak posts in the fields of Kalimegdan in Belgrade, or killed outright in the prison camps, fortresses, and other places throughout the Balkan Peninsula. The Serbian Orthodox Church endured all of these tortures because of its firm convictions as expressed in its modest slogan: "For the Sacred Cross and Golden Liberty".

In the first quarter of the XX century, the years 1913, 1914, and 1915 abounded with anguish of the Serbian Orthodox Church. These years have been recorded as the years of her martyrdom in modern times. During this period of time the Serbian Church was persecuted notably in Austria-Hungary, Serbia, and other provinces of the Balkans, by the Germans, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Albanians and others. It was during that time that the Bulgarians burned alive the Serbian Metropolitan-Archbishop Vincent of Skoplje and likewise killed 157 Serbian priests in the gorge of Surdulica. It is also significant that the Serbian Church suf-

ferred much, as recently as in 1937, at the time of its struggle against the proposed infamous Concordat. But of all persecutions of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the most excruciating and the most terrifying were those which began in the year of 1941. The Serbs and the Serbian Church have been forced to undergo the worst cruelties recorded in history. Rape, torture, slaughter and murder at the hands of the Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Pavelich's Croatian Ustashi, as well as of Moslems in Bosnia and Hercegovina, are of a most gruesome and unspeakable kind.

And why so much suffering, one may ask? The answer is simple — only because of the Serbs' unbounded love for liberty, freedom and true Christian democracy.

The atrocities which have been visited upon the Serbian people and the persecutions of the Serbian Orthodox Church cannot even be compared with those committed against the Armenians in the time of Abdul Hamid, a ruthless Turkish emperor, but only with those wild massacres and barbarous annihilations of ancient Carthage and the extermination of Christians in Nubia, North Africa, by the Vandals. If we were to enumerate all the Serbian victims, we would be confronted with the grim realization that about 700,000 Serbs have been butchered and slain in the so-called "Free Croatian State" of Quisling Pavelich alone. In addition, we would find many thousands who were forced under pain of death to convert from the Orthodox Faith to Roman Catholicism. Then, too, we would find that the Serbian victims killed by the Germans, Bulgarians, Hungarians and Albanians, number well over 300,000 not counting those Serbs who are pris-

oners of war or those who have been thrown into concentration camps. At the end of the present war the toll of Serbian victims will mount to 1,500,000 or more as it did in the last World War. It appears that from a total of about 9,000,000 Serbs there are at least 3,000,000 Serbian victims, or about one-third of the entire race over a period of only thirty years.

And what of the hundreds of destroyed and pillaged Serbian churches and monasteries, of the thousands of Serbian homes and institutions plundered and in the hands of the Pavelich's Ustashi and their accomplices? What of the vast private fortunes and properties forced from the Serbs by the enemy during these persecutions? Truly, the sufferings of the Serbian people and of the Serbian Church cannot be visualized, much less adequately described, yet the past and present horrors can be in no wise exaggerated.

In these persecutions the leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church were always first to suffer. The Serbian Bishop Platon of Banja Luka (in Bosnia), was killed and his body, together with the bodies of several other murdered priests, was thrown into a river and it was some time before their bodies were recovered. The Serbian Archbishop Petar Zimonich of Sarajevo (Bosnia), and Bishop Sava Trlaich of Plasky (Lika) were imprisoned, mistreated, and tortured beyond endurance. They later died from maltreatment. The Archbishop of Zagreb (Croatia) Dositej, was first imprisoned and then beaten and tortured in a most inhuman manner. Bishop Irenei of Dalmatia was also imprisoned and later transferred to an Italian concentration camp at Bagne a Ripoli, near the city of Florence, Italy. There are numerous other Serbian Bishops who have been imprisoned by Quisling Pavelich. Bishop Nikolaj Veli-

mirovich, who is well known to many Christian leaders in America, is suffering under the Gestapo and may be in a concentration camp. Many of the Serbian priests and monks have been executed, often as many as five or even a greater number at a time, as it happened at Kragujevac (Serbia), in Mostar (Hercegovina), in Novi Sad (now under the Hungarians).

The Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo was most cruelly treated. The enemies despised him more than they did the priests and the Bishops and other leaders, because he took the lead in the people's revolt against the shameful attempt to enslave Yugoslavia by the Germans. Patriarch Gavrilo, after the bombardment of Belgrade, retired to the Monastery of Ostrog in Montenegro, where he was later joined by King Peter of Yugoslavia. When the Government decided to leave Yugoslavia with the King, Patriarch Gavrilo was asked to follow in refuge also, but he refused to leave, in order that he might remain and share the fate of his people at home. On May 9, 1941, the Nazis took him together with many priests in the Monastery of Ostrog, accused him of stealing the state's property and condemned him as a common thief, because they found in the Monastery some of the valuables belonging to the King. The Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo had also been imprisoned in the year 1915, in Pech, and interned by Austro-Hungarians.

From Ostrog, the sixty-three year old Patriarch Gavrilo had a rough and perilous road to travel. A statement from Switzerland in the newspaper "Die Zeitung" announced that the Patriarch was compelled to travel afoot, about a month's journey from Ostrog to Belgrade and that he was forced to make the journey without his robes, dressed only in his underwear. In this way the Nazis hoped to humiliate the venerable

Serbian Patriarch, only to find that the people along the way where the Patriarch passed, knelt and wept in prayer to the Almighty for the alleviation of the sufferings of their noble leader. Those prayers were answered. The Patriarch is still alive, interned in Monastery Rakovica, near Belgrade.

Why is the Patriarch suffering? Because of his resistance to a shameful pact between Germany and Yugoslavia. Patriarch Gavriilo was assured by responsible government officials that the proposed pact with the Axis seemed a negation of Serbian traditions as well as treason against all Serbs and Slavs, and the Allied Nations but that it would be signed. He was associated with high-ranking officials and with prominent persons who were also opposed to this plan of the Cvetkovich-Matchek Government as well as with the Regents, who formulated the principles of collaboration with the Government of Germany. Patriarch Gavriilo was also responsible for calling the council of Bishops, which also condemned the Government's policy, and announced its decision to the priesthood and to the people calling them to revolt.

When the Government of Cvetkovich was thrown out on March 27, 1941, and when in the Cathedral of Belgrade the Patriarch blessed the young king, Peter II, as King of Yugoslavia, he uttered these significant words:

"At dawn this morning the Yugoslav Nation chose the road of truth and justice, of national unity and freedom. The eternal ideals, which every Serb has always carried and cherished in his heart, rose this morning clear and shining like the sun on the horizon. The bearer of these, our national ideals, the son of

our immortal King Alexander, and the successor of the glorious dynasty of Karageorgevich who first in our history waved the banner of freedom, became King Peter this morning. The Almighty has preserved us today from decline. He heard our prayer and directed us back to the road of truth. Let us always bend our knees before God and rise before man."

When the same day jubilant crowds of people were cheering the ascent of King Peter to the throne, the Patriarch said: "Be all around the King and be prepared for what may come. The Church is always with you." And, when someone asked him whether he approved these tumultuous demonstrations through the streets, the Patriarch replied: "I place myself at the head of them."

In a letter to us the former prime minister of Yugoslavia, General Simovich, wrote these words about Patriarch Gavriilo: "I am happy to observe that within the soul of our people in America the spirit of St. Sava lives. No less does this same spirit hover over our fatherland and our own people, being headed as they are by the highest representatives of the Serbian Churches. This spirit stands as a bulwark of our people and of our faith. Our undying gratitude properly belongs to the illustrious and fearless Archbishop of our holy Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Gavriilo and his collaborators, Most Reverend Metropolitan Bishop Nikolaj, the late Bishop Platon, and many others."

We shall conclude this introduction with an appeal to every cultured individual, but especially to the noble peoples of America and England and all Allied Nations and their governments, to condemn this unheard of barbarism against the Serbs and the Serbian

Church in Yugoslavia. And looking forward to a brighter tomorrow, after a glorious victory and the destruction of the Axis, we appeal to them to extend a brotherly and a Christian hand of help to restore the martyred Serbian people and their martyred Church.

Rt. Rev. Bishop Dionisije,
Serbian Bishop of the Eastern
Orthodox Diocese
for the
United States of America and Canada

41 | Jagobno



THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP DIONISIJE

41 | Ягобно

OUR PURPOSE

NOT VENGEANCE—BUT JUSTICE

The publication of this book is inspired by the traditional custom of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which has from time immemorial protected the spiritual and the national interests of its people. The present cataclysm in Europe has effectively drowned the voice of the Serbian Church, with the exception of its branch in America and hence the Serbian Orthodox Diocese in America, in keeping with this tradition, is called upon to make its contribution towards safeguarding the just interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its people.

Indeed we are well aware of the fact that all the countries which have suffered occupation by the Axis Powers and their satellites, have experienced in varying degrees a carefully planned, progressive and ruthless attack on their churches and religious institutions, on their peaceful, law abiding and innocent people, irrespective of their ages. But the intensity of Axis ruthlessness as applied to the Serbian people and their church, apparently finds no comparison in the memory of mankind.

Apart from purely spiritual considerations, religious persecutions by an occupying Power are in direct contradiction to the provisions of the Hague Convention, to which Germany also affixed its seal and signature, and which, among other things, provide that "family honor and rights, individual life and private property, as well as religious convictions and worship,

must be respected," by the occupying power. Thus far, we have witnessed that the Hague Convention is not the only instrument repudiated by Germany and it would be useless to attempt any argument in this respect.

Axis methods used in their design to subdue the conquered people into slavery are manifold and vary from religious persecution to deliberate mass murders of harmless and defenseless people and their spiritual and civic leaders. Not even women and infant children are excepted from their set plans of exterminating the small nations.

The reports on the existing conditions of the Serbs in Yugoslavia which we present here, with documents and papers from various reliable sources, are all authenticated and properly verified. They constitute but a part of the reports thus far received and which are being withheld from publication pending their proper verification. Some of the reports herein released make references to the same atrocities — the deliberate and calculated progress of the invaders toward the destruction of human life and property. We have incorporated all these reports in this publication in a desire to present more than a single witness to specific cruelties—hence perhaps the seeming repetitions. There are several groups of witnesses collecting data, working inside Yugoslavia, whose reports are being carefully checked.

Though the sources of information are reliable and the reports are comprehensive to a certain extent, it is still not possible to publish a full story of the unspeakable atrocities to which the ruthless invaders have resorted. The illustrations of massacres, nearing a million Serbs, in Yugoslavia, the destruction of life and property including churches, the converting of churches

into slaughter houses, the desecrating and befouling of shrines and altars, the looting of sacred vessels and ornaments, the shooting of some church dignitaries and clergy and the internment, torture and murder of others, all give but a vague picture of this, the greatest of world tragedies.

Therefore this publication is far from being an adequate presentation of a record of the crimes and heartless conduct of the invaders and their satellites, all of whom have converged with all their sadistic and satanic fury to exterminate the Serbian people and forever obliterate their church. For obvious reasons neither all reports in our possession, though already authenticated and verified, nor all the names or sources could be published. When the proper time comes, the indictment to be presented by the Serbian people against the Axis Powers and their satellites, who have set back the clock of civilization by many centuries, will profoundly shock the World. The full and complete story of their crimes will call for just and effective retribution in order to save humanity in the future.

Led by the Axis inspired and paid Quislings, the Croats, who speak the same language as the Serbs, but who belong to the Roman Catholic faith, had carried for a long time petit political grudges against the past Yugoslav regimes, so that when the invaders set upon Yugoslavia from all sides, in their frenzy they swiftly broke loose, destroying the Yugoslav Army. Within a few days from the time of the invaders' attack, the Croats proclaimed their "Independent Croatian State" including many Serbian provinces inhabited by about 3,000,000 Serbs. In true satellite fashion the Croats at once declared War against the United States of America and other United Nations

and set out to exterminate the Serbian population from their territory. To accomplish this they have perpetrated crimes never before recorded in the history of mankind. The wild, bloody orgy of exterminating the Serbs from Croatia is still in full blast, as will be more fully noted from the reports herein presented.

41) Јагобџо



GENERAL DRAZA MIHAILOVICH

41 Ягобно

I

A MILLION VICTIMS!

As we go to press with this book, the number of innocent Serbian victims in Yugoslavia is reaching 1,000,000, which is evidenced from a telegraphic report by General Mihailovich, leader of the Serbian army of resistance, to the Yugoslav Government in London, and his frantic appeal for help directed to the Allies.

This report and appeal for transmission to the United Nations is dated as of February 5th, 1943, and reads as follows:

"Yugoslavia is drenched with Serb blood and yet our Allies cannot or will not stop the flow of this blood and the mass murder of Serbs. I do not believe that it is in the interest of the Allies that the Serbian people should cease to exist.

"I beg the Yugoslav Prime Minister to interest our great Allies in the fact that the Serbs in Yugoslavia are being exterminated. Could not something more be said in broadcasts about the slaughter of Serbs? The number so far approaches 1,000,000 of Serbs killed. Let the whole world know on what scale the Serbs are being massacred by the Germans. Cannot an appeal be made to prevent the extermination and annihilation of the Serbian people?"

41 | Ягобно



Hangings by the Nazis and Croatian Ustashi of defenseless Serbs among whom are many women.

41) Ягобъно

LATEST REPORT OF GENERAL DRAZA MIHAILOVICH

Late in February 1943, the following communique was issued by General Draza Mihailovich, from his headquarters in Yugoslavia:

"According to verified reports up to the present time there have been 823,000 Serbians slain in Yugoslavia since April 18, 1941. This number of slain victims was also admitted officially by the Italian Governor of Montenegro. The Ustashi Governor of the province of Srem, former Colonel Victor Tumic, has tortured and slain 30,000 Serbs in the period from September to the last of December 1941, excluding this number from a total of more than 600,000 Serbs slaughtered and slain in Pavelich Croatia.

"The Bulgarians have continued to massacre innocent people in towns and villages occupied by them.

"In the districts Surdulica, Vladicin Han, Lebane, Vranje, Presevo and Prokuplje there were 600 Serbians executed, 200 interned and five villages were burned by Bulgarians.

"The Bulgarian soldiers, during the massacre perpetrated at Kriva Reka, bayoneted Milanka Milicich, an infant one year old, Vera Niketich and Mihajlo Nikolich, infants, 6 and 5 months of age respectively.

"In the county of Despotovac the Bulgarians have burned 40 houses under the pretext that they were formerly occupied by our Chetniks. They have publicly threatened to burn every house which may be visited by our Chetniks.

"At Krushevac a Bulgarian soldier wounded a German. Immediately the Germans accused the Serbs of this crime and threatened to execute 100 Serbs in the event the German succumbed.

"At a conference of Gestapo chiefs from all occupied countries, held in Vienna November 17, 1942, a decision was reached to destroy our (Chetnik) organization, disregarding any means or any number of lives necessary to attain this aim, and to take special measures against the Serbian people.

"At Mladenovac a woman in self defense wounded two German officers, one of whom succumbed. In retaliation the Germans immediately executed 50 hostages from the same town.

"On the occasion of their departure from Ivanjica, German officers kidnapped and raped Mileva Miyatovich, whereupon they murdered her and threw her body out of the truck.

"At Jajinci, a village near Belgrade, on December 27, 1942, the Germans executed 900 followers of my cause among whom were 68 active officers."

With his communique above, General Draza Mihailovich issued also an appeal to inform the world at large of these mass executions of Serbian people in Yugo-

slavia and to show that the unfortunate country has been drenched with Serbian blood of innocent victims whose number is nearing one million.

The following statement emanates from a trustworthy source:

"According to a specially prepared plan, the enemy forces on the occupied territory of Yugoslavia will proceed to exterminate entirely the Serbian population. In this respect the leading role is in the hands of the Ustashi authorities. At the massacres in Srem in the latter part of 1941, under the Ustashi leadership of Victor Tomic 30,000 Serbs were slain including men, women and children; reports of new crimes were verified also.

"At the beginning of October 1941 the Ustashi bandit Victor Gutic, well known for his bloody extermination of Serbs in the province of Verbas, gathered at Sisak 3,000 Serbian children between 2 and 5 years of age at a concentration camp with the intention of bringing about their destruction. These children left entirely without care were dying at the rate of from 10 to 15 daily. Their fathers were forced into concentration camps and their mothers transported for slave labor in Germany."

The above statement was received within a few days after the above communique issued by General Draza Mihailovich.

41 Ягобно



Serbian priests being hanged in a church yard by the Croatian Ustashi.

41) Ягобъно

II

OBSERVATIONS OF A NEUTRAL DIPLOMAT

From a sworn statement by a diplomatic representative of a neutral country, which is substantiated by other trustworthy reports, the following excerpts are quoted:

"It seems that the Serbian population in the territory of independent Croatia is completely doomed, unless early and effective relief by the allied forces is rendered.

"In this the most unfortunate part of Yugoslavia, the Serbian population has been cruelly subjected to continuous mis-treatment by the Ustashi authorities and the atrocities visited upon the Serbs in Independent Croatia are so frightful that the ordinary human mind is unable to perceive them.

"In certain localities in Croatia as well as in Bosnia, the number of victims is so great and the persecution of the Serbian peoples is becoming so extensive that the extermination of the Serbian race in these regions is becoming complete. It appears from all indications that there exists a perfect coordination among the enemy forces, who for their purposes have thus far successfully employed the representative Croatian authorities as leaders in pogroms, persecutions, mass murders of Serbian people, destruction of their homes and land. Not even

their religious institutions have been spared. Their churches have been desecrated in unspeakable manner and their spiritual leaders have been treated as common criminals.

"It is interesting to note that among the Ustashi authorities in Independent Croatia there are great numbers of intellectuals, whose education and station in social life have failed to conceal their inhuman bestiality towards their fellow men.

"Ordinary executions were insufficient to satiate the blood-thirsty Ustashi. Most inhuman and cruel tortures were as a rule in order, to which the innocent victims were first subjected before relief by death was granted them.

"The particularities of the unbelievable atrocities visited upon the Serbian people by the Croatian Ustashi cannot be fully related for the simple reason that the human mind at present is not able to perceive such a description. There is no comparison even in the darkest ages of the history of mankind.

"Instances are too numerous where the good Croatian neighbor of yesterday employed the most brutal means to destroy his Serbian neighbor to-day. There was no regard shown to Serbian women and children either. The Croatian Ustashi have set their mind determinedly to annihilate everything which is Serbian and it seems there is nothing in their way which will stop the progress of their murderous determination.

"There were instances when the Ustasis' executioners placed their victims in single file, one behind the other, so as to be able to kill as many as possible with a single bullet. The dead and wounded were cast into prepared graves or caves even though some of them were still alive.

"Those that have succeeded in escaping the murderous hand of the bewildered Ustashi, as well as those Serbian victims who are already dead, have enriched the murderers and vandals, who have helped themselves to the wordly possessions of their victims."

Similar reports, fully verified are on file with the proper authorities of the allied governments.

41) Jagobno

41 | Ягобно



One of the many Serbian war victims hanged in Belgrade by the Nazis.

41 Ягобно

III

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS

Of the population of Yugoslavia, over 50 percent are of the Orthodox Church, 37 percent are Catholics, and the remainder are Moslems, Protestants and others.

With the partitioning of Yugoslavia between Germany, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria, and because of the terrible reprisals by Germans and Italians as well as outrages committed by the Ustashi (the followers of the renegade Pavelich), the Orthodox population in so-called Independent Croatia is being driven to despair. Their churches are being destroyed, their priests killed, and their properties confiscated or ruined.

Information reaching Yugoslav quarters in London, both directly and through the reports of certain neutral diplomats, shows clearly that Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (provinces ruled by Pavelich) are being systematically exterminated by the Ustashi. About one million Serbs from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina have fled to the mountains or to Serbian territory in order to save their lives. The members of the patriotic Serbian Orthodox priesthood, who have always been torch-bearers of national freedom are being killed or driven out from all those places where the Serbian population has lived for centuries.

Examples are too numerous to give in full, so it is possible here to cite only a few.

Protopresbyter Branko Dobrosavljevich, from Veljun, had to dig a grave for his son, a student who had

been tortured and killed in the presence of his father. The father was murdered while trying to read the burial service.

A priest of Nashice, Djordje Bogich, was tied to a tree and was savagely mutilated; his nose and ears were cut off, his tongue cut out, and his beard pulled from his face. He finally died when his chest was slashed open.

The priest of Bolc, Bjelovar was buried alive at Gudovac, and the protopresbyter Stevan Circich at Ogulin was murdered, having his arms and legs broken and his beard pulled off.

In the particular report from which these examples are taken, the districts named number more than 40, and the instances of torture and murder total many hundreds.

But the Orthodox community is not the only one to be treated in this brutal way. Cardinal Hinsley, preaching in Westminster Cathedral on November 30th, 1941, and referring to the persecution of Catholics, said:

"Nothing can surpass the thorough ruthlessness of the Nazi promoters of their New Order. In Slovenia, out of 700 priests of two dioceses only 16 old priests are left in freedom. No Mass is allowed; the administration of the Sacraments is forbidden; all monasteries are confiscated and the religious are driven out. All Church property is likewise confiscated and the valuable Church vessels are looted."

Cardinal Hinsley went on to denounce the barbarities practiced in the Orthodox community:

"In Serbia," he said, "the same foul system of false propaganda is used as in other countries in order to embitter the relations between the different religious or racial bodies, while Nazi firing squads are engaged in shooting Orthodox priests and so-called Communists.

"Nearly all Church life in Orthodox Serbia is stamped out."

Details of the fate of other religious groups are not at present available, but the evidence quoted above does not encourage the belief that they have fared any better. Time and time again the Nazis have announced in varying ways that religion in any form is contrary to the purposes of Nazi ideology, and the vigorous, brutal and utterly godless persecutions of the Serbian Orthodox and the Slovene Catholic priesthood and of Church communities in general is yet another indication of Axis determination to stamp out spiritual freedom.

A more subtle but none the less deliberate method of trying to undermine religion is to be found in an order issued by the Minister of Public Instruction in the puppet State of Croatia which bars members of the Serbian Orthodox faith from entering the University, with an exception for those who had already attended the University, or who had given up the Serbian Orthodox faith before April 10th, 1941. This measure is, of course, designed to exclude Serbs from the country's educational system.

Another blow against the Serbs was reported in the press of November 1st, 1941, which said that the Minister of Justice had abolished the court of the Orthodox Church, with the result that in the future the Church would no longer have jurisdiction in church

and marriage questions. Thus, records of births, marriages and deaths of all Orthodox believers would be made by the civil authorities henceforth, and all records now in the possession of the Church were to be given over to those authorities. This last measure places a useful weapon of oppression against the Serbs in the hands of the Quisling Pavelich Government.

In Croatia, too, as part of the cynical campaign to try to make a lasting breach between the Croats, who are Catholic, and the Serbs in Croatia, who are Orthodox, only the Catholic and the Moslem religions are officially recognized. The Orthodox and Jewish religions have been deliberately refused recognition.

41 | Ягобно

REPRODUCTION AND
TRANSLATION

of the

Croatian Ustashi Proclamation

Former Serbs!

On Thursday, June 12, when the Ustashi were escorting food for the hungry people, they were intercepted by the Chetniks at Komar near Travnik and were fired upon.

Because of that attack, 14 of those former Serbs were captured and shot on the spot.

Although not one Ustashi was wounded, these ferocious means were used, and should this again happen in the future the punishment shall be even more drastic, and for every Ustashi that is killed, one hundred of you shall be shot.

Headquarters and Commissariat for
the former county of Verbas.



41 Ягобно

IV

PERSECUTION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE PRESENT STATE OF CROATIA

The following information concerning the situation of the Orthodox Church in Croatia has reached us from a trustworthy Bulgarian source:

In the present Croatian state there are five million Roman Catholic Croats, and 3,000,000 Eastern Orthodox Serbs. These latter are now being persecuted in a most cruel manner. Of the Eastern Orthodox Bishops one has been killed, several have been imprisoned, and the others have been forced to leave the country. Of the Orthodox priests a considerable number have been assassinated, many have been imprisoned, the others have been thrown out of the country. Thus this large body of Eastern Orthodox is now without any pastoral guidance, and there are no longer any Orthodox religious services. It is estimated that several hundred thousand Orthodox have become victims of the systematic persecutions through imprisonment, maltreatment, plunder, and that several tens of thousands have been killed. One of the officials of the Croatian State has formulated the purpose of this policy for the elimination of the Orthodox leadership, so that the rest without leaders can be catholicized, and so that within ten years Croatia will be a Catholic state.

Many Orthodox Churches have been destroyed, many Orthodox institutions have been confiscated, others again have been transformed into Catholic

churches. The monasteries, several of which have a great tradition behind them, have been transferred to Roman Catholic orders. Even the patriarchal center Sremski-Karlovci has not been spared. The patriarchal church there was sealed after the most valuable treasures had been taken away, the patriarchal library has been plundered, and the patriarchal palace has been occupied by Catholics.

Orthodox officials are being notified that in the Croatian State only those can remain in state service who belong to the Roman Catholic Church.

Certain Roman Catholic periodicals in Croatia approve this persecution. Thus the organ of the Archbishop of Sarajevo defends the use of "revolutionary methods" in "the service of truth, justice and honesty", and states that "it is a silly idea, unworthy of the disciples of Christ, that the struggle against evil should be carried on in a noble manner and with gloves."

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One of the many group hangings of Serbian patriots. This one in the vicinity of a church.

41 | Ягобно

V

MASSACRE OF THE SERBS IN USTASHI CROATIA, FROM APRIL 1941 TO APRIL 1942

The persecution and massacre of the Serbs in Pavelich Croatia were inaugurated simultaneously with the invasion of Yugoslavia by Germans between April 11th and 15th of 1941. Immediately upon assuming control over a certain place, the Ustashi began most terrifying persecutions of the Serbs. The sufferings to which the people were subjected by the Ustashi during the first year since the invasion are incomparable to anything in the history of savage people. When once the statistics of the massacred Serbs are compiled and the manner in which they were annihilated known, the civilized world will be thrown into consternation and will be unable to believe that such bestialities in the middle of Europe and under the supervision of Germany could have taken place.

Everything they have done was in accordance with predesigned plans directed by Pavelich from Zagreb. Their first step was to confiscate from the Serbs, radios, automobiles, telephones and typewriters, then the arrests of Serbs followed.

As early as April 12, 1941, the newspapers of Zagreb carried announcements to all Serbian residents of Zagreb that they must vacate the city within 12 hours and anyone found harboring a Serb would be executed. Therefore, the Serbs and the Jews were

compelled to have their families leave their homes and move to the outskirts of the city. Later they were rounded up and taken to concentration camps or executed. Only a few of them however, escaped to Serbia. One of the first victims subjected to inhuman treatment by the Ustashi was the Serbian Metropolitan of Zagreb, Bishop Dositey.

Wholesale arrests were conducted in all the larger cities; Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Travnik, Split, Dubrovnik, Livno and in other places, at a daily average of from two to three hundred Serbs, and in some instances of Croats who were nationally inclined as Yugoslavs. They have arrested in Split, Governor Bulich, the Serbian Orthodox Archpriest Sergey Urukalo, who was also a member of Parliament, as well as many others who were in certain instances released from jails upon the arrival of the Italian troops of occupation. By reason of this protection of Serbs by the Italians, apparent enmity exists between the Ustashi and the Italians.

Shortly thereafter wholesale arrests of the Serbs in all parts of Croatia, filling Zagreb prisons and concentration camps with Serbs took on such proportions that the horror of it all was felt with every breath of air. Within the first few days of this unprecedented wave of terror the Ustashi arrested in Sarajevo, Dr. Dushan Jeftanovich, president of the Chamber of Commerce, and took him to Zagreb and there with 9 other victims executed him under the pretext he was a Communist. During those days they also arrested in Sarajevo the well known and nationally prominent leader, Dr. Vojislav Cesarovich, and assigned him to a forced labor gang where he was mistreated by Ustashi to such an extent he finally died. The same fate also befell Milan

Bozich, a Serbian Orthodox Archpriest and member of Parliament, who was a well-known and respected leader in Sarajevo. As for Bogdan Vidovich, also a well-known civic leader in Sarajevo, it is only known that he was taken to an unknown destination. The Metropolitan of Sarajevo, Bishop Petar Zimonjich, was also arrested and imprisoned, though he was a man 75 years of age. Bishop Zimonjich was subjected immediately to tortures by the Ustashi but death saved him from prolonged suffering.

The executive power and authority in Sarajevo were in the hands of Hakija Hadzich and the Catholic priest Brale. The first one mentioned was a leader among the Moslems of Bosnia and Hercegovina and a personal friend of Radic and Matchek, whom he immediately deserted and so allied himself with Quisling Pavelich. According to reports unconfirmed, as yet, Hadzic was against the execution of the Serbs while the Catholic priest Brale was insistent upon mass execution of the Serbs.

ESCAPE IN BEWILDERMENT

The panic stricken Serbs of Sarajevo began to escape in large numbers to Serbia. The German occupation authorities were issuing travel permits without any attempts to prevent their escape. The German authorities neither protected nor persecuted the Serbs in Croatia, but passively viewed the terror spread by the Ustashi. The Italian authorities however, have everywhere, whenever possible, given protection to the Serbs. Whenever the Italians arrived, they immediately removed imprisoned Serbs from the jails as at Mostar, Livno, Trebinje and Dubrovnik. The arrests were made without written orders at the instance of

local Ustashi or certain police chiefs. In his bestial persecution of the Serbs, Chief of Police of Sarajevo, Francetic, has distinguished himself, while in Mostar these atrocities were carried out by the notorious Hocevar, a former lieutenant of the King's Guards in Belgrade, who was convicted for embezzling Army funds and dishonorably discharged from the service. Hocevar succeeded in convincing Matchek's men in Zagreb that he was a victim of politics and therefore he was appointed immediately in 1941 as Chief of Police at Mostar. But immediately after Pavelich's proclamation of Croatian Independent State he deserted Matchek and joined the Ustashi and as such personally organized and directed mass executions of the Serbs. His most trusted accomplice in crime was one Bulatich, assistant county chief at Mostar, who personally killed many men on the city viaduct and from there threw many of his victims who were still alive into the river Neretva below. The first mass executions were conducted by the Ustashi during the night between May 31st and June 1st, 1941. On that fateful night Ustashi groups, sent for the specific purpose from Zagreb headquarters under the leadership of local Ustashi and chiefs of police, invaded the homes of the most prominent people in Dubrovnik, Trebinje, Mostar, Livno, Glina, Gospic, Banja Luka, Metkovic and other places and from each place they arrested from 8 to 10 of the most prominent Serbs and took them to the outskirts of the towns and cities and without any procedure whatever, executed them and threw their bodies into nearby rivers and creeks or into the natural deep pits. Not a single body was buried in the ground.

It is only natural that the Serbs never expected to be murdered without accusation or court trial and

in each instance they were absolutely innocent. The people became panic stricken and it seemed this was what the Ustashi were waiting for. It is now positively known that the orders for these massacres were emanating from the chief Ustashi headquarters in Zagreb, that they were being issued personally by Quisling Pavelich and sometimes at the special instance and request of the Croatian leaders Artukovich, Budak, and others.

These first mass murders were intended to liquidate at one stroke the Serbian populace in those places and districts where they were in majority or too numerous. At the beginning the populace of the villages and the countryside was not molested. It is to be regretted that the Serbs failed to grasp the full importance of the danger with which they were so suddenly confronted, and hoping that the Ustashi would be satiated with the first mass murders, did not make any comprehensive efforts to escape.

However, only 24 days after the first pogrom on June 24, 1941, murder enmasse was begun. It was just a few days before the traditional Serbian holiday Vidov-Dan and the Ustashi made open remarks that the Serbs would long remember the forthcoming Vidov-Dan.

We are now approaching the full perfidy of the Ustashi: a decree by Chief of State, Quisling Pavelich, was published in the Official Gazette June 22, 1941, and the same was announced over the radio as well as from the pulpits of the Catholic churches, that anyone found guilty of committing any crime against any person who might be a citizen of the Croatian state would be most severely punished. Simultaneously the Ustashi organization all over Croatia were receiving,

from the Pavelich headquarters, coded instructions to proceed relentlessly with mass executions and extermination of the Serbs during the next few days including Vidov-Dan, June 28th. This will explain why some of the parts suffered more than others.

During this crucial, fateful period between June 24th to June 28th there were murdered in Bosnia, Hercegovina, Dalmatia, Lika, Croatia and Srem more than 100,000 wholly innocent Serbs. At this time the crimes were not perpetrated during the night time only, but also in broad daylight. Like wild animals the Serbs were being rounded up everywhere, on the streets, in their homes and offices and from the fields and countryside. They were taken in trucks to the outskirts of the towns and cities and executed enmasse. A great many of these unfortunate victims passed through most terrifying tortures and met death with a sigh of relief. 41 1290770

At Livno, a prominent physician, Dr. Dushan Mitrovich, Director of the State Hospital, who was known as a lifelong promoter of Serbo-Croatian friendship, and a civic leader for more than 20 years in this community, was taken with his wife and two children to the outskirts of the city where in the presence of the parents, the children were slain first, followed by the mother who fell from the blow of an ax and finally the doctor himself was murdered.

Of the 2,000 Serbian inhabitants of Livno more than 1,900 were executed, only a few old men and women, and some children remain alive.

At Ljubuski, not a single Serb was spared, all having been executed. Among the victims of this town was a prominent civic leader, Dr. Alexander Lukac, the municipal physician.



Serbian victims being hanged in a cemetery while German officer looks upon the crime.

41 Ягобно

At Stolac all of the Serbs were murdered except three aged men, each one over 80 years of age. At Ljubinje and in the Valley of Popovo Polje more than 8,000 Serbian peasants were massacred, so that all Serbian villages in that district stand desolate of Serbs. More than 1,200 Serbs were murdered in Mostar among whom there were seven priests, the Municipal physician, Dr. Veljko Jelacich; the most prominent merchants, Cerekovich brothers, Ljubo Sain, Jovo Oborina, Tosha Ninich and his brother, Dr. Veljko Ninich; a number of professors and teachers, judges and lawyers, engineers, railroad officials and others. The remaining Serbs saved themselves by escaping to the woods or into Serbia in which they were able to succeed only by giving enormous bribes to Gestapo agents.

The slaughter of the Serbs at Banja Luka was terrible and beyond the conception of the human mind. It began when the Ustashi murdered during the first wave of terror Bishop Platon and five other Serbian priests and later threw their bodies into River Vrbas.

At Bihac and vicinity there was hardly a Serb left living. On the eve of Vidov-Dan the Ustashi rounded up from the environs of Bihac 9,000 peasants all of whom were slaughtered within four days. The executioners in this instance were the gypsies employed for the purpose by the Ustashi, at the rate of 50 dinars per life in addition to one kilogram of lamb meat and one litre of whiskey.

At Glina the ghastly executions reached their culmination. Each night they brought between 800 and 1,000 handcuffed Serbs to the Serbian Orthodox Church and in the very church they were slaughtered with knives. Their bodies were literally swimming in pools

of blood and the murderers bragged that they were wading in Serbian blood up to their knees.

The Valley of Neretva between Mostar and Metkovich is completely exterminated of Serbs. In Capljina, by some miracle, one Serb survived. From the villages of Prebci and Pribilovci, near Capljina, they took 600 peasants away under the false pretense that they were being taken to labor camps. As soon as they reached the next village the Ustashi herded them into some stables and set the same afire and not a single one was saved.

Still, generally speaking, the villages have suffered less than the towns and cities because the villagers in nearly each instance still possessed their arms. The villagers were also in a better position to effect their escapes into the woods and from there offer resistance. This explains the erstwhile Chetnik action in Bosnia and Hercegovina which was at the beginning limited to the defense of life only. Of the villages, only those suffered much which were populated also by the Moslems who, as a rule joined the Ustashi and they jointly attacked the Serbian villagers. This Moslem infidelity led to some reprisals from the Chetniks when the Moslems were abandoned by the Ustashi forces. These reprisals account for the fact that in December 1941 there were over 40,000 Moslem refugees from Sarajevo, from eastern parts of Bosnia, and at Zagreb 30,000 from northwestern parts of Bosnia.

The behavior of the Moslems was traditionally treacherous. As always, they were in the camp of those who were momentarily in power. More than 95% of Moslems joined the Ustashi and participated very actively in the massacre of the Serbs, as for instance, in the city of Mostar, where great numbers of killings were done personally by Huremovich, a Moslem. A

small percent (about 5 percent) remained honorable exceptions and they even signed and published a resolution condemning the brutal massacre of the Serbs. The Moslems were later persecuted by the Ustashi and were discharged from public service, as for instance, the case of the president of the County Court at Mostar, Mrajo Rasich, State Prosecutor at Mostar, Avdo Glavovich, and others.

After the Vidov-Dan massacre relative quietness prevailed for about a month. Old Serbian organizations having been destroyed, churches, institutions and libraries burned, and the intellectual class of people massacred and disposed of, the Serbian peasantry was left without any leadership. The church records were destroyed so that there are no legal documents in the hands of the churches in existence. Children cannot be baptized, or marriages performed and burials must be made without religious ceremonies as there are no priests left alive.

The Roman Catholic clergy intensified their efforts to convert the remaining Serbian populace to Catholicism promising the people that by such conversion they could save their lives. Thus, they succeeded in converting about 30% of the remaining populace to Catholicism, but to many even this conversion was of no avail, for later on in the next wave of Ustashi terror they were killed off nevertheless.

About July 20, 1941, pogroms and mass executions were resumed. The Ustashi resolved to exterminate the remaining Serbian populace, not only men but also women and children in all parts of the Independent Croatian State. It was then that they commenced the removal of the remaining Serbian people into concentration camps.

These concentration camps consisted not of barracks, but of fields fenced with barbed wire with some old roofless stables into which the people were herded like cattle. The daily food consisted of some soup, which in effect was only luke warm water with a few beans therein. During the first few weeks a great many died from acute indigestion. The worst concentration camp was the one at Jasenica where 60,000 people died of starvation; of the women's concentration camps, the worst one was at Loborgrad. The conditions which existed there could not be adequately described. Women were without facilities for washing in order that they might keep themselves clean and they were kept under very unsanitary conditions. The younger ones were all raped and young girls 14 years of age were made pregnant.

One of the worst bloody orgies that took place in the concentration camps was at Pag. Here there were interned about 4,500 Serbs, 2,500 Jews and about 1,500 Croats accused of being Masons or Communists. All of them were kept in open fields and everyone of them was brutally murdered. One day the Ustashi learned that the Italians were to assume control of the Island of Pag and in order to prevent the release of these unfortunate internees, the Ustashi killed each and every internee in this camp before the Italians came.

Through the entire province of Lika, rivers of blood were shed. Among the first victims to fall were the Serbian teachers, priests, railroad and other state employees. One day the Ustashi descended and rounded up 70 railroad men, took them to a field and machine gunned everyone of them. This action caused a tieup of railroad communications for several weeks. Their



The hangings enmasse of the Serbian patriots in Bosnia by the Croatian Ustashi.

41 Ягобно

families not only were deprived of their supporters but were soon to meet the same fate.

In the month of October 1941 the Ustashi expeditions swarmed upon the villages surrounding the city of Sarajevo, Pale, Blazuj, Romanija, Semezovac, Rajlovac, all purely Serbian villages. Their methods were always the same. Under false pretenses they would place the peasants under arrest or round them up by force.

The stronger resistance was offered in those counties where the Serbs lived in compact units: Bosanska Krajina, Eastern Bosna and Hercegovina. In those districts the Serbian peasants were well organized and defended their villages quite successfully. In the battles around Visegrad 47 officers and 800 Ustashi soldiers were killed. In the struggles near Konjic and the neighboring village of Borak, 40 Ustashi with their leader were annihilated.

This resistance was offered likewise to the Germans and since that time the Guerrilla warfare of the Serbs has been in progress.

The Chetnik units have destroyed railroad communication lines, especially the important ones of Sarajevo-Visegrad and Sarajevo-Brod. The traffic from the Eastern railroad lines was eliminated by the Chetniks' action for a period of many months.

The stiff resistance of the revolting Serbs caused the Croatian Ustashi who were thus far aided by the newly created Croatian army, to ask the Germans for military aid and in the fall and winter of 1941 the Germans assigned two of their divisions to subdue the Serbs in the Eastern part of Bosnia. These German divisions proceeded with caution but not farther than 5 to 10 kilometers from the passable roads, but upon

the approach of the German army the Serbian peasants would retreat deeper into the woods. As soon as the Germans would return from their expedition the Serbs would come out of their wooded wilderness and became masters of large terrains. This explains why certain districts could never be reached by the Germans and why the Ustashi never had power in their hands during the first year of their bloody regime. On the contrary, the Chetnik authorities held the reigns in these districts, including the postal and telegraph systems. Without a Chetnik pass no one was able to travel through these districts.

In the spring of 1942 the action against the Serbs was again intensified especially along the River Sava, the bloodiest onslaught of all occurring in the city of Brcko, where they executed all remaining Serbs including those converted to Catholicism.

One of the most blood-thirsty executioners of Serbs was one, Sudar of Lika, who years ago had attempted to organize a revolt against Yugoslavia. He set out to avenge his prior venture that had failed and publicly declared in Nevesinje, that of all Ustashi he had killed personally the greatest number of Serbs by his own hand. Eyewitnesses have submitted sworn testimony that they had seen him grab babies from their mothers' arms and holding the babies by their feet swing them forcibly against a wall smashing their heads in the presence of their mothers. He also led the group of murderers who were cutting off the breasts of women as well as gouging eyes from living men. With pride he bragged that he had shipped gouged Serbian eyes to the Ustashi headquarters in Zagreb, to prove his bloody activity, because compensation rewards and

leaves depended upon the number of murders committed.

One Zorko, also known as Dan, of Siroki Breg near Mostar, killed with his own hand 90 most prominent Serbs. Later the Italian authorities placed him under arrest and convicted him for unlawful possession of fire arms. In his possession 8 gold watches were found, apparently stolen from his victims. He was sentenced to death and the entire Roman Catholic clergy, together with Bishop Misic, intervened in his behalf and pleaded with the Italian commander to spare the life of this common criminal.

How great in some instances was the number of victims may be evidenced by the following fact: Since there was no time to dig graves for the executed victims, the common procedure of throwing the bodies into pits and rivers was adopted. During the month of July 1941 there was such a vast number of corpses in the River Neretva, about 15,000 or more, that the boats had difficulty going through the enmassed bodies. Because of the frightful scenes thus encountered the boat captains refused to ply their boats on this river. The corpses later were carried to the sea as far as the islands of Hvar and Korčula.

An example of the unprecedented brutality in the history of civilization is recorded by the sworn testimony of several witnesses regarding the following happening: At Nevesinje the Ustashi arrested one whole Serbian family consisting of father, mother and four children. The mother and children were separated from the father. Fully seven days they were tortured by starvation and thirst, then they brought the mother and children a good sized roast and plenty of water to drink. These unfortunates were so hungry they ate

the entire roast and then the Ustashi told them that they had eaten the flesh of father and husband.

All of this resolves itself into a single question: What was the attitude of the Croats towards all of these sufferings visited upon the Serbs?

The facts disclose that there were only a handful of Ustashi at the beginning of this great tragedy. The Croats in general, especially in the cities, remained very reserved. Neither did they participate in the persecution of the Serbs, nor did they condone the terror, but in instances they condemned it. A significant number of Croats unable to bear this situation, took cover in the Italian occupied districts, where there were no massacres committed. Many of them fell into displeasure of Pavelich and they themselves were subjected to persecution. In general all good and honest Croats condemned these terrible murders, but they were powerless to do anything because the Ustashi were armed and they were not.

The Croatian peasantries acted differently in different localities. In the territory surrounding Imotski and Ljubuski they participated in the massacre of the Serbs, also in the pillaging and destruction of their properties. One of such robbers and murderers was Dane Milos, who organized criminals in Ljubuski and murdered all of the Serbian villagers.

There were also districts where the Croatian peasants themselves chased away the Ustashi gangsters when they would appear, and would invariably give every protection to their neighboring Serbs.

Such instances were recorded in Kupres and Belo Polje, but a very disgraceful and shameful behavior in this great tragedy was displayed by the Catholic clergy. Not only did they fail to raise their voices in a single

word of protest against this unchristianlike slaughtering, but they were invariably at the helm of the Ustashi and in some instances they were active participants in the unspeakable crimes with gun and knife in their hands. They pointed out Serbs for murder, they led the Ustashi hordes. At Mostar, Reverend Leo Petrivic, secretary to Catholic Bishop, Dr. Taol, organized and led the bloody Ustashi activities in the villages around Ilic, and afterwards he was present, but in silence, witnessing the execution of 7 of his colleagues, Serbian Orthodox priests of Mostar. On behalf of none of his colleagues did he utter a single word although he knew all of them well and one of them he had known for the last 30 years.

At Split, in a Catholic seminary, they prepared a list of Serbs and Yugoslav inclined Croats, about 1,200 persons, and submitted this list via their main Ustashi headquarters in Zagreb, to the Italian authorities, demanding deliverance of the persons named on this list, apparently for the sole purpose of extraditing them to Croatian jurisdiction for execution. The Italian authorities rejected this infamous demand.

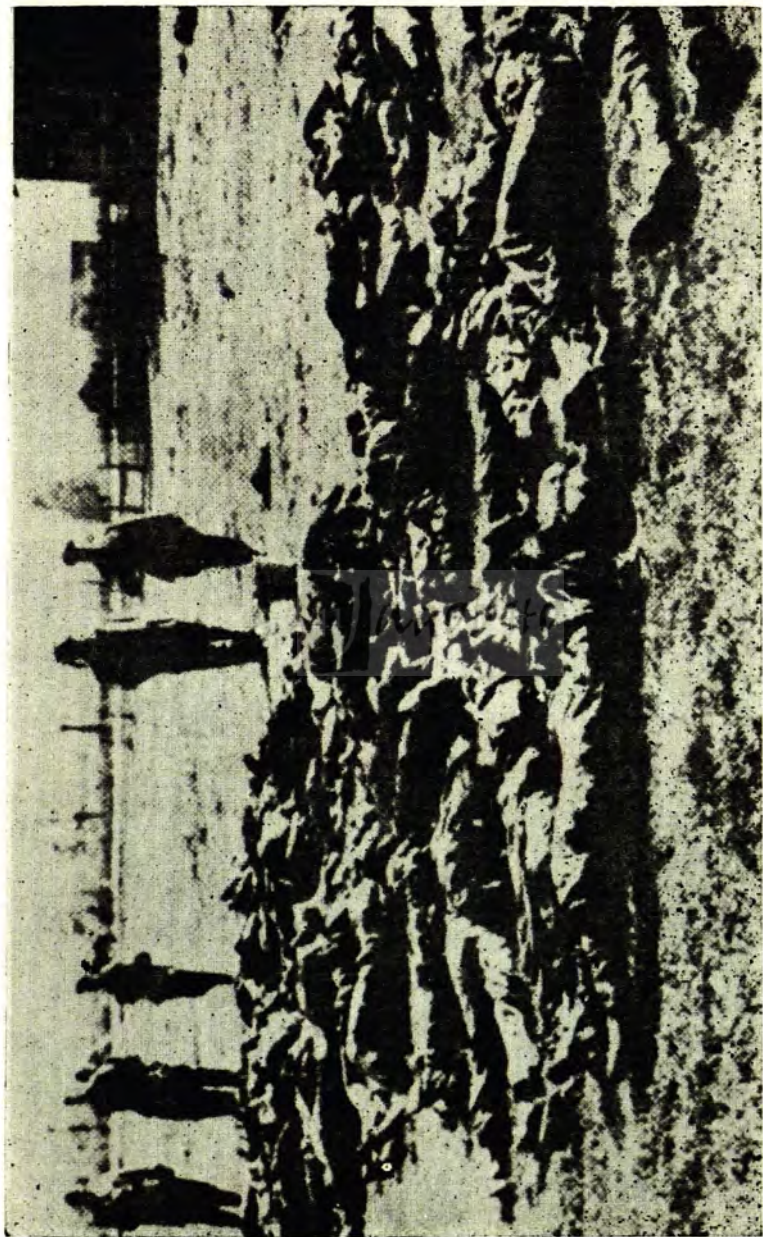
This great Serbian catastrophe resulting from a brotherly hand cost not fewer than 700,000 Serbian lives, according to absolutely authentic information and records, duly and simultaneously *verified by two separate committees, one at Split, the other at Belgrade*. Not only are there a number of towns and villages, but there are also entire counties wholly exterminated of Serbs. Even the leading newspapers of Zagreb have admitted that in the county of Varazdin there is not a single Serb or Jew left.

Taking into consideration the fact that about 300,000 Serbians were forced to take refuge in Serbia

it would appear that the Ustashi have succeeded in murdering or destroying one million Serbian lives in one single year.

According to the Ustashi statement there were in Pavelich Croatia 2,000,000 Serbs; 3,200,000 Croats and 800,000 Moslems. It is apparent that their plan to achieve their grim purpose has already half way succeeded. The remaining one million Serbs are now next in line to meet the same fate, according to all advices which are being received in coded letters and otherwise. The persecution of the Serbs is continuing throughout the mountain districts of Bosnia and the remaining Serbian villages are being systematically exterminated under the pretense of supposed Chetnik activities there.

If the Allied Nations fail to undertake immediate repressive action, it may be reasonably expected that the Ustashi will succeed in the total and complete extermination of all Serbs within the territory of the Independent State of Croatia.



German soldiers and Croatian Ustashi shooting enmasse Serbian war victims.

41) Ягобно

VI

FURTHER REPORT OF ATROCITIES

TESTIMONY OF A TRUSTWORTHY EYEWITNESS

After the fall of Yugoslavia danger threatened all people but more particularly the Serbs. It was evident that this fall meant vengeance from the invaders and also from the small neighboring nations, which had been eagerly awaiting for the opportune hour, such as Bulgarians, Albanians, Hungarians, and even Croatian Frankovci inside Yugoslavia. There were in reality two invading powers and four others seeking to take vengeance. Through all of this the Serbs suffered in silence in the beginning. But many thousands of the liberty-loving citizens, as well as many soldiers, who did not wish to be taken prisoners, remained in retreat and armed in the mountains. There they organized against the terror of Quisling Pavelich and others who despised the Serbs.

Just about the time Germany attacked Soviet Russia in August of 1941, a strong and organized movement against the invaders began in many parts of Yugoslavia.

The extremist elements, silent for some time now began to move again. The adherents of Frank's Party (Frankovci), who were found to be in many of the places where massacres were committed, took advantage of the situation in proclaiming all Serbs communists and began to round them up like animals. The massacre unheard of in the history of Europe began

and at least 600,000 Serbs have been killed. In January 1942, the massacres were resumed again in the district of Dvor, which was spared from the first massacre, also around Nova Gradiska, which until then had remained almost intact. The Serbs in the entire Independent Croatia were unmercifully dealt with and persecuted. Lazo Durman was lanced by a spear and unborn babies were torn from the wombs of pregnant mothers, which happened to Mileva Nozevich from Sabandza. The chests of innocent people were burned and boiling water spilled over them. Small boys were put on a hot fire, their eyes gouged out; ears cut off; nails hammered into their heads; and arms and legs amputated. Beards of priests were pulled off together with the skin; men were dragged along the road tied to trucks; arms and legs were broken. People were slaughtered like animals; machine guns were fired on them; some were buried alive; while others were cast into deep pits and bombs thrown on them. In houses and churches innocent people were burned. Children's limbs were torn from them; their heads were pounded against walls; they were thrown into fire, into boiling vats and into lime; their ears were boxed, and their heads smashed. Hundreds of persons were killed on the church altar and thousands slain in the church of Glina. Women, girls and minors were brutally attacked, being taken to the camps of the Ustashi to serve as prostitutes after which they were killed; mothers were raped in the presence of their daughters; daughters in the presence of their mothers, and rape took place even in the churches. A son was forced to rape his own mother (in the case of Olga Kepliya from Gliniyotog Kuta). About 100,000 Serbs in Bachka were killed by the Hungarians but without being subjected to prolonged tor-

tures. Now again on January 21, 1942, thousands were killed in Novi Sad, Churug, Zabalj, Gospodjinci, Titel and Stari Bechey.

Some Italians took photographs of certain Ustashi who were wearing around their waists garlands of human tongues and eyes gouged from the unfortunate Serbs. The Italians also took photographs of the Pavelich Ustashi holding a large dish containing several pounds of human eyes gouged from the tortured and murdered Serbian people. Never before in history or during this war has such brutality and cruelty been inflicted upon the Serbs or any people anywhere.

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Bodies of the massacrered Serbian victims left in a field by the Croat Ustashi to decay.

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VII

ATROCITIES IN SREM

According to the latest reports, Pavelich's Ustashi executed on the 26th and 27th of August, 1942, in the province of Srem, the following number of Serbs: In Zemun 80; Ruma 103; Vukovar 27; Sremski Karlovci 16; Vinkovci 12. In Jarmina on the 14th of August, 1942, 14 Serbs were murdered and on the 24th of the same month another 67. Subsequently, 1,000 Serbs from the same province of Srem, among whom were women and children between the ages of 12 and 17, were brought to Vukovar, the seat of the province of Srem and there, after a mock trial presided over by a judge named Brezkovich, all were executed. A minister of the Croatian Government, former Colonel Victor Tumich, declared that those executions would serve as an example for the pacification of Srem and would be continued regardless of their number.

On the 13th of January, 1943, General Mihailovich informed his Government by telegram that the Commander-in-Chief of the Ustashi had issued an order for the execution of 10,000 Serbs in Srem.

In December, 1942, the German military sentenced to death hundreds of Serbs in the village of Ruma. All sentences were carried out. The village of Martinci and others in the vicinity of Ruma, have been visited by the same fate of destruction as the Czech town of Lidice. The inhabitants of these destroyed villages were exterminated.

The city authorities of Belgrade have prohibited the people from swimming in the Sava and the Danube, because of the numerous human corpses which float down these rivers, as a result of German, Hungarian and Ustashi crimes.

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The Gestapo counting the Serbian victims of Pavelich's Croats, which were killed on the banks of a river.

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VIII

PERSECUTIONS AND MASSACRES OF THE SERBS BY THE GERMANS

Germany has always desired to be influential over the Slavic people and to increase her influence to a dominating power. If any of the Slavic people were compelled to resist German domination they were classed as enemies at once. This especially was true in the case of the Serbs, when Germany poured out her fury against them because they resisted the infamous pact of March 25th, 1941, between Germany and the then Yugoslav Government. The rejection of this pact by the Serbs seemed to Germany to hamper her advance toward the wealth of the East. For this reason she became furious and struck at Yugoslavia a severe blow, beginning with the destruction of Belgrade, an open city, by air bombardment on April 6 and 7, 1943. With Germany, the Hungarians, Italians, Bulgarians and several hostile groups within Yugoslavia united in the common purpose to annihilate the Serbian population.

It chanced that among the Croatian people there was a large organization, "Frankists", which desired to restore the old Hapsburg Austrian Empire, and in addition to this organization there were numerous German settlers in Yugoslavia such as farmers and business and professional men, who were German sympathizers and as an active "fifth column" promoted the cause of Germany. When the mobilization of Yugoslavia was

ordered these Germans refused to respond even though they were citizens of the country. They had installed in their homes efficient radio receivers so that they could hear everything that Hitler said or ordered. Many of these Germans were also equipped with motorcycles, which they used in the service as agents of the Gestapo, after the fall of Yugoslavia. They seized much of the property of wealthy Serbs and later denounced them to German authorities, which resulted in the execution of a great many.

The crimes and cruelties against women, that were committed by the German soldiers in Poland were also repeated against the Serbian women. Unlimited numbers of helpless women and girls were ravaged. In some places every woman between the ages of 16 and 30 was raped. The Serbian colonies near the borders suffered especially in this regard, many of the young girls being branded on the arm with the letters M.M. (Military Maiden). It has been reported that one girl in the vicinity of Slatinski Radenci was ravaged by more than fifty German soldiers in a relatively short time.

It was not possible to prevent the persecutions and atrocities against the Serbs in Serbia under the rule of General Nedich, not to mention the impossibility which existed in other places in Yugoslavia. Almost at the outset of hostilities it became known that hundreds of the Serbs, beginning with the intellectual class of the University, were slain or sent to prison camps, as was the case with 200 physicians, because they would not support the German regime. Likewise every government official who opposed the Germans in any way was removed from office. To crush the Serbian spirit, the Germans used every means at their command.

Arrests were made and hostages taken, executions and hangings became daily occurrences as well as annihilations of entire settlements, villages or towns.

The food supplies of the Serbs were systematically drained by the Germans so that in many places dire famine and starvation followed. Even in the rich region of Machva the children suffered blindness because of the food shortage.

The terrorism of the Germans did not crush the fighting spirit of the Serbian people. With renewed determination many fled to the mountains and united in the now famous guerrilla warfare under General Mihailovich. As a result, many Germans were killed and Hitler was so enraged that he ordered that for every German soldier killed one hundred Serbs should pay with their lives and for every wounded German fifty Serbs should suffer death, and that every house from which a German had been shot, should be burned or razed. Notices to this effect were posted everywhere.

Against these defense movements the Germans organized a punitive expedition consisting of several complete motorized divisions with airplanes, heavy artillery, tanks, and machine guns. This expedition directed its power against the Serbian defense in western Serbia, in Machva. Reporting of this, the Donau Zeitung says, that Quisling Pavelich sent his Ustashi as his aid to the German fliers, who flying low opened fire with machine guns upon all persons at places where the opposition existed. This outrage was followed by the burning and devastation of all towns by the German soldiers, so that by the month of September 1941, in the region of Machva alone, 16,000 persons had been killed and from other places all the able bodied

men had been taken for forced labor in Germany. As a result of this there are many localities where there are no males left. In this manner the town of Shabac suffered particularly.

In the district of Rudnik, in the town of Gornji Milanovatz, the German punitive expedition assembled all the people at the church where many of them were either killed or imprisoned, and later the expedition destroyed nearly the whole town of 464 houses, leaving only 72 intact.

In the industrial city of Kraljevo all railway and airplane workers were killed. Moreover at least one person from every family was shot by the Germans. By German admission, in this town there were 6,000 persons killed.

Executions were carried out in many other places, especially in the town of Uzice, which the Germans obliterated like Lidice in Czechoslovakia. Almost all of the people, who were not able to escape into the mountains, perished. The bodies of the murdered victims were thrown into trenches and partially covered with earth and then the ground was rolled by great tanks so that every vestige of a grave would disappear.

The counties of Krushevac, Leskovac and Lebane suffered the same experience as the towns of Jagodina, Cuprija and many others. But the cruelties in the town of Kragujevac exceeded those of all the other places.

From authentic accounts the massacre of about 8,000 Serbs was committed in Kragujevac. On October 20, 1941, fully armed German soldiers encircled the town of Kragujevac and blocked all streets, roads and highways. Thereupon they entered the houses, one by one, and took all the adults and drove them in selected groups to the outskirts of the city. In these



Bloated Serbian corpses left beside a river, the victims of the Nazi and Croatian Ustashi.

41 Ягобно

groups were found professors, doctors, lawyers, teachers, business men, mechanics and laborers, many students and the seven priests of this town. All these people were under the belief that they were to be sent to a concentration camp. But the following day the Germans began to divide them up into smaller groups, and take them in such groups to the outskirts of the town and there executed them mercilessly with machine guns.

This slaughtering was handled by the commander of the town of Kragujevac, a German officer, Zimmermann. The German soldiers were asked to volunteer for this massacre, but none volunteered. One sergeant refused to shoot and he was imprisoned. To accomplish this slaughter the German officers were forced to give their soldiers alcoholic liquors. After 2,300 were massacred, the commander was asked "whether it was enough?" "Continue shooting", was his reply. After this they continued to shoot the remaining and thus killed approximately 8,000 persons. Students carried school books with them for they were taken while class was being held. Seeing that they would be shot also, the director, Vojislav Pantelich, kneeled and begged the soldiers to spare them from death. But mercy was not to be found, all were killed while crying out, "Shoot, we are Serbian children!"

The Germans also took many hostages from great numbers of places of whom large numbers were killed while others were sent to concentration camps. From the town of Miloshevac, near Smederovo, 600 were taken as hostages and driven to Belgrade. Near Belgrade, in the village of Jajinci, about 900 Serbs were killed and thrown into one common grave.

A better fate does not await those who are in concentration camps either, for many of them are dying

from various illnesses or cold and hunger. Likewise in Norway, of the 900 Serbs sent there by the Germans, hundreds have already died from diseases. Perhaps, the remainder will perish also.

NAZI DIRECTIONS FOR MASS MURDER

Reprinted from The Reader's Digest June, 1943, originally published in Crusader (British 8th Army Weekly)

These are the regulations issued by the headquarters, 125th German Infantry Regiment, Oct. 28, 1941, when that unit was stationed in Yugoslavia, copies of which were later captured by the British 8th Army in Egypt.

Supplementary regulations by the General Officer Commanding Serbia, concerning the manner of carrying out executions, make necessary the following amendments to Regimental Orders of 16.10.41:

(a) When a large number of persons have to be dealt with they are to be distributed for shooting among units.

(b) The bodies are to be buried in sufficiently deep graves. Burning of bodies is to cease. The placing of flowers on graves by the populace is to be prevented.

(c) In order to avoid unnecessary contact with the bodies, persons are to be led directly to the edge of their graves. In the case of mass executions it is allowable to cause the hostages to kneel with their faces toward the grave.

(d) Shooting of large numbers is to be carried out in groups of five to eight, one after the other. Those to be shot must have their legs tied.

(e) Before the execution takes place those to be shot should have all papers removed.

A short report is to be made on the execution, showing: 1) Names of those shot; 2) Reasons for shooting; 3) Name of officer in command; 4) Place, time; 5) Name of officer ordering the execution.

(f) The execution is to be carried out in a very regimental manner with an officer in charge. Two to four men are to be detailed for each man to be shot. Aim for the heart and head. After the volley the officer responsible will, on orders from the attending medical officer, fire a final shot into the body of each with a regulation pistol. Death is to be certified by the medical officer.

(g) Articles of clothing (including footwear) and personal effects of those shot will on no account be given to the local population. They are to be handed in, in exchange for a receipt, to the appropriate local military authority. Until the burial has been completed one officer is to be present.

The order of 16.10.41 by the Commanding Officer, Infantry Regiment 5, is hereby canceled.

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Serbian victims in Machva; Germans would not permit burial.

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IX

THE WAVE OF TERROR CONTINUES

(RELENTLESS EXTERMINATION OF THE SERBS BY
GERMAN AND BULGARIAN INVADERS)

From a summary of reports received, the conditions in occupied Serbia are as follows:

1—The Bulgarians have resumed their traditional persecution and extermination of the peaceful Serbian population, especially directing their energy against the intellectual class. In the prisons of Kosovska Mitrovica there are imprisoned a great number of innocent Serbs as hostages. Due to their unbearable sufferings and agonizing tortures, a great many of these hostages have been driven to insanity.

2—The Gestapo Chief Himler recently concluded a series of conferences with his aids throughout Serbia, and upon his departure, the Gestapo inspired tortures reached their culmination. In the jails of Nish, hundreds of victims were packed in small rooms where one could hardly remain even in an upright position. They received food through the barred windows in quantities insufficient for their sustenance. They were permitted once a day to leave their cells and carry their buckets, passing a formation of guards whose whips busily lashed them. The Germans are continuing with mass executions and have ceased to publish the list of names of those executed.

3—The Germans have denounced Major Kalabich, a county chief, as being a collaborator of General Draza

Mihailovich, merely because he refused to persecute the people within his county at their suggestion. They subjected Major Kalabich to terrifying tortures, rolled him naked over broken glass, and thereupon executed him.

4—The Germans have organized wholesale posses against the people and prominent citizens, under the pretext that they are rounding up the followers of General Draza Mihailovich. The mayor of Valjevo, Lukich, under pressure from the German Gestapo, caused the arrest of 800 of the most prominent citizens to be held as hostages. Their fate is sealed, because the execution of hostages in Serbia is in continuous process to terrify the people. No one in Serbia is assured that he will live to the next evening or dawn.

5—On December 15, 1942, at Krushevac, there were 10 Serbians executed under the pretext of being sympathizers of General Draza Mihailovich. Among them was Dragomir Plocich, mayor of the village of Mesevo, and Velisav Bogicevich, mayor of the town of Vitanovac. They were only suspected of being collaborators of General Draza Mihailovich. In Trstenik and vicinity there were 200 wholly innocent Serbs arrested under the suspicion of being in collaboration with General Draza Mihailovich. Their fate will be the same as that of other hostages.

6—For the purpose of reprisal, at Petrovac, on December 15, 1942, 50 alleged sympathizers of General Draza Mihailovich were executed, for the death of a German soldier.

7—Between December 9 and December 13, 1942, over 3,000 wholly innocent Serbs were arrested at Belgrade, being accused of alleged collaboration with General Draza Mihailovich. An unprecedented wave of

terror is sweeping Belgrade. More than 300 prisoners were executed there on Christmas Eve, 1942, and on the following day, on Christmas, fully 3,000 hostages were slain and this massacre continued until December 27, 1942, when 900 persons were executed. Among the last victims there were 68 active officers who were spending time in Belgrade on a leave from the German camps for prisoners of war. They were all executed under the veil of suspicion of being sympathizers or collaborators of General Draza Mihailovich.

Thus far the Germans have published only 350 names of these victims. It is expected that they will continue the publication of names of other executed persons. The execution of hostages enmasse is a daily occurrence in all parts of Serbia, especially intensified since September 1942. The hostages are being picked at random under the orders issued by General Bader, military commander of Serbia, and General Meistner, commander of Gestapo forces. In Belgrade alone there were executed 27,000 persons in 1942. The slightest suspicion that one belongs to the organization of General Draza Mihailovich is sufficient to cause his execution.

The threat of General Bader, to execute 100 hostages for every object destroyed by sabotage, is being carried out relentlessly, and the victims are usually men between 18 and 40 years of age, and especially of the intellectual and prominent classes.

8—In order to continue their mass execution of hostages throughout Serbia, the Germans have since January 10, 1943, organized their agent provocators in all parts of Serbia, who attempt to gain the confidence of the people by the collection of funds for General Draza Mihailovich. Whoever falls into the

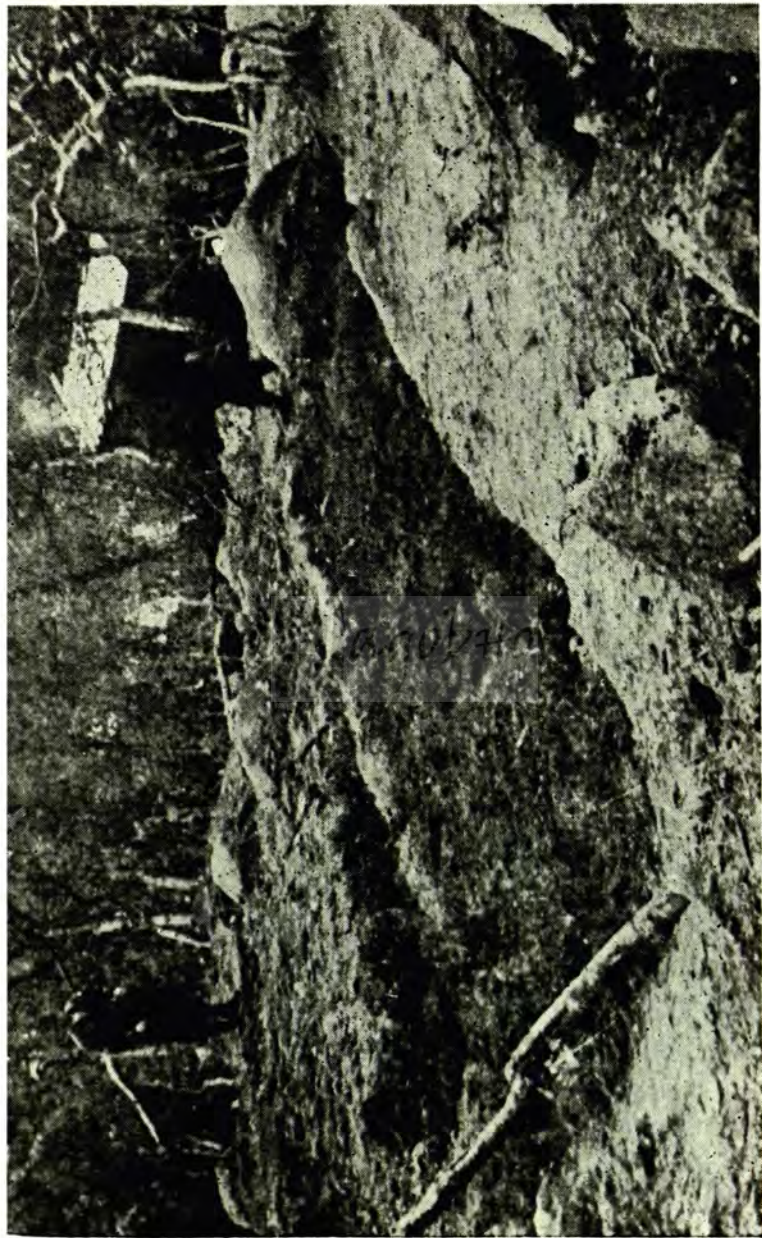
trap and offers any aid is executed immediately and on the spot.

9—The Italian governor of Montenegro stated in a conversation that, according to Italian statistics, there have been over 823,000 Serbs executed in Yugoslavia thus far. From September to December 31, 1942, former Colonel Victor Tumich, Pavelich's governor of Srem, executed 30,000 Serbs. This number is to be added to the 600,000 of Serbs slaughtered by the Ustashi in Pavelich's Independent Croatian State.

10—In the counties of Vladichin Han, Surdulica, Vranje, Lebane, Presevo and Prokuplje, the Bulgarians have executed 700 of the most prominent citizens, have interned 20 other persons and have burned 5 villages. In the county of Despotovac, the Bulgarians have burned to the ground 40 homes, for the alleged reason that they were at one time occupied by the Chetniks of General Draza Mihailovich. They have threatened to burn every house which is once visited by Chetniks.

In the village of Kriva Reka unspeakable atrocities were committed upon the populace by the regular Bulgarian army under the command of Colonel Penev. The Bulgarians bayoneted Milanka Milich, an infant of one year, Vera Nikolich, a six-month old baby, and Mihalje Nikolich, a five year old child.

11—On the 26th day of December 1942, at Krushevac, a Bulgarian soldier seriously wounded a German soldier during a quarrel. The Germans accused the Serbs of this crime, and announced that they would execute 100 Serbs at Krushevac in the event the German soldier died from his wounds. Everywhere they hunt for a pretext to serve for mass executions of male persons between 18 and 40 years of age.



The graves of more than 200 Serbian prisoners of war, who had been executed in Jernvannet, Norway.

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X

HUNGARIAN ATROCITIES

THE ARRIVAL OF THE ENEMY FORCES

Upon their invasion of Yugoslavia, the Germans and the Magyars occupied the city of Novi Sad, chief city in the province of Vojvodina, on April 12th, 1941. Prior to the enemy's arrival, well known and prominent civic leaders like Mile Petrovich, Mayor of Novi Sad, Dr. Moch, Kosta Hadzija, with many others, had organized a citizens' defense council of 300 men, Serbs, Magyars and Germans, together, for the purpose of preserving order until the arrival of occupational forces. However, the German and the Magyar members of the council disarmed the Serbian members and took over all of the most important places, and positions.

As soon as the enemy forces entered Novi Sad, gun firing over the city started and did not cease until the afternoon of April 15th. The Magyars and the Germans claimed that they were attacked by the Chetniks in Temerinska Street and under this pretext they began massacring entire Serbian families residing in Temerinska and Futoshka streets as well as in the Serbian suburb of Podboje. It was sufficient for anyone to point his finger at a Serbian house and say that the Chetniks were occupying it and the family and the occupants thereof would be murdered. The German and the Magyar residents, especially those employed as janitors of larger homes and apartment houses, were

usually such informants for their own personal gain, as in many instances the informants became property owners in the place of their former masters.

The fear of the Chetniks ran high and therefore the German and the Hungarian military authorities issued special bulletins cautioning their men regarding Chetniks. Whenever the enemy forces arrived to occupy a town or a village, the first question asked of civilians would be regarding the Chetniks. This fear of the Chetniks caused confusion among them which resulted in fighting among themselves. Such fighting was waged for two full days in Novi Sad that over 900 German and Hungarian soldiers were wounded and treated in nearby hospitals, and many were killed, although there was not a single Chetnik in sight.

During these frightful days, the Serbs were mercilessly slaughtered by the thousands, and their corpses were strewn about the streets, among them being women and children. In Futoshka street on every lamp post a Serb was hanged, which created a frightful picture, yet the German and the Hungarian officers went comfortably and leisurely about photographing the scene. In these massacres, General Veres Lajos, commander of the Segedin Cavalry Brigade, distinguished himself by his brutalities, and General Bajor Ferenc, Military Commander of Novi Sad, who is of German descent, likewise distinguished himself. For their ruthlessness and bestiality, Captain Kis Ervin, Adjutant of General Veres, and Captain Smiha Fojpesleben, of the General's staff must be also mentioned.

Beginning with the frontier town of Subotica and throughout every town and village through which they passed, the Magyars executed the Serbs. In these massacres they were to a large extent aided by native

Germans and Hungarians. At Sombor, they massacred a large number of the Serbs, among whom was found the local Archpriest with his wife and children hanging on the Church belfry. From Sombor they descended upon the city of Srbobran where they killed almost every Serb. Among the victims in this city was Paja Dobanovachki, a nationally known civic leader, and his family. From Srbobran they went to the town of Sirig, which is mainly a settlement of veterans of former wars, who being apprised of the enemy's brutality, took up their arms and decided to make a stand against the enemy. To avoid an armed clash, the Hungarian Commander sent his emissaries to the veterans with assurances that no one would be molested, and the veterans taking the word of the Commander, laid down their arms. However, the Hungarians immediately began the massacre of the Serbs in total disregard of the Commander's assurances and word of honor, by machine gunning the peaceful community. Therefore, the Hungarians exterminated every Serb in Sirig, amounting to about 700, and thereupon with tanks finally destroyed every house in this settlement. On the site of Sirig thereafter, by forced labor of Jews and Serbs, barracks were erected, wherein refugees from Bukovina were accommodated. It is estimated that in these massacres, between 70,000 and 80,000 Serbs, and a large number of Jews, lost their lives.

After this extensive extermination of the Serbs, the Hungarians issued a decree ordering all Serbs who had come and settled in Bachka (part of the province of Vojvodina) to evacuate within three days, otherwise they would be executed. The decree provided that they were to leave with only 300 dinars and no more. In obedience to this decree, more than 60,000

Serbs left Bachka. The Hungarian authorities thereupon converted to their own use all of the real and personal property of the fleeing and evacuating Serbs, and demanded of the Jews fifty million dinars. The Jews being able to collect but thirty-eight million dinars were forced to pay the balance in stocks, bonds and other securities, representing their investments in local enterprises, thereby transferring the ownership of said investments into Hungarian hands. By this method, the Merchants Commercial Bank of Novi Sad became the property of General Bajer. Thereupon the pillaging and theft of merchandise from Serbian and Jewish stores took place, the Hungarians and the Germans racing each other in loading and conveying trucks with merchandise, all of which was shipped to Hungary and Germany. After this all Serbs and Jews from 18 to 60 years of age were assigned to perform forced labor, in each instance of which the work was hard and aimless and they were subjected to inhuman treatment by the ruthless invaders.

TORTURES AND EXECUTIONS

The executions by hanging were preceded in most cases by frightful tortures, for instance, tying the victim's hands to his back with wire and raising him upon a scaffold to hang there until the wire would cut through his flesh to the bone, after which the victim would be taken from the scaffold and his hands untied. If he was not executed, this torture often resulted in the victim's complete loss of the use of his arms for several months. This type of torture was inflicted upon Pan Frank, an industrialist, who was later executed with his wife and child by the Hungarians.



The Serbian prisoners of war, suffering from typhus, arriving at Beisfjord in Ofoten, Norway.

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Another type of torture consisted in forcing the naked victim to roll on ground covered with broken glass, so that he would bleed profusely from the cuts thus received, and during this performance the victim would be lashed and whipped constantly.

Later on the Jews were separated from the Serbs and were set at forced labor while the Serbs were committed to concentration camps. This action was taken in fear of a Serbian revolt.

In all instances the Serbs displayed their undivided sympathy and solidarity towards the Jews, the Serbs often openly expressing their sympathies by words of encouragement.

The Hungarians organized in all towns and villages Civilian Defense Councils, which collaborated with the Hungarian military authorities in furnishing them data and names of the Serbs to be executed or interned. These councils were known as 'Magyar Tizesh Pakach'.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Concentration camps were established in the following places:

The Airport at Novi Sad, had about 12,000 internees. All of those interned here had to live and sleep in the open, although among them were many families with several children, many of whom were infants. Even births occurred in this concentration camp, without any medical or proper assistance, so that mothers and newly born babes died. What little money the internees still had in their possession was used in bribing the guards for minor favors, and in many instances the guards robbed the internees of their last dinar, so that the rich and poor starved together.

Similar concentration camps were established at Begech, Bachka Topola and Velika Kikinda, in which over 50,000 internees were corralled. By reason of the systematic extermination of the Serbs either by starvation and ruthless massacring, the Hungarians succeeded in liquidating an overwhelming number of interned victims. Great numbers were massacred, while others died from starvation and still others in substantial number were deported to the provinces of Banat and Srem. At the time of writing this report, there are only about 15,000 Serbs interned in the several Hungarian concentration camps.

In all of these concentration camps, there are many children whose parents have died and who therefore have been adopted by other families. It is known that the native Serbs of Hungary are making efforts to have these children released from these concentration camps, while the native Serbs of the vicinity of Budapest lead in this very noble effort.

EVENTS AFTER SEPTEMBER 1941

It has been proved that the greatest enemies of the Serbian people are the Hungarian officers and military leaders. From the month of September to the last of December 1941, the Hungarian army intelligence officers distinguished themselves in the persecution of the Serbs and the Jews. Upon the slightest provocation, wholesale executions of Serbs were enacted, and arrests of the Serbs unceasingly continued. There was established at Segedin a special military circuit court, which moved from one prison to the next and pronounced death sentences to be executed forthwith by hanging. This court usually selected from five to ten young men and girls and immediately found them guilty of being

Communists or Chetniks. It is significant that most of these victims were youngsters. Such executions took place at Novi Sad, Senta, Sombor, Subotica, Bechey, Kanjiza, and at many other places through which this infamous circuit court passed.

The older and more prominent people were coerced to transfer their properties voluntarily to the Hungarians. These victims would be first arrested and subjected to all kinds of tortures until they finally consented to part with their properties. Nevertheless many of these people were executed, and the others who were released suffered for many months from their tortures and mistreatments while in prison.

The Hungarian army officers, without exception, engaged in the most ordinary pillaging. As soon as they would learn of some well-to-do Serb, or find a comfortable home belonging to a Serb, they would immediately cause his arrest and accuse him of being guilty of spying, or whatever first would come into their minds. In each instance, they would take possession of the property and everything for which they had no immediate use, they would ship to their homes in Hungary. Thus, all of the homes of the well-to-do Serbs were ransacked and stripped of their furnishings, including most valuable as well as highly treasured articles. Such conduct created distinct enmity between the officers of the Hungarian army and the local police officials, who in some cases attempted to protest against such pillaging. However, such police officials were instantly dealt with and at the instance of the Hungarian army officers, were transferred to other places.

The invading Hungarian troops, appearing very shabbily dressed and equipped, set out immediately to find better equipment and uniforms. To imitate the

Germans, they came with motorized units, many of which consisted of an assortment of army trucks and private automobiles, as well as mercantile delivery trucks, hearses, and other commercial vehicles bearing the names of the merchants owning them. The army officers were likewise poorly equipped and dressed. Not many of them wore army boots, but ordinary shoes and cloth leggings. In a short time by pillaging and stealing from Serbian and Jewish stores, they obtained what they lacked. Resistance to such conduct of the invader was impossible but many people succeeded in saving their lives through heavy bribes given to the officers of the invading Hungarian army.

NEW POGROMS

In the month of January 1942, most terrifying massacres of the Serbs were perpetrated by the Hungarians.

On January 6th, the eve of the Serbian Christmas, the Hungarians suddenly and without any warning, massacred the entire Serbian populace of Zabalj. It appears that the Hungarian soldiers came to this place and kidnapped about 50 Serbian girls taking them to their military barracks for the purpose of raping them. The revolting Serbs attacked these Hungarian kidnappers, some of whom were killed, and others dispersed, but the girls were freed. This incident of kidnapping occurred prior to this fateful day. The angered Hungarians brought a brigade and surrounded the village and massacred everyone regardless of age or sex. The next day, on Christmas, the Hungarians attacked the neighboring village of Churug and destroyed it under the pretext that the villagers of Churug participated in the fight at Zabalj.



One of the thousands of Serbian victims killed by the Ustashi.

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These bloody massacres created great turbulence in the entire Bachka region and the Hungarian military authorities made efforts to justify their bloody acts, asserting that 300 Chetniks came from Banat and were harbored by the Serbs in these villages. To prevent an uprising of the Serbs revolting against these massacres, the Hungarians commenced immediately to reenforce their military units by shifting troops from other places into Bachka. Most of these troops had seen action at the Russian front.

On January 21st, while Novi Sad was overflowing with Hungarian troops and gendarmes, throughout the city appeared large posters carrying an order of the military commander of the city announcing that by reason of the infiltration of certain foreign elements into the city, a thorough search would be conducted. This order stated that the search would last three days and that it would consist of the examination of documents of identity of the entire population. In order to make this search effective the inhabitants were prohibited from leaving their homes, and under the penalty of execution, they were even prohibited from looking through their windows into the street. Simultaneously appeared an announcement from Bishop Irinei, stating that he had visited Regent Horthy, who purportedly promised him that the Serbian population of Bachka would not be molested, provided, however, military orders were obeyed and existing laws adhered to. The Bishop's announcement created confidence among the Serbs, who again trusted the word of honor. It has been established since, that the Hungarian authorities had invented and falsified this alleged announcement of Bishop Irinei, in an effort to mislead them into false security.

The search started January 23rd. First of all there were placed on every street of Novi Sad troops and gendarmes. The military patrols went from house to house and made the search. In some instances the patrols would leave the buildings, leaving the occupants unmolested. Many were taken to an office set up in the Spomen Dom Building, where they were to receive additional documents of identity from a board consisting of native Hungarians. Instead of receiving additional documents of identity these Serbs were all murdered in the building. A member of this board, Pandurovich, a Hungarian of Slav origin, being unable to bear further witnessing of this coldblooded slaughter of innocent people, submitted his resignation on the third day, explaining he was ill and unable to perform his duties. He was immediately called to the office of the Hungarian officer in charge and by him murdered in the office.

There were instances where the documents of identity were confiscated from the people who were thereupon visited by another military patrol who demanded the documents for examination. Not being able to produce the documents already confiscated by the previous military patrol, they were summarily executed, in cases even entire families. In some sections of the city the Serbs and the Jews were executed irrespective of whether or not they had necessary documents of identification. Not even infant children, six weeks old, were spared. Many children died from skull fractures caused by blows received from the boots of the Hungarians. All of the Serbs and the Jews residing in the streets of Rumunska, Miletica, Jovana Subotica, Nikole Tesle, and many others were executed. In the building located at the corner of Mileticha and Jovana Subiticha Streets,

directly across the street from King Peter's Armory, about 80 Serbs and Jews were murdered, among whom were also certain members of the families of Yugoslav army officers. In the Monumental Palace of the Home of Municipal Employees, more than 200 Serbs and Jews were murdered.

During this incredible massacre in homes and public buildings, a great many Serbs and Jews were taken for execution at the city cemetery, or on the beach of the Danube. In groups of four, the victims were stripped naked and murdered. Some of them were pushed alive into the icy water, through especially dug holes on the frozen Danube. The scenes were horrifying. It was bitterly cold weather and the children five to fifteen years of age hesitated to disrobe but the Hungarians tore off their clothes and jabbed their bodies with bayonets. Thereupon they would grab the innocent victims by one hand and with the butts of their revolvers would smash in their heads. There were instances where mothers, though naked and with hands tied, would throw themselves upon their children in a last effort to protect them with their own bodies.

PILLAGING EVERMORE

While these searches, seizures and massacres were in full swing, from the homes of well-to-do Serbs and Jews, everything of value would be taken by the Hungarians. To dispose of every possible witness of the wholesale pillaging, all of the occupants of the pillaged homes were murdered. In some cases the Hungarians expected to find large amounts of money in the homes of their victims, and being unable to discover it by their own search, they would take the vic-

tims through the streets strewn with the bodies of those already executed and thereupon return a victim to his home and propose to save his life for his money. In every instance where they received the victims' money under such pressure, the Hungarians executed the victims nevertheless.

It was on the evening of January 25th that this terrific pogrom ceased, and the police took over the authority from the army forces again. During this period of three days there were slain between four and five thousand Serbs and Jews at Novi Sad and vicinity. The atrocities were so great that it is impossible to describe them adequately. It could be truthfully said that similar atrocities are not recorded in the history of mankind. The Hungarian soldiers, who perpetrated these atrocities came from the Russian front where they had witnessed the unheard of atrocities committed by the Germans upon the Russian people and they applied their experiences in Bachka.

Among the more prominent civic leaders that perished in these massacres were Dr. Pavlish, a lawyer and president of the Sokol organization, and his wife. The Doctor passed through the experience of being visited by a first military patrol, which confiscated his documents of identity, and shortly thereafter being visited by another military patrol which found him without his documents and thereupon took him to the beach on the Danube where he was murdered and thrown into the icy river. His body was later cast up by the river at Belgrade, and upon being identified, was given a stately funeral. Slain also were the Ivkovich brothers, merchants of church goods; Dr. Kosta Trifkovich, president of the French Club; together with his brothers Relja and Ivan; Mrs. Matanovich, a widow and land

owner; Dr. Stojan Bichanski with his wife and child; Paja Jakovljevič, a merchant; Dr. Papricich, Supreme Court Judge; Ljubojevich, merchant; Lazarevich, a land owner, with his entire family, consisting of his father, mother, wife, two sons and four daughters; Vasilije Petrovich, a Municipal official; Josip Kon, with his wife, and many others.

ORGY OF BLOOD

As an example of the unbounded Hungarian hatred of Serbs, which has apparently stirred the lowest animal instincts of the ruthless invader, the following incident may well serve the purpose. At the entrance of the Serbian bank in Novi Sad, the Hungarian military patrols came upon three persons who happened to be high bank officials of Budapest, all three of them Hungarians, who were on their way to take possession of the bank. The military patrol, without asking any questions or for documents of identity, killed all three of the men on the spot. These unspeakable atrocities stirred up the public mind in Budapest, where it was not known what was going on in Bachka and the frontiers were sealed tight. The military authorities issued several incoherent statements, each denying the other. At first they maintained that the Chetniks attempted to cross from Srem into Bachka, that they were aided by the Serbs in Novi Sad and that it was therefore necessary to punish the offenders. Later the same authorities issued an explanation stating that they had discovered a conspiracy among the Serbs in Serbia and Banat, aimed at the Hungarian army with the ultimate purpose of regaining possession of Novi Sad, and that the conspirators and their families were executed therefor. Another later explanation attempted to show

that all of those executed were guilty of possession of firearms and radios. To quiet down Hungarian public opinion, the military authorities announced that all of the guilty Serbs were apprehended and liquidated and that it would not be necessary to proceed further with punitive actions, order having been restored.

Meanwhile, only two days later, to wit: on January 27th on St. Sava Day, the Hungarians repeated the same search, seizure and massacre of Serbs at Stari Bechey. They mercilessly killed Serbs and many of them they threw into the River Tisa, alive. More than 1,000 Serbs, men, women and children were massacred at Stari Bechey on that day. These atrocities were continued by the Hungarians in many towns and villages, as for example, in Ada, Mol, Nadalj, Djurdjevo, Gospodjinci, and other places.

From the most conservative verified estimates thus far, the Hungarians massacred from 10,000 to 15,000 Serbs in the month of January 1942 alone.

ATROCITIES CONTINUE

From the month of January to the last of June 1942, the Hungarians continued relentlessly with internments, pillaging, torturing and mass-murdering of Serbs and Jews.

But in spite of all this massacre of the Serbian people, and this infamous conduct of the Hungarians, and in spite of the constant and great danger to which the Serbian people under Hungarian regime are exposed, all reports tend to establish the fact that the Serbs are still stoically enduring their lot. The Hungarians have failed to shake the morale of the Serbs and their belief in final victory. This spirit is especially felt

among the youth, who idolize Draza Mihailovich, whose forces they desire to join.

Some of the Serbs of Voyvodina have fled and keep themselves in hiding in Hungary, where they are tolerated by the Hungarian peasantry.

Of the native Hungarians, there are some who have proved themselves the greatest enemies of the Serbs, one of whom is Ivan Nadj, a lawyer and former parliamentary deputy. He was an active instigator of many crimes perpetrated upon Serbs. The former leader of Hungarians in Yugoslavia, Dr. Santa, has vanished.

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Serbian victims, killed by the Nazi, washed up by the Sava River.

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XI

BULGARIAN ATROCITIES

During the present century the Bulgarians have waged war against the Serbs three times, assailing each time without a declaration of war. The first of these surprise attacks was after the successful Balkan War in 1913, the second was as an ally of Germany and Austria in 1915 (although Bulgaria had pledged her neutrality to the Allies and Russia), and the third time was with the Germans in 1941. In all three of these attacks she was led by Chauvinistic and German propaganda in the hope of gaining Balkan domination.

In the last World War the Bulgarians committed great atrocities upon the Serbs. Bishop Dositej, at that time Bishop of Nish, who in this present war suffered greatly from the Croats as Bishop of Zagreb, was captured by the Bulgarians in 1915 and taken to Bulgaria, where he was saved from death by a few personal friends. This same Bishop Dositej, at the time of the terrible earthquakes in the south of Bulgaria, sent in the name of the Red Cross 1,500,000 dinars as help to the homeless Bulgarians. During the same war the Bulgarians committed great crimes against the Serbian church, killing one hundred and fifty seven priests and leaving entire villages around the city of Prokuplje in carnage and ruin.

In this World War the Bulgarians already had plans, and it seems that these plans were common to all the enemies of the Serbs—to attack the Serbs and to anni-

hilate them, if possible. After taking certain parts of Yugoslavia they immediately murdered outstanding citizens, exiled the Serbian colonists of 1912, and turned all Serbian schools, churches and monasteries into Bulgarian institutions of religion and education.

Almost in every place they organized so-called national committees, whose duty was to destroy the Serbian people or to Bulgarize them. The well known Macedonian "Dejac" and member of the Macedonian Comitadjis of Vancha Mihailov and engineer Dima Chkatrov, started this organization. These committees pointed out all outstanding Serbian citizens who were then murdered by the Bulgarian Comitadjis. For example, a certain Piperkov, member of Vancha Mihailov's gang, committed many atrocities in the district of Skoplje.

Atrocities were also committed upon the Serbian colonists in tune to the motto of Constantine Vanov from Veles who said: "The land which the Serbian Colonists have is Bulgarian, and it should be given to the Bulgarians." This propaganda was not only carried on by Bulgarians of the "Independent Macedonia" idea but also by the Bulgarian government as well. The Bulgarian press stated in 1941 that in South Serbia there were 6,000,000 acres of free land to be divided among new Bulgarian colonists. This shows that about 120,000 Serbs were to be exiled and chased from their hearths, that the land, homes, buildings, money and other possessions were to be taken from them. Bulgarian quarters claim that the killing of Serbs did not take place, but where are those 120,000 Serbs? A small part was evidently annihilated, another part interned in Bulgaria, and the majority was simply put to flight and has found refuge in the mountains or in the Serbia

of Neditch. Skoplje is now devoid of Serbs, and the buildings built by Yugoslavia are now occupied by Bulgarians. In localities where battles were fought whole towns have been destroyed. Seeking vengeance, just as in 1917, for alleged Serbian Chetnik activity, the Bulgarians have annihilated three villages near Leskovac, without regard for the age or sex of the inhabitants. If any Serbs remain in the territories of South Serbia now occupied by Bulgarians, they are subjected to the terrible system which aims to Bulgarize all the people in the domain. Everywhere there are Bulgarian educational instructors, Bulgarian political authorities, Bulgarian armed bands—and it seems that any resistance on the part of the Serbs is really impossible, except for those who are members of the Chetnik army of Gen. Draza Mihailovich.

Simultaneously with the oppression of the Serbian colonists, the Serbian Orthodox Church was attacked as well. Since the time of the ancient Serbian state in South Serbia many monasteries and churches built by the Serbian Nemanyich dynasty and prominent leaders in Serbian history have existed, famous historic places not to be overlooked. Besides this, the Serbs had their bishops and dioceses in this region in the days of the Turks, such as those in Skoplje and Veles. There were also many schools in various towns and cities. The coming of the Bulgars brought a direct assault on the Serbian Church. First all the bishops were driven out of their dioceses, some even were killed, and then all clergymen, of whom there were some 400, were either exiled or interned. 350 Serbian churches and monasteries were taken over by the Bulgarian clergy, without

regard to the fact that this territory had always been under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarch of Pech.

In Skoplje the Serbian Metropolitan Josif was replaced by the Bulgarian Metropolitan from Trnovo, Sophronije, with the title Bishop of Skoplje and Veles. For Ochrid and Bitolj they set up their Metropolitan Filaret, also taking over the well established Theological Seminary in Bitolj. The Serbian Diocese of Zletovsko-Strumicka was incorporated into the neighboring Bulgarian Diocese, although the Zletovsko-Strumicka Diocese had its Serbian origin five centuries ago. The same thing was done by the Bulgars in Greece, where they set up their Metropolitan Kiril as bishop of all occupied territories in Greece. In addition to all this, they have even established friendly ties with the "Croatian Orthodox Church!"

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church was never organized properly according to the laws and regulations of the Orthodox Church. Forcefully it broke away from the Patriarch of Constantinople and caused a schism, for which action it is not recognized by any Orthodox Church in the world. The Serbian Church tried to help the Bulgars in this respect, but no result was obtained mainly due to the very chauvinistic ideas of the Bulgars themselves. For this proffer of friendly aid, the Serbian Church received the due thankfulness of the Bulgarian church in the form of pogroms and oppressions.

The Serbian language is forbidden in all schools in Bulgarian occupied territory and the Bulgarian language has been introduced and is being used.

Near the town of Prokuplje they have, in retaliation for an attack upon an automobile, set on fire and destroyed 30 homes.



One of the thousands of Serb victims killed by the Nazis and Croat Ustashi.

41 Ягобно

The Bulgarian troops helping the Germans in the Eastern part of Serbia are also without any mercy in "cleaning up" in Serbia. They killed the Serbs en masse in the valleys of Morava and Toplica. Their crimes, as the true reports say, are impossible to endure. The Serbian people of those regions asked the Royal Yugoslav Government in London to urge for some reprisals against the Bulgarians in order to save the poor people.

Especially unspeakable crimes were committed by the Germans, Bulgars, and Pavelich's Ustashi in the region of Mountain Kopaonik against the people, where a Croat, Franjo Korda, former Colonel in the Yugoslav Army, has distinguished himself in the brutal massacres of the Serbs. The Bulgarians, on October 11, 1942, burned the villages of Gochice and Desnice in Trstenik county, region of Serbia, where they exterminated all living. Among those killed were 29 women and children. Those two villages do not exist any more. In the same county, on the 9th day of October, 1942, they wiped out the entire village of Stanshince and cut to pieces with knives a peasant, Velislav Radulovich. In the town of Jagodina they scattered from airplanes some announcements and afterwards they killed anybody who tried to pick them up.

During August, 1942, in the counties of Rasina and Dobrich, the Bulgarians burned 7 villages and slaughtered 300 persons. They cut off women's legs and arms and left them to die in agony beside the road. In the county of Morovice the Bulgarians destroyed the villages of Shobiash, Sochanica, Turija and Vrchenovac by fire. They put red-hot coals on the head of Vasilije Janjich and then plucked out his beard and mustache.

The teacher, Velkovich, was tied to the tails of racing horses.

The villages of Kriva Reka and Machkovac, on the mountain of Kopaonik, are completely destroyed and in ruins. The whole population of this mountainous section of the country is exterminated. Over 2,000 Bulgarians and Germans first encircled all inhabited places and started their bloody task. As the Croat Ustashi killed the Serbs in the Church of Glina, so the Bulgars did the same. They filled the church with people, about 120 persons, and then set fire to the church.

In the schoolyard they barbecued alive two men, Miladin Riljak and Janko Cvetkovich, and also two women, Zorka Mitrovich with her two children, and Borka Simich with her four children. They butchered these victims and then threw the dead children over the bodies of their dead mothers. Two children, Milanka Milich and Vera Niketich, were thrown into the air and then caught by knives. In Kriva Reka among the ruins only 273 bodies of men, women, and children were found, but the victims in this region total about 700 persons.

From the 10th to the 15th of October, 1942, the Bulgarians were in the village of Rogachina in the county of Zupa where they wiped out everything including the animals. Many houses were burned and all the girls were raped. The same atrocities occurred in the villages of Mitrovo Polje and Breznica where the Bulgarians stole everything, including the clothing of women.

Baja Hadji-Ilijev, a Bulgarian reserve officer from Tjustendil, shot 6 persons in the village of Golog and set fire to several houses where 8 persons burned to death. In Lebane county 6 Bulgarians killed 280 men,

women and children and 30 more in the town of Bela Palanka. During the month of August 1942, three villages were burned down in the county of Svrlijig.

The Bulgarians, who had their main headquarters in Kragujevac and who were under the command of lieutenant Georgijev, attacked the village of Mijokovac (district of Chacak), and ransacked and burned it. One hundred homes were burned to the ground, while the villagers fled to adjoining towns.

Further, the Bulgarians together with the Germans, invaded the county of Dragachevo, near Kraljevo which they also ransacked and burned. Many more towns were plundered and many innocent people were arrested in the vicinity of Dragachevo. These innocent people were taken to Ivanjica and Chacak, where they were each held for a ransom of 50,000 dinars.

Engaged in battle with a group of Serbian Chetniks, Bulgarian troops robbed the rich treasury of the historical monastery Studenica and maltreated the monks.

Besides this they ransacked many villages in the district of Kraljevo, where the Bulgarian soldiers bestially attacked many women. A young girl, a student of the third grade of the gymnasium—which is equal to the seventh grade of our elementary school—was ravished in the village of Sirce.

The Bulgarians also burned part of the village of Guberevac (in Gruza), and shot seven innocent villagers in the village of Dubce, which is the same district.

Eighteen citizens were shot, eighteen homes were burned to their foundations, and 62 people were seized and arrested in the Morava District.

A Bulgarian punitive expedition forced its way into the town of Boljevac (district of Zajecar), where horrible atrocities were committed. Eleven persons in the town of Valakovci and three men in Podgorci were beaten to death. Everything that was movable was stolen from the town hall. Twenty homes were burned and 92 innocent persons were arrested.

The Germans and the Bulgarians together have perpetuated additional atrocities against the Serbs in the town of Krushevac and vicinity. It is reported that they killed about 1,000 persons taking them in groups of 20 and that they burned many houses in this neighborhood. The reasons for this outbreak was due to guerilla activity by Draza Mihailovich. It is also reported that in the town of Pozarevac 400 persons were slain.

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A Serbian victim of the Croat Ustashi whose brain was extracted.

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XII

PERSECUTIONS OF THE SERBS BY THE ITALIANS AND THE ALBANIANS

For many centuries the Italian people have had the ambition to conquer the entire Adriatic Sea as well as all the countries bordering on it and in this way increase their influence in the Balkans. The Pavelich Croatian Ustashi, the Separatists of Montenegro, and the so-called Albanian Committee of Kosovo all worked for the sole purpose of dividing Yugoslavia, which was according to Italy's plans. Not only this, but she also wished to create separate states of Croatia and Montenegro, and enlarge the borders of Albania. In this way she planned to establish her influence more and more in the Balkans.

Immediately upon the fall of Yugoslavia, Italy undertook to sever Montenegro from Yugoslavia and to create of it a free state under her ruling. Under the protection of the Italian government, certain well known separatists of Montenegro convened as a congress on June 28, 1941, to proclaim a restoration of the State of Montenegro. This congress also wished to abrogate the decisions of the Congress of Podgorica, held in Montenegro in 1918, proclaiming the unity of Montenegro and Serbia. This congress was unable to consummate its treacherous work, however, because the noble patriots of Montenegro forcefully attacked and dispersed it. The Serbs of Montenegro who had always contended for the unity of the Serbian people

opposed every attempt of the separatists to sever them from the other Serbs, as the Italians wished to do. In reprisal for that, the Italians slaughtered many of the people and took others into concentration camps in North Albania and elsewhere.

As far back as the ending of the First World War, the Italians began to institute their propaganda amongst the Albanians against Yugoslavia and the Serbs. Among the Albanians in Yugoslavia were some criminals who were hiding from the law, and who had escaped over the border into Albania. The same was also true of certain politicians who were dissatisfied with Yugoslavia, and so to create a larger Albanian State both of these groups were received by the Italians and supported and armed by them. From these criminals and pseudo-politicians was organized the so-called "Committee of Kosovo". The purpose of this committee was to increase the territorial borders of Albania by capturing certain desirable cities and strategic points in Yugoslavia and placing the whole under the domination of Italy. On various occasions the leaders of this committee delegated some of its members to cross the border into Yugoslavia and slay either Albanians or Serbs who opposed their policies.

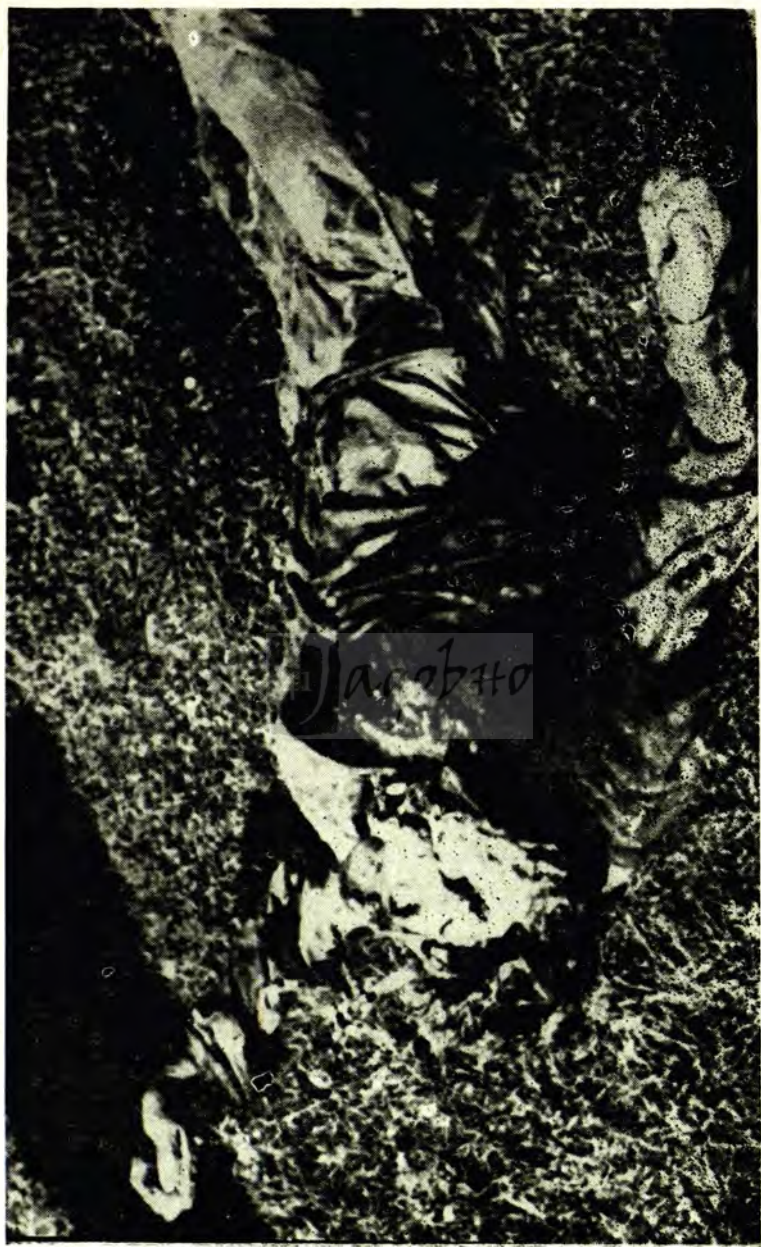
After the first World War the Yugoslav government settled many Serbs and their families in Southern Serbia and Macedonia for the purpose of imbuing new life into those old and weakened Serbian communities which had existed for centuries, and in this way hundreds of new settlements were created.

The Albanian Committee of Kosovo was fervently opposed to this colonization and patiently awaited an opportunity to destroy it. This occasion came upon the dismantling of Yugoslavia when, armed with material

supplied by the Italians, the Albanians hurled themselves against the helpless settlers in their homes and villages. According to the most reliable sources the Albanians burned many Serbian settlements, killing some of the people and driving out others who escaped to the mountains. At present other Serbian settlements are being attacked and the property of individuals and of communities is either being confiscated or destroyed. It is not possible to ascertain at the present time the exact number of victims of those atrocities, but it may be estimated that at least between 30,000 and 50,000 perished; and what the number will be at the end of the war no one can say.

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A tortured and beheaded Serbian victim of the Croatian Ustashi.

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XIII

REPORT BY A COMMITTEE OF BELGRADE

Bloody days and months, and now already the second year, have gone by during which without any quarter or mercy the Croats have been spilling Serbian blood with the cool and calculated aim of wiping out the last Serb in the territory of "Independent Croatia". History is gaining a new concept of the height of cruelty and blood thirstiness which will be rightfully named "Croatism". History knows of many criminal mass massacres. The persecution of the early Christians, Vandalism, the Spanish Inquisition, the war of the Huguenots, the French and the Russian Revolutions, all fade away in comparison with the unprecedented bloody terror in Croatia. The Spanish Inquisition claimed only 30,000 victims in three centuries, likewise the Huguenot wars, while the demands of the French Revolution itself did not exceed 40,000 victims. Even the Russian Revolution can not be compared in its prey to the slaughter perpetrated by the Croats, not to speak of their horrible cruelty.

The traditional hate of the Serbs by the Croats is centuries old. Its intensity was demonstrated in the latter half of the nineteenth century under the influence of the ideology of the Croat leader, Ante Starcevic. "A litter of dogs," said Starcevic of the Serbs, "who should be hacked to bits with axes." This was the substance of Starcevic's ideology. From that time, date the pogroms against the Serbs in Croatia. In Zagreb in 1895, then

again in Zagreb in 1902, Karlovci, Bjelovar and in other towns these pogroms took place. In 1914, after the assassination in Sarajevo, again fearful pogroms ensued in Sarajevo, Zagreb, and other larger towns. At no place at any time have the Serbs done likewise. In fact they did not even organize armed resistance against the pogroms. Even under Yugoslavia these acts of terrorism did not cease, but they became more intense after January 6th, 1929. Assassinations of political leaders, the derailing of trains, sabotage by time bombs, mass executions of "Chetniks" in Kerestinac, the riot of Sibenje, the demonstration in Zagreb and the demolition of Serbian shops, all of these were only signs of the far greater horrors which were soon to follow.

After the Accord of 1939 the reign of terror was conducted entirely openly and according to plan. The propaganda was out in the open. The Governor (Ban) Subasic, together with other Croatian leaders appointed many Croatian Ustashi to the highest official positions. The chief of police, Dr. Josif Vragovic, had been a sworn Ustasha since 1932. In the fall of 1939 there were put to death by torture some twenty Serbs and Croats, Yugoslavs in Zagreb, all in perfectly similar fashion. The police, of course, could not find the criminals although their forces were strengthened by units of the Croatian Home Guard, who themselves were rightfully accused of these crimes. At the same time there ensued much shifting and ousting of Serbs from the government service, especially in the police department. The percentage of Serbs, government employees, in the Province of Croatia fell to 4% in spite of the fact that according to the percentage of Serbs in said Province there should have been at least 18% to 20% of Serbs in government service.

When the chief of police, Dr. Vragovic, was dismissed and in his place was installed an honorable and national-minded man, Vikert, it seemed as though the situation would become better, for Vikert desired to stand up against the violent ascendancy of the Ustashi. He even uncovered the entire organization of the Ustashi which had for its headquarters the "Matica Hrvatska", a literary center. Ban Subasic failed to take radical measures to liquidate the Ustashi movement, as the matter did not seem serious or dangerous to Dr. Macek, so that only certain half-measures were ventured, which, however, had a negative effect.

The atmosphere became more oppressive from day to day while the threats of the Ustashi became ever louder. At Zagreb the Serbs began to find before their doors in the mornings circulars filled with convincing threats. Then came the 27th of March (1941), which Zagreb received in cold ominous silence. The Ustashi rejoiced, for they felt their time was nigh. The Serbs were awakening to a premonition of some evil that was to befall them.

THE DISASTER

The majority of the Croats awaited the disaster in preparedness. In the army appeared unmistakable signs of sabotage, prepared long before and well organized. It was not in vain that Dr. Ziga Shol, the people's representative of the Croatian Peasant Party, publicly stated at a gathering in Sabac in 1938, that in the event of war Croatian bayonets would be turned against the Serbs. The "Hrvatska Revija" (Croatian Review) of Zagreb published last year an article, "Internal Front in the

Balkans", wherein it praised the stand of the Croatian people during the disaster. There, it is claimed, that the Croats, who were dominant in technical personnel and in all possible important positions from sergeants to staff officers, succeeded in causing such fearful confusion in the army's organization that nothing could be carried out according to plan. It is known that the Aviation Corps Officer Kren, on the eve of the war, fled by airplane to Germany and there disclosed vital information of air-bases. The Croatian regiments in Bjelovar and Virovitica rebelled openly. Units of the Croatian Peasant Guard, beginning from Zagorje right down the line through Podravina and Slavonia and the entire territory of Croatia, disarmed the disorganized units of the Yugoslav Army and even killed some soldiers. Ban Subasic evidently arranged with Dr. Machek and other Croatian leaders to leave Zagreb, on April 10, 1941. Hurriedly he handed over his office to his "Chef de cabinet", to the trustiest of the trusty, Vladimir Sipus. Only ten minutes later, the same Sipus had an ambush prepared for Ban Subasic at the Sava bridge. By a chance the Ban took another road and thus escaped. Such was the substance of the leading figures in authority over the Banovina.

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

On April 10, 1941, Slavko Kvaternik proclaimed the existence of the Independent State of Croatia. That proclamation was the decree of the death sentence for the Serbian people in Croatia.

The picture in Zagreb had changed externally only inasmuch as German units were to be noticed on the



The well known Serb, Teslich, whose heart the Croat Ustashi extracted through the holes on his chest.

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streets. At Mark's Square, in the "government", except for a few new faces there remained to the last all the district officials who were Croats and all departmental chiefs. The Serbs were ousted very rapidly from all positions and arrested by the police that very day. Along the streets the units of the Croatian Civil Guard were cruising under the command of Chief Commandant Zdravko Kovacevic and Cavalry Commandant Dragutin Belak, persons who were very close to Dr. Macek, leader of the Croatian Peasant Party.

Events ensued with tremendous speed. First the seizure of weapons from the Serbs took place, so that an empty-handed people might be liquidated more easily. A hellish propaganda against the Serbs had spread forth. Dr. Mile Budak contributed the slogan "Serbian dogs — across the Drina!" Dr. Puk, Dr. Zanic and Dr. Gutic popularized the cry, "The highways will yearn for the Serbs but there will be no Serbs." Mass arrests of Serbs began both in Zagreb and in the interior. The police and the magistrates' courts being overcrowded, other public buildings were improvised into jails, as for example schools and armories. The treatment of the prisoners represents the height of cruelty. Already by April (1941) the mass executions of Serbs had begun. In Gudovac, a village in the district of Bjelovar some 200 Serbs, peasants, were killed. Immediately after followed the killings of smaller and larger groups in the village of Stari Petrovac, in the district of Nova Gradiska, in Pozega, in a forest near Sisak, and throughout the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. As fast as the first Ustashi units could be formed, the massacres were begun immediately, so that it was obvious that the designs for slaughter and destruction had been prepared for in advance.

THE WAVE OF BLOODY TERROR

From the first part of May (1941) a bloody terror was intensified with fearful speed over the entire jurisdiction of the Independent State of Croatia.

The first to receive the blow was Banija, the most solid Serbian district of Croatia. Its people were nationally conscious, for they had withstood throughout the centuries all the pressure of the Austrian methods of assimilation, and had affirmed their Serbian political consciousness by furnishing during the war thousands upon thousands of volunteers. They were the first to be led to the slaughter-house.

GLINA. Of the endless number of Serbian settlements in Croatia, Glina was the first to suffer the fearful bestiality of the Ustashi. One night towards the first part of May (1941) the Ustashi besieged Glina. The Ustashi from Karlovci, Sisak and Petrinja gathered all males over 15 years of age, drove them in trucks outside the town and killed them all with guns, knives and sledge hammers. Over 600 fell there. The days which followed held death for the Serbs of the entire district. The center of the massacres was in the village of Bosanski Grabovac. The Ustashi would enter the Serbian villages commanding the Serbian peasants to assemble, under some harmless pretense, that some decrees would be made known to them or something similar. The people, frightened and unarmed, not suspecting any evil, would flock from all sides to the execution place. The bloody tragedy would continue for several days. According to authentic statistics it is computed that about 120,000 Serbs were thus killed there. In a few days Glina was again the center of the massacres, where by force or some pretext the Ustashi gathered together several

thousand Serbs. The jails and school-buildings were overflowing. Every night some 500-600 Serbs were led off to the Serbian Church. In the choir loft were the official representatives of the civil Ustashi authorities. In the Church auditorium the Ustashi executioners would swing into action. Some ten or twenty of them would work with flash lights in one hand and knives in the other. Several nights the butchery lasted with unabated fury according to the horrible testimony of one of the executioners, Hilmija Berberovich, who was found later in Belgrade and who gave sworn testimony. That bloody orgy lasted for months. Not a village was left unscathed. After the massacres looting and burning of entire villages would follow. Not a Serbian Church has been left. No one was given any mercy, not even the women and children. The incident which took place in the village of Susnjari is without precedent in history. After the Ustashi had killed nearly all that lived in the village, they led out some twenty children of about ten years of age and tied them to the threshold of a big barn facing outward. They set the barn on fire. The flames licked their prey voraciously and the wretched children were enveloped in fire. In the morning those unfortunate innocents lay in the ruins, their bodies horribly burned and thus half dead, still they were tortured for hours by the Ustashi who jabbed them with knives until death rescued them from their indescribable tortures. On hearing of these atrocities the remainder of the Serbs fled to Petrova Gora (Peter's Mountain) to save their naked lives.

VRGIN MOST. At the same time or somewhat later there began a bloody baiting of all Serbs in this district in accordance to the same system. In Vrgin Most some 3,000 Serbs were massacred on August 3,

1941. They had gathered there from all the villages about in order to be converted to Roman Catholicism. The authorities had called them together under a pretense. That same day the Ustashi rounded up all the Serbs from Topusko and vicinity, several thousand of them, and during several nights butchered all of them in the Church, just as in Glina. And thus it continued, the butchering of Serbs, both men and women, in the villages, in the fields, on the roadsides, wherever they could be found and captured. A small part of them succeeded in saving themselves by fleeing to Petrova Gora. The villages were looted and then razed.

VOJNIC. On July 29, 1941, there arrived in this district Bozidar Geroovski, chief of the Ustashi police in Zagreb, who with a strong unit of Ustashi police rounded up some 3,000 Serbs from Krnjak, Krstinje, Siroka Reka, Slunj, Rakovica and other villages which were within reach. All were killed in Pavkovich, near a village mill, but by a strange twist of fate there was one survivor who gave a horrible testimony to the atrocities which preceded the butchery. Thereafter the massacre of the inhabitants in all the villages followed.

DVOR NA UNI. From July 30, 1941, the units of the Ustashi traversed this district from village to village and systematically killed off all the Serbs on whom they could lay their hands, looting the homes and burning everything in sight. Those who were not killed escaped into the forests.

KOSTAJNICA. The bloody orgy had already begun on the 20th of April, 1941, in the village of Svinjica. The Ustashi arrested a priest, Babic, tortured him and buried him in an upright position to his waist in the ground. A martyr's death saved him from un-

heard of tortures, but not until several hours later. By the same methods the orgy of madness of the Ustashi laid waste the entire village, slaughtering all those living who were Serbs. Some food which had been saved by the peasants was confiscated from the houses and carried away to Stara Gradiska. There the women and children were left but the men were taken to Zemun where those able to work were shipped off to Germany, while the rest were simply executed. Children were separated from their mothers and sent to a concentration place near Zagreb, obviously to be made over into a new sort of Jannicharies.

PETRINJA. In the district of Petrinja the massacre of the Serbs was executed by the local Ustashi without any outside assistance. By the same usual methods the people were gathered together, from nearby villages and executed, thus forming graveyard after graveyard. Those who did not save themselves by fleeing into the forests were liquidated or shipped off to concentration camps on the pattern of the district of Kostajnica.

KORDUN, SLUNJ, OGULIN, VRBOVSKO. The martyr's death of the priest Branko Dobrosavljevich from Veljun began a long list of bloody sacrifices. The Ustashi, who had come from Bosnia, Ogulin and the local men from Cetinj Grad first killed the son of the priest, Dobrosavljevich, in his presence. The wretched father then had to read the obituary for his own son, after which the Ustashi tortured him horribly and finally killed him also. Thereafter mass executions of the Serbs in several places were begun, in the Serbian churches in Kladusa, in Veljun, Slusnica, Primislje and other places. Looting, burning and violent destruction followed.

KARLOVCI. Among the first to be killed here was the lawyer, Dr. Milan Vujcich, a well known adherent of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition. Both he and Captain Janjanin were killed by the Ustashi just outside of town.

SISAK. Here in the most bestial manner was killed the manufacturer Milos Teslich, who was literally cut to pieces. The Ustashi gloated over his body even photographing themselves with their dead victim.

DISTRICT OF OGULIN. Here the bloody terror was led by the Prefect of Police, Jurica Markovich, himself. With a picked band of Ustashi, whose ranks were filled by the students of the gymnasium of Ogulin, he displayed incredible cruelty. The jail in Ogulin, known as the "Tower", was constantly overflowing with Serbs whom the Ustashi were torturing and executing. It was the same in the villages of Plaski, Gomirje and other places. Thanks to the fact that that district was occupied by the Italian Army, the atrocities ceased and the number of victims was smaller.

VRBOVSKO. In this district the village of Srpske Moravice was ruined. From here several hundred Serbs, headed by Prota (Arch-priest) Vladimir Duich, were taken away. Most of them were executed while the rest met their end in the concentration camps after torture and much suffering.

GOSPIC. Lika, the center of Serbian political, cultural and industrial life was the first offered up as a sacrifice of blood. All the Serbs, except two or three, had already been led off in the month of May (1941) and after being executed were thrown into a pit. Among them was the lawyer, Dr. Bogdan Brujich, one of the defenders of the Ustashi in the year 1932.



Croat Ustashi gathered around the corpse of the Serbian martyr, Teslich.

41 | Ягобно

GRACAC. Documentary evidence of one of the most cruel of all crimes was found in this town. Besides the mass executions of the Serbs, there, as in other parts, the Ustashi committed unheard of crimes. Thus a physician, Dr. Torbica, was cut to pieces while still alive. The Ustashi poured salt into his wounds pretending that they were performing an "operation". In their Ustashi headquarters they held hundreds of Serbs, women and children in prison, torturing them fearfully. They gave the women some food which made them suspicious. At first they were given cooked entrails, but later they were offered cooked meat and by the bones they could tell that they were eating the flesh of their own children. After being tortured both the living and the dead were thrown into a pit known as "Tucica." After a few days some Italian soldiers rescued one of the victims still living from this pit. He was lying there tied to a heap of corpses. Because of his great pain, he had chewed up his sleeves while both his arms and legs were broken. It is a singular wonder how he kept alive and was saved.

OTOCAC, KORENICA, UDBINA, DONJI LAPAC. These towns, as well as other remaining places, all give a sad picture. Persons who were not killed are barely living in the forests and wasting away from hunger and other misfortunes.

NORTHERN DALMATIA. There too, was felt the heavy hand of the Ustashi. The Italian occupation, however, diminished the tortures of the Serbian people.

BOSANSKA KRAJINA. A long series of fearful crimes forms a prelude to the cruel murder of Bishop Platon and Prota (Arch-priest) Subotich. After bestial tortures such as the pulling of beards and the building of

fires on their chests, they were murdered and thrown into the Vrbas river which later on washed up their mutilated corpses. In Banja Luka the "Stozernik" (Ustashi official) Dr. Victor Gutic, harassed the town-folks fearfully. He has certainly distinguished himself as being one of the most bloodthirsty of all Ustashi, second to none but Eugen Kvaternik. Publicly at gatherings he would order the butchering of the Serbs and would post rewards for all Serbian decapitated heads brought in. Mass murders, deportations to camps, plunder, arson, extortion, rape and all possible crimes and atrocities mark the activities of Gutic in Banja Luka and in all Bosanska Krajina.

Thus, Prijedor, Prnjavor and Bosanski Petrovac, all felt the systematic extermination of the Serbs. A rank higher, if it is at all possible even to speak of graduations in the martyrdom of the Serbs, stand the nearly completely laid waste towns of Bosanska Krupa, Novi, Cazin, Mrkonjic Grad and Sanski Most. Dr. Gutic gave full meaning to his slogan "The highways shall yearn for the Serbs." That a Serbian village or settlement still remained here and there is difficult to believe. Some inhabitants escaped to Serbia and others fled to the forests. Last spring, after the "purge" of Kozara all the Serbs were taken away, men and women, young and old, whoever was found at home, to share the fate of their fellow victims of the district of Kostajnica, on their path of martyrdom. The same fate befell the districts of Bosanska Gradiska and vicinity.

DISTRICT OF BELOVAR. With the massacre of the Serbs at Gudovac, in the district of Belovar, a series of bestial atrocities by the Ustashi reign of terror fell in its wild fury on the counties of Grubisno Polje, Gar-

esnica and other Serbian parts. The extermination of Serbs was executed according to well laid plans and systematic methods. A tribute in blood was paid by the lives of tens of thousands of defenseless Serbs in the region of Podravina.

PROVINCE OF SLAVONIJA

VIROVITICA is the center of the settlements of the 1 World War volunteers, which stretch across that district eastward through the counties of Slatina, Nasice, Miholjac, Valpovac, and Osijek. Peaceful, law-abiding farmers from all parts of Lika, Banija, Kordun, Bosnia and Hercegovina, had *founded their settlements, which by their farm productivity had* distinguished the Serbs of Slavonia, as a result of their hard labor. Those good people shared the fate of their brethren. Dr. Ivan Pernar, the peoples representative of the Croatian Peasant Party, declared at a public gathering in Valpovi, in September of 1939, that all the volunteers should be driven across the Drina river. And indeed, all the volunteers settled in Slavonia were really carried off by a wave of violence, most of them being massacred. Nor did the natives fare much better. There were mass murders in this district and more shipping away to camps. In the county of Slatina the mass murder of the entire village of Kometnik occurred on January 12, 1942, along with that of many other known and unknown victims. The county of Daruvar is likewise represented by large numbers in the concentration camps.

THE DISTRICTS OF PAKRAC, NOVSKA, JASENOVAC, OKUCANI, NOVA GRADISKA, BROD, SLAVONSKA POZEGA suffered great losses even in 1941. At first all the more distinguished indi-

viduals and intellectuals in the towns and villages were arrested and shipped off to labor camps. Later, it will be noted what became of them. In order to save their own lives the people fled to the forests. Naturally that led to reprisals. In the spring "purging" activities were begun. Many were executed and are being executed in the most cruel of liquidations of Serbs in central Slavonia. The notorious "Black Legion" of Colonel Francetic swooped from village to village killing on the spot some men, women, and children while others were shipped off to concentration camps, according to the example set in Kostajnica. Thus the county of Pakrac was literally wiped out. There exists no longer a single Serbian village or even a house. All were razed by fire. The younger generation is in the forests. Such was the fate of the other counties herein mentioned, in which lived a compact mass of about 200,000 Serbs. At this moment Francetic's "Black Legion" is operating in the county of Pozega, in a wild orgy of murder, ravage and destruction. In the village of Slobostina they threw all Serbs that lived there into contaminated wells. Thus the Serbs are disappearing in Slavonia. The erstwhile progressive and productive towns, villages and hamlets are becoming devastated ruins and graveyards.

IN THE DISTRICTS OF BROD AND DJAKOVAC the Serbs are in great minority and are scattered throughout all the villages. All of them suffered.

Especially did the city of Brod suffer, because all the Serbs who were an important, cultural or influential factor there, were either driven into camps or deported. In the district of Nasice all volunteers' settlements were liquidated in cold blood, as were the settlements in the districts of Osijek and Vukovar. Over a thousand Serbs



The son of the Serbian martyr, Teslich, massacred by the Ustashi.

41 Ягобно

from Osjek and vicinity were interned in the barracks and in the Sokol building. There they suffered indescribable torture and bestiality, many of them being murdered and the remainder taken away to a camp. Many Serbs of Vukovar were likewise horribly slaughtered and the rest shipped off to camps. The Serbs of Vinkovci also shared their fate. Those who remained here and there in some of the villages will most likely be wiped out, for Francetic's "Black Legion" is systematically doing away with all Serbs from west to east. They are now in the district of Pozega.

HERCEGOVINA. The Ustashi terror began in Mostar. The Ustashi, the majority of them local Mohammedans, are arresting, looting and *shipping* off Serbs or killing them and throwing their bodies into the Nevetva river. The students of the Gymnasium have especially distinguished themselves in these brutal activities. The Ustashi are traversing from village to village killing all in their path. They are throwing Serbs alive into chasms and are burning whole families locked in their homes. There have been several hundred of these living torches. The same is true in the districts of Ljubinje, Stolac, Trebinje and Foca. Those who were not killed were transported to camps. A certain small number of them saved themselves by fleeing to the woods.

CENTRAL BOSNIA. Outside of Zagreb the strongest Ustashi hotbed is Sarajevo. Their spiritual leaders are Archbishop Saric and the priest of Sarajevo, Brale. From there is spread terror throughout Bosnia. Arrests, massacres, looting, and deportations to camps are the order of the day. Violent waves of this savage and unprecedented terror are sweeping over all

districts: Derventa, Brcko, Jajce, Tuzla, Travnik, Bjelina, Kladanj, and so on down the line. There is one example of extraordinary savagery in Kladanj. There, over a hundred Serbs were interned by the Ustashi in a small jail. Because of the heat, men dropped unconscious. They were there several days without food or water. What followed in the way of human misery, cruelty and bestiality cannot be described in this report publicly.

In Tuzla the Ustashi drove nails into a huge barrel, threw certain Serbian prisoners into it and rolled it around while blood gushed out in streams.

EASTERN BOSNIA. In all of these districts the activities of the Ustashi were none the less intensive. The same methods were systematically employed as in other places. Only did the forest activities of last year (1942) abate the course of destruction. The Serbs were somewhat relieved but not for long. Punitive expeditions purged those districts to their limits and those who did not save themselves by fleeing to the forests fell under the knife. A smaller number saved themselves by fleeing into Serbia.

SREM. In Srem the terror began last year but in smaller proportions, for the Croats represent a minority in Srem. The people there held themselves relatively quiet until these days. Following the forest activities in Frushka Gora a savage wave of terror swept over Srem. This time it took on a new aspect—an itinerant martial court, an automatic machine for the declaration of death sentences. By summary sentences, between 40 and 50 Serbs were executed daily. It is noteworthy that the condemned were all young men under 30 years of age. Nor were forgotten the old

stand-by methods of mass arrests, deportations and slaughterings, and afterward widespread looting and the razing of villages.

DEPORTATIONS

On the fifth of June, 1941, there was held in Zagreb a conference of German and Croatian authorities. There it was decided that a certain number of Slovenes, especially priests, must be migrated from Slovenia into Croatia and 65,000 Serbs from Croatia into Serbia. For the carrying out of those plans there was formed a special office for "State Management of Rehabilitation" with the duty of executing the "transferring" of Serbs and making a disposition of their property. In other words, a mere organization for looting. A plan was devised whereby the deportation would be executed and a list was drawn up. It was made up chiefly of city-dwellers and the more influential and wealthier peasants, so that the looting would be all the more profitable.

On the nights of July 4-5, 1941, Ustashi patrols made the rounds of the Serbian homes in Zagreb. It was decreed that all families had to prepare to leave within a period of ten minutes. It was especially emphasized that they take along their money and precious articles of value. Those families were transported by trucks to Zagreb Town Hall. There all of their precious articles and money were taken away from them with the exception of 500 dinars per person. In the course of the first night there were about 200 families thus rounded up. Their houses were padlocked but only after being looted by the Ustashi. Only the bare wooden walls remained. All of the loot was later sold at auction

and the proceeds pocketed by the Ustashi. The first party to be deported had the fortune of being taken directly by train across Bosnia and transported to Serbia. The following night a new party was rounded up from the houses and so it went until all of Zagreb was purged of Serbs. Only now it went much harder with the deportees. Instead of being sent directly to Serbia, some of the parties were sent to a concentration camp in Caprag. There they usually waited two or three weeks for trucks to carry them to Serbia. Their treatment was exceedingly cruel—aimless forced labor, bad food, and bad sleeping quarters, though fortunately there were no killings. In that camp which operated until late in 1942, Serbs, especially priests, were brought from many parts of the Independent Croatian State. From the remaining parts of the Independent State of Croatia the deportees were gathered together in the concentration camp of Slav. Pozega. There were abandoned army sheds there which served their purpose to good advantage. Their treatment was much more brutal—forced labor, worse food, and maltreatment every day. In one night all of the deportees, 490 of them, from Dobo, were executed in the nearby woods. That action represents the acme of sadism and resulted in fearful looting. It should be known that before April 6, 1941, there were in Zagreb about 15,000 Serbs. Of these 1,000 were independent merchants and the remainder public and private employees, and professional men, representing the middle class. These forced deportations caused property, both real and personal, vast estates and valuables to fall into the hands of the Ustashi. In these were included stores valued at more than ten million dollars. If all could be computed the grand total value



Corpses of massacred Serbs in the village of Gudovac, near Belovar, in April, 1941.

41 Ягобно

would be fabulous, counting the City of Zagreb only. But there were many other cities, towns and villages similarly looted, robbed and pillaged. As far as cash money is concerned not much was gained. For the greater part, Serbian property was kept by the plunderers, but much of it was sold for a trifle, and the rest presented as gifts to certain Ustashi who had distinguished themselves. A great portion of the loot was swallowed up by specially appointed Receivers, (Commissioners) who took charge for liquidation purposes, of enterprises belonging to the Serbs.

THE CAMPS

The concentration camps of Croatia represent places of torture such as the world has never seen. Human imagination cannot conceive such atrocities, yet in their discovery of newer and more horrible tortures the Ustashi have demonstrated a singular inventive genius. Of those crimes thick volumes of documentary evidence will be published in due time after the war.

The first concentration camp was organized as early as April 1941 in Kerestinac, on the estate of the ex-governor Mihalovic, who himself was arrested by the Zagreb police. In the administrative buildings were interned Jews, Communists and Serbs, each group separately. The regime of the camp was in the hands of the police and therefore bearable, since the police had not yet versed itself in the newer methods of sadistic torture. That camp was discontinued in July. A far greater camp was created at Koprivnica, on the premises formerly used by the factory "Danica." It consisted of a group of old, deteriorated buildings and shacks. The regime was under the Ustashi and thus terribly strict

and cruel. The numbers in the camp fluctuated usually from 6,000 to 10,000. Daily some groups were shipped off to Gaspic, while others would arrive, so that it may be said that more than some 30,000 Serbs passed through Koprivnica. There were also a few Croats, Communists and Jews interned there. The treatment of prisoners was cruel, and some were even murdered. Especially maltreated were the Serbian priests. The Ustashi tore out the beards of venerable older priests and with pleasure knocked out their teeth with gun-butts and forced them, though they were exhausted from torture, to perform the heaviest physical and otherwise aimless tasks. The food was bad before high heaven, prisoners had to sleep on the bare ground, and sanitary conditions were revolting. Packages of food would arrive from prisoners' relatives but the Ustashi would plunder them. Those who succeeded in obtaining some funds secretly, were able to buy now and then a bit of bread. The imprisoned Serbs were mostly intellectuals gathered together from over all of Croatia, citizens, merchants, artisans, various government employees and villagers, qualitatively of the best Serbian element. During the month of June, 1941, began the transportation of these prisoners to Gaspic in closed freight cars packed so full that the wretched occupants suffered unbearable suffocation, sultriness and thirst. In Gaspic those groups were assembled within the precincts of the county jail and penitentiary. These freight-loads arrived not only from Koprivnica but from other parts as well. Daily, from the middle of June to August 20, 1941, there would arrive some 1,000 arrested men and women. The conditions in these jails are indescribable. Crowded to capacity and more were the rooms, the courtyards and the corridors. The food was bad and there was

only one well for the supply of water to all those thousands. Day and night the Ustashi mercilessly beat, tortured and killed. There was no help from any quarter.

Every morning there were funeral processions. Two by two, their hands tied to one another by wires, and pairs bound by chains, the prisoners would form a mournful line of some 500 men. Guarded by the Ustashi, bludgeoned and beaten, these wretched Serbs walked for the last time in their lives. They went to Jadovno, which is a small glade at the foot of the Velebit Mountain, some 16 kilometers distant from Gospic and at a height of about 1400 meters. There a camp was made in its most primitive form, but with no buildings or barracks of any kind. The driven Serbs were enclosed in an area well fenced by barbed wiring. In order to afford some protection for their heads, the prisoners improvised shacks with branch roofs. They suffered from hunger, as well as from cold, for the nights at that altitude were unusually chilly and the men were poorly clothed and without bedding. They were maltreated, given wretched food, and forced to perform the most strenuous tasks. Thus tormented physically and spiritually, the prisoners were regularly and mercilessly killed off daily by the Ustashi. There was a huge cliff formation there, characteristic of those mountains, the depth of which has never been measured by anyone, and on the top of which was a crater a meter and a half in diameter. To the edge of that crater the Ustashi would bring the bound Serbs, pair by pair, and murder one of the pair either with a gun, a knife or a sledge hammer. He would fall into the crater, dragging along with him his live companion. And thus it continued with horrible precision every single day, with the regularity of an assembly line in a factory.

How many Serbs found their grave in that endless chasm? When it is known that some 500, and later twice that number daily went from Gaspic to Jadovno and that this exodus lasted for several months, then it is not so difficult to compute the incredible fatal number of innocent victims. Of over 30,000 prisoners so processed through this inquisition, unfortunately not one living witness survived. Only through indirect ways and from the Ustashi it may be learned how many Serbs were thus liquidated.

On August 20, 1941, that camp was hastily evacuated and abandoned because of the Italian occupation. All those that survived in Gaspic were again crammed into closed freight-cars and transported to Jastrebarsko. On the way there many of them died from weakness and suffocation. From Jastrebarsko the men were shipped to the camp in Jasenovac, while the women were sent to Kruscica, near Travnik in Bosnia. Those few days in Jastrebarsko were but another horrible station for those martyrs on their road to Calvary, for new tortures and sufferings were awaiting them at this place.

JASENOVAC. This was one of the most horrible places of tortures and executions. In Jasenovac arrived the remainder from the camps of Gaspic and Koprivnica, while daily newer and newer groups arrived from all parts of the country. At first the camps were established in three different places. One of them was in Jasenovac itself, in the brick factory of Ozren Bacich, the second, was to the left of the highway leading to Novska, and the third was in the village of Krapje, five kilometers away. The commander of all of these camps was an Ustashi officer, Lubaric, and the commander of the camp at Jasenovac was one Ljubo Milos, an Ustashi lieutenant, a native of Hercegovina. The Ustashi,

Croats and Moslems, were from Hercegovina, though some came from the vicinity of Osijek. That which was seen and endured there by those rare fortunates who succeeded in saving themselves goes beyond any fantasy or imagination. The prisoners worked at horribly strenuous tasks at the hydro-electric plants, working at top speed beyond their strength from early dawn to late in the night. The food consisted of a boiled potato from time to time or watery gruel. Beatings, clubbings and tortures continued while death haunted every step. The Ustashi killed off the Serbs both in groups and individually day and night, using all possible means of murder and torture. Machine guns, rifles, revolvers, knives, axes, hammers, all were used to destroy Serbian lives. In order to save on ammunition the Ustashi would drag certain groups of Serbs to the fiery furnaces of the brick factory. There they would stun each man, one by one, with a hammer and throw him alive into the roaring furnace. The first of the group would be shoved into the furnace from behind by his fellow sufferers, so that they could be thrown in instantly, and thus quickly meet their end. Others again were butchered along the beaches of the Sava river and thrown into the water. The most cruel and the most bloodthirsty of them was one Ljubo Milos. He himself has killed at least three thousand Serbs. He slaughtered his victims with a knife and later licked their blood, jesting and crying out: "How sweet is the Serbian blood." At the arrival of the various groups this Milos would ask each person about his occupation. As soon as he ascertained that one was an intellectual or a city dweller he would immediately murder him on the spot. Usually the majority of the new prisoners would be killed at once on coming to

the camp. There was a gang of grave diggers formed from tramps who spent the whole day only in collecting corpses and burying them naked, for they would strip them of their clothes and store them in a warehouse. With Autumn came the cold and the floods. Since the area was beneath water level, the people were forced to sleep right in the water. Now they suffered even more because of the cold. New batches of prisoners arrived in unrelentless tempo. One group from Pakrac came on the Catholic Christmas Eve, about 100 of them, who had been beaten and tortured before their arrival here. At that time a certain Ustashi "begged" Milos to "give" him a Serb for a Christmas present. Milos allowed him with great magnanimity to take his pick. To the lot of that Ustashi, whose name was Matkovich, fell a certain Joca Divjak, the owner of a restaurant in Lipik. Matkovich recalled that Divjak once, when his restaurant was crowded, could not offer him a seat. Therefore, Joca Divjak was chosen by Matkovich to be the bloody sacrifice. At midnight, two of the Ustashi felled the unfortunate victim to the ground. One sat on his head, tore open his coat and shirt and began slowly to pare him with a knife in the chest. After half an hour Matkovich tore the living heart out of Divjak. The others were forced to watch all this and even laugh while the wretched Divjak endured such indescribable tortures. He who turned away his head from this horrible scene was immediately killed on the spot.

There was another horrible means of torture called "Zica" (wire). It dealt with the barbed wire fenced area of some ten square meters. At a height of a little more than a meter the wires were thickly woven on top like a bird cage. Beneath, water was ankle deep. Therein were placed those who had committed some



Part of the prison camp by Jernvannet, Norway, barbed wired, where many Serbs were shot to death.

41 Ягобно

breach of discipline. For whole nights those wretches had to squat in the water in that terrible cold while by day they were forced to work. Dr. Oton Gavranich, Sokol leader from Zagreb, endured about nine nights of this torture and finally died from exhaustion. Many others shared his fate, especially Serbian army officers, who had been released from captivity by Germans to return to Croatia.

The news of these bestial acts was heard abroad. In the month of February, 1942, the rumor was spread that a certain international committee would come to Jasenovac. The authorities of this camp began to get busy to "clean up" the camp. There were a sort of barracks there which served as a hospital, though without any doctors or medical equipment for patients whatsoever. All of the patients were killed. There was a new dispensary built according to regulations with all equipment and clean beds. Other barracks were fitted out as a mess hall supplied with all the requirements. The remaining barracks were put into order in such a way that the camp assumed an exterior likeness of some home. The inmates received some imaginary numbers and orderly clothes, as well as better food, for the sake of appearance, before the commission which was expected to arrive. In addition they placed beds in the infirmary and put in them healthy men to play the part of recuperating patients. The commission finally came and went satisfied with conditions. After that everything reverted immediately to the same old order.

There is no way to ascertain exact figures of the atrocities for not one of the survivors could obtain a full view of the acts and the number of men who came there, never to leave again. It is estimated by conservative calculations that nearly 40,000 Serbs found

their death in Jasenovac. Jasenovac exists even today. New groups still arrive and the wheel of horrible fate grinds relentlessly for the Serbs. In this vicinity is also the camp St. Gradiska. Here are placed in the main the wives of men in the districts of Kostajnica and others which had been purged the Spring before. The men were shipped via Zemun to work in Germany, while the old and helpless were simply killed off in Zemun. Several thousand Serbian women are actually wasting away from hunger and lack of sanitation in St. Gradiska and still more and more transports of victims arrive here steadily.

WHO ARE THE USTASHI?

Certain circles claim that all these atrocities in Croatia are the work of a small number of Ustashi. This claim is not correct. It is true that Quisling Pavelich brought with him from Italy only about one hundred Ustashi. The others were organized in Croatia itself. In the cities they consisted first of all of students of the Gymnasium and schools of higher learning, youths of good civic training; then men of the merchant and artisan classes, all good and peaceful former members of the "Hrvatski Junak" (Croat Hero). The leader of that organization was one Majer, people's representative of the Croatian Peasant Party for the city of Zagreb. When the Croatian newspapers are read from the time of the origin of the Independent State of Croatia to the present day, we find there thousands of names of various Ustashi "functionaries" who have arisen from all classes of the people, beginning with peasant to the university professor. In the same way it can be authentically substantiated that in the entire Stokavska territory of the Independent State of Croatia, representatives of

all of the classes of the people took part in the massacring and persecuting of the Serbs. The picture is somewhat more consoling in certain parts of Slavonia, in Upper Croatia, and the Zagorje (Hinterland) district, where Serbian settlements border. Especially blood-thirsty were the Croats in Lika, Kordun, Banija and Bosanska Krajina, and with them the Mohammedans. It is known exactly what went on in each district.

Many former Yugoslavs, distinguished and well known public workers and artists, joined with the Ustashi. We shall mention only Mestrovic, creator of the Kosovo Memorial, then Dr. Vinko Kriskovic, Croatian leader in science, then Dr. Milorad Straznicki, Yugoslav Minister to Stockholm, who automatically connected himself with the Ustashi Independent State of Croatia. One should only read the Croatian newspapers to see how many of those Croats had camouflaged themselves under the cloak of various Yugoslav activities.

The first to desert to the other side was Dr. Tot, director of the Board of Foreign Trade in Belgrade. He was followed by Dr. Tortich, the people's representative of the Croatian Peasant Party, as well as by all the people's representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party from Srem, Dr. Hefer from Osjek, Dr. Brekovich of Split and many others.

THE BLOODY HANDS OF THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD IN CROATIA

The Catholic priesthood in Croatia, Hercegovina, and Dalmatia carried out an intensive propaganda campaign for the Ustashi government. For years so-called Eucharistic congresses were convoked, which were re-

ligious manifestations only superficially, but in fact were for extremist political purposes.

It was obvious that after the disaster a great portion of the Croatian youths in the intermediate and high schools participated most actively in the bloody terror perpetrated by the Ustashi against the Serbs. They were the so-called "Croatian Heros", members of an organization which was founded and led by the Catholic priesthood.

After the fall the Catholic priesthood was in closest collaboration with the Ustashi in the massacring of the Serbs, and it cannot be said that it was the doings of individuals limited in scope and time. On the contrary, by the number of priests in the towns where the atrocities were committed it may be plainly observed that those priests led that bloody orgy according to an earlier planned system, methodically and with precision.

JUST A FEW EXAMPLES:

SARAJEVO. Dr. Ivan Saric, the most illustrious archbishop of Vrh-Bosanski, a fanatical Serbophobe of old, began immediately after the fall and the commencement of the anti-Serbian terror to write poems of praise in honor of Quisling Pavelich, lauding his destructive work against the Serbs. The Croatian newspapers of that time were full of his poems of praise. Still stronger was his influence over the direct acts against the Serbs in Bosnia. His right hand man was the priest of Sarajevo, Brale, who was a former Ustashi functionary, personally and openly led that action.

LIVNO. Dr. Srecko Peric, a monk of Livno, former Catholic priest of Nis, preached from the altar that all the Serbs should be slaughtered,—his sister first

because she had married a Serb! After the slaughter he promised to absolve the murderers of their deeds, for murder is not a sin if carried out in the interest of the Catholic Church. And really, the District of Livno suffered horribly. Several thousand Serbs, men, women and children were tortured and murdered in the most cruel and beastly manner.

OGULIN. Ivan Mikan, priest and honorary canon of Ogulin, led the terror together with Jurica Markovic, district governor. In the jail of the district court of Ogulin were hundreds of Serbs. The priest Mikan made daily rounds of the prison and mercilessly beat Serbs with a bull-whip, scolding the Ustashi for being lax in their work. He ordered that the Serbian monastery of Gomirje be looted to the bare walls, an order which the Ustashi conscientiously fulfilled. The brethren of the Gomirje monastery were taken to a camp at his command and there executed.

BRCKO. Fra Anto, priest of Tramosnjica, organized Ustashi bands in his village and marched with them through nearby Serbian villages, capturing Serbs wherever he could get them. He led them off to his village, locked them up in a shed and held them there for days without food or water, torturing them bestially himself with the help of his Ustashi.

KNIN. Simic Vjekoslav, a monk in the monastery on the Knin plain, personally slaughtered numerous Serbs.

NASICE. Sidonije Solc, a monk of the Franciscan monastery in Nasice was engaged in a terror of forceful conversion of the Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism. Whole Serbian villages were deported at his command

just because they did not wish to change their religious faith.

KOSTAJNICA. The abbot of the Catholic monastery stood on the town bridge while the Ustashi were butchering the Serbs and throwing them into the Una river, inciting them to kill all of the Serbs.

SLAVONSKI BROD. The Catholic priests Guncovic and Marjanovich Dragutin, acted as police officials and ordered the arrest of local Serbs who were tortured and killed. They personally assisted in the executions of these unfortunate Serbs.

GLINA. German Castimir, abbot of the monastery in Guntic directed the mass murder of the Serbs in this town. It was at his instance that for several nights Serbs were slaughtered in the Orthodox Church of Glina.

The number of Catholic priests who participated in this brutal extermination of Serbs cannot be even approximated at this time, but their number is large. There are some, however, that should be mentioned. Eugen Pujic, Catholic priest of Hercegovina, personally cut the throat of an Orthodox priest, his colleague in the village, with a large knife. Among others are: the Catholic chaplain in Petrinja; the priest from Donja Dolina, district of Bosanka Gradiska; the priest from Divuse, district of Dvor; Ante Djuricic, a friar from Karlovac; a missionary friar from Okucani; the priest Astalos from Dalj, district of Osjek; the priest Ljeskovic from Prijedor; the priest Niksic from Slunj; the priest Mogus Mate from Udbina; the friar from Visoko; the priest from Vrbovsko; a priest Dr. Violini of Brcko; catechist Zubic of Vukovar; the priest Orlic

41 | Ягобно



MAP OF YUGOSLAVIA

(as of April 1941)

- Main places of German atrocities
- + Places that have been completely destroyed
- Places of massacre of the Serbs by Croatian Ustashi
- ▲ Places of Hungarian atrocities
- × Places of Bulgarian atrocities
- Places of Italian and Albanian atrocities

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SEA

Monopoli



41 Ягобно

of Sunja; the priest of Ricica; the friars from the monastery of Sinj; the priest of Lovinca; the priest of Gornji Bogicevac; and the priest Matica Franjo from Nova Gradiska; all of these, along with many others, distinguished themselves by their encouraging and inciting the massacring and persecution of Serbs and their forcible conversion to Catholicism. In such a way they succeeded in killing 135 Serbian Orthodox priests, of whom 85 were of the Gornji-Carlovac Diocese, not to mention the other victims. It was on their initiative that nearly all of the Serbian churches in Croatia were desecrated, looted and razed. It is obvious that the Croatian Catholic priesthood, as representatives of the "ecclesia militans", adopting Machiavellian principles, carried out their duty, longed for and awaited, with great zeal. Archbishop Stepinec of Zagreb and the other bishops of Croatia signified their approval of this unchristian and wild orgy of blood, for at no time did they raise their voices of objection to such conduct of their clergy, nor did they by any act or move attempt to exhibit their displeasure, at least, of these crimes. Their ominous silence is but proof of their condonation.

THE CATHOLICIZING OF SERBIAN ORTHODOX PEOPLE

With the first wave of terror the Ustashi and the authorities began to force the Serbs to accept the Catholic faith. In this the Catholic priests especially distinguished themselves on all sides. The terrorized Serbs gave in here and there in the belief that in that way they would save their lives. But there was no thought of this. The only aim was to humble the Serbian people. It was for this reason that public parades were held on the occasion of conversions. The people were forced to display a certain joy over their

"Return to the faith of their fathers". There were arranged delegations as a sign of gratitude and loyalty to Quisling Pavelich in Zagreb. Pavelich kissed one of the leaders of such a delegation. Meanwhile, subsequent events showed a truer picture of that infamy. It was of no benefit to any village whose inhabitants became converted, for soon after there was no distinction made between those who were converted and those who were not, when mass murders began. Sarcastic remarks of Ustashi were heard at that time such as "the wolf changes his skin, but never his nature."

THE BLUFF OF THE CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

On the Orthodox Easter, 1942, there was held a solemn liturgy in the Serbian Orthodox Church of Zagreb, in observance of this Serbian Orthodox Church's recognition of becoming Croatian Orthodox. Quisling Pavelich received a delegation of representatives of that Church and issued a statement so that the naive men believed that the persecution of the Serbs would cease. There was even decreed a constitution of the Croatian Orthodox Church, bishops were appointed and the new patriarch Hermogen was ceremoniously enthroned. Pavelich presented him with a tiara. His representative made a speech in the church on the text of the motto "A brother is dear, no matter what his faith". That was last spring. Subsequent events clearly demonstrate that all this was done for the benefit of the world at large and without the slightest intention that the remainder of the Serbs in Croatia be saved, even under the trademark of Orthodox Croats.

Meanwhile, nearly all of the Serbian Orthodox churches in Croatia were torn down and the monas-

teries were looted. After much difficult work some relics were successfully saved and transferred to Belgrade. Precious historical objects, documents centuries old, archives, sacred vessels, vestments, church books, all were looted and scattered about. The great majority of Serbian priests were bestially tortured and killed. Among them, Bishop Platon, Metropolitan Petar of Sarajevo and Bishop Sava of Plaski also met their deaths at Jadovno, as well as a large number of other priests and clergy.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE SERBS IN THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

The Croatians have succeeded within the last seventeen months in radically changing the situation of the Serbs in Croatia. Those who were saved are scattered in hiding in the forests and swamps. Perhaps there exist remnants here and there in Hercegovina and Bosnia, or in a village in Lika, which as yet has remained intact. In Serbia proper there are about 25,000 Serbs who saved themselves by fleeing the Independent State of Croatia.

How many Serbs have been killed?

We hesitate to mention the number. It is better to interpose the question: How many Serbs yet remain alive? It is known by the statistics of the year 1931, that under the present jurisdiction of the Independent State of Croatia there were 2,600,000 Serbs. Over a period of ten years that number must have normally risen to 3,000,000. How many have remained, or better to say, how many will remain, is dependent on the speedy tempo of events to come. Such a tragedy as the present, so profound and so gigan-

tic is not to be remembered in the history of the world. It will take another century of peaceful living to enable the Serbian people to return to their numerical status as of April 6, 1941.

Belgrade, September 8, 1942

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The prison camp near Jernvannet after the Serbs had been sent to Beisfjord, Norway where they were shot.

41 Ягобно

XIV

SERBS NOT ALONE IN SUFFERING

IN YUGOSLAVIA, THE SLOVENIANS AND THE JEWS SUFFER ALIKE

The northwestern part of Yugoslavia is inhabited by Slovenians, a component part of the Yugoslav nation. They speak a language akin to, but grammatically slightly different from Serbian. In itself Slovenia represented the progressive industrial life of Yugoslavia, and its natural resources as well as its charming beauty have long been coveted by both foes, the Italians and the Germans. And as soon as the first impact of the enemy's force echoed in the valleys of these Julian Alps, the invaders began the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, and Slovenia was the first part to be divided up by them.

To accomplish their aim, both the Germans and the Italians resorted to ruthless methods. Religious persecutions, massacres, and wholesale arrests and internments were but samples of attempts to Italianize Slovenia. The invaders exiled over 300,000 Slovenians to other parts of Yugoslavia. Thus, in a rather brief time this once flourishing land became a vast region of devastation and death.

The Jews of Yugoslavia are also suffering. The Serbian people at no time experienced any opposition from the Jews in the national development of Yugoslavia and glowing examples of devotion to the government's cause by Jews have been recorded many

times. On occasions of national distress they have always, unfalteringly, given their valiant support to the Serbs.

The Serbian Orthodox Church and its people go on record acknowledging the common fate and suffering of the Slovenes and the Jews and their efforts and sacrifices in the present struggle for liberation.

41 | Ягобно

APPENDIX

41 Ягобно

41 Ягобно

XV

THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF WAR ON LAND IVth. HAGUE CONVENTION

(Official English Text)

(1908 Command Paper. 4175. Vol. CXXIV. P. 769)

MILITARY AUTHORITY IN THE TERRITORY OF A HOSTILE STATE

Article 43

The authority of the power of the State having passed de facto into the hands of the occupant, the latter shall do all in his power to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety respecting at the same time, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country.

Article 45

It is forbidden to force the inhabitants of occupied territory to swear allegiance to the hostile power.

Article 46

Family honor and right, individual life and private property, as well as religious convictions and worship must be respected.

Private property may not be confiscated.

Article 47

Pillage is expressly forbidden.

Article 48

If, in territory occupied, the occupant collects the taxes, dues and tolls payable to the State, he shall

do so as far as possible in accordance with the legal basis and assessment in force at the time, and shall in consequence be bound to defray the expenses of the administration of the occupied territory to the same extent as a National Government had been so bound.

Article 49

If, in addition to the taxes mentioned in the above Article, the occupant levies other money contributions in the occupied territory, they shall only be applied to the needs of the army or of the administration of the territory in question.

Article 50

No collective penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, shall be inflicted upon the population on account of the acts of individuals, for which it cannot be regarded as collectively responsible.

Article 52

Requisitions in kind and service shall not be demanded from local authorities or inhabitants except for the needs of the army of occupation. They shall be in proportion to the resources of the country, and of such a nature as not to involve the inhabitants in the obligation of taking part in military operations against their own country.

Article 55

The occupying State shall be regarded as administrator and usufructuary of public buildings, landed property, forests and agricultural undertakings belonging to the hostile State, and situated in the occupied country. It must safeguard the capital of such properties and administer them in accordance with the rules of usufruct.

Article 56

The property of local authorities, as well as that of institutions dedicated to public worship, charity, education, science and art, even when State property shall be treated as private property.

Any seizure or destruction of, or willful damage to, institutions of this character, art museums, on works of science and art, is forbidden and should be made the subject of legal proceedings.

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THE MEMORANDUM

DELIVERED TO THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
OF GERMAN OCCUPATION FORCES IN SERBIA.

In Behalf of
THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

By
HIS EMINENCE BISHOP VALERIAN
Vicar to His Holiness
SERBIAN PATRIARCH GAVRILO

41) Ягобно

EXPLANATION

The organized murders, massacres and unbelievable atrocities committed by the Croatian Ustashi upon the Serbian people of Orthodox Faith within the territory of the Croatian Independent State, have caused Bishop Valerian, Vicar of His Holiness Gavriilo, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, who is imprisoned by the Germans, to raise a voice of protest against the sadistic Croatian criminals, in an effort to save the remaining and defenseless Serbian people within the territory of the Croatian State. In his despair, Bishop Valerian addressed himself on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Commander in Chief of the German armed forces in Serbia with the memorandum that follows, to which no comment is attached as it speaks for itself. The language, tone and presentation of facts noted in this memorandum is rather significant, but the reader's attention is called to the purpose and result expected to be attained by the nature of such a plea. Hence the alleged German Virtues were necessarily mentioned.

This memorandum was presented to the American Government on December 5, 1941, by the Royal Yugoslav Ambassador in Washington, at the instance and request of the Royal Yugoslav Government in exile, now in London.

41 Ягобно

XVI

THE MEMORANDUM OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

PRESENTED TO GENERAL DANKELMAN, COMMANDER
IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES IN SERBIA,
IN AUGUST, 1941

A.

Excellency:

The distressing news which we are daily receiving of the atrocities committed upon the unprotected Serbian population in the Croatian State in general, and especially in the Serbian provinces: Lika, Srem, Bosnia and Hercegovina, compels us to call these crimes to the attention of your Excellency, as the representative of the German Army in occupied Serbia, as a representative of the German people, and as a human being.

In the territory of the present Croatian State there are over two million Serbian inhabitants. They have inhabited this territory from the time of the coming of the Slavs to the Balkans, as for instance, in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Dalmatia and Lika. All migrated there during the wars between Austria and Turkey, when they were settled by Austria in a military zone for its protection and for the safeguarding of middle European culture, and as a bulwark against Turkish invasion. In this military zone the Serbs as such frontier guardsmen, enjoyed special privileges from the time of

Emperor Leopold and these privileges were later enlarged by Empress Maria Theresa, and Emperor Joseph Roman II. This military zone was discontinued in the later 80's of the last century.

The German Army created the Independent Croatian State and has appointed Pavelich to rule it with his Ustashi. We believe that the intention of the German soldier, whom we know to be courageous and determined, which intention has been also admitted by his greatest enemies, was to create a state in which there would be law, order and justice, and that the thought was far away from the German soldier to create a Croatian State in which crimes and atrocities would be committed and perpetrated, such as have never been recorded in history to date.

From the very beginning of the creation of the Croatian State the persecution of the Serbian people, tortures, murders and robberies have been recorded, though somewhat to a lesser degree, while the German troops were stationed in different parts of Croatia, and while the Commanders of German garrisons, as soldiers and as human beings, were attempting to hold off and subdue the animal instincts of the Croatian rulers and their accomplices. Even in spite of this there were perpetrated a number of crimes, the nature of which is the reflection of an absolutely merciless and sadistic temperament.

People were murdered in the most ruthless manner after extremely cruel tortures, such as the gouging out of their eyes, the cutting off of their ears, noses, and sex organs, or crucifying them on the door frames of their homes and torturing them by all kinds of unspeakable methods which could have been invented only through insanity or savagery.

Upon the departure of the German and the Italian troops of occupation from the territory of the Croatian State, persecutions, robberies and murders of the Serbs, which were up to that time limited, were so greatly intensified with mass murders of the Serbian people, that it could properly be characterized as a process for the annihilation of the Serbian people. The Croatian Ministers: Dr. Mile Budak, Dr. Milovan Zanich, Dr. Mirko Puk and Dr. Victor Gutich, were in reality trying to outdo each other in inciting their fellow Croats against the Serbs and in awakening in the Croatian sadists their animal instincts. These ministers have publicly declared that they would cause the murder of one-third of the Serbian population, that one-third of it they would expel from Croatia and the remaining third they would convert to Catholicism, and in this manner liquidate over two million Serbs in the Croatian State.

These declarations of the above Croatian Ministers were carried out in deeds and the Serbs were forced into concentration camps enmasse. Some of them were expelled from the territory of the Croatian State and ruthless murders of Serbian men, women and children were begun. The Serbian priests and their families were forcibly carried away from their homes and exterminated; the Serbian churches and monasteries were razed and burned; the records kept by church institutions were confiscated and delivered to Catholic priests; the Serbs were coerced to abandon their Orthodox faith and to embrace Catholicism. In all these crimes, it is to be regretted, the Catholic priesthood participated also.

Excellency:

The Serbian people, who have for centuries defended the honor of their name and endured the most

terrific tortures, or have died for their holy faith, could not have remained passive in view of these atrocities, but were compelled, though totally unarmed, to rise in defense not only of their own lives but also of the lives of their dearest ones, as well as in defense of their faith and their property. This justified and necessary defense on the part of the Serbian people, which has spread in Hercegovina, Bosnia and Lika, the Croatian rulers now proclaim to be a communistic movement and they desire by such a lie to justify before the civilized world their inhuman atrocities, and especially before the German people, who have begun to register their disapproval of such conduct and crimes.

The Serbian people are deeply religious and nationally conscious and have proven both their religious feelings and national-mindedness in century long struggles up to this day. The Serbian people are, in great majority (90%), agriculturalists with patriarchal traits, and therefore never have had and have not now anything in common with communism or the ideas of the industrial proletariat. It is therefore a most deliberate misstatement to characterize this defense by the Serbian people against the atrocious attacks of the Ustashi as a communistic movement among Serbs.

The Serbian people have with their own blood created Yugoslavia, and during the period from 1914 to 1919 they suffered untold numbers of casualties for their liberty and the liberty of their brother Croats. During this period of time the Serbian people also suffered greater and far more painful blows from their Croatian brothers and the Moslems than they did from their enemies. But the Serb is a soldier and a hero, and after bloody battles and victory he did not seek vengeance, but extended his brotherly hand both to the

Croats and to the Moslems. He embraced them as his prodigal brothers and forgave them all the crimes and misdeeds which they had perpetrated upon the Serbian people. The noble and heroic Serbian soul has been endowed with the Christian virtue—forgiveness. When in 1918 a movement in Yougoslavia led towards the expulsion of minorities, especially the German immigrants since 1898, the Serbian Government immediately put a stop to the movement in its very inception, and no one suffered any harm. Today, these same Croatian and Moslem brothers, all of whose sins the Serbs forgave, have returned their love for their brother Serbs by confiscating their property, taking away their faith, destroying their lives and treating them like wild beasts. This is all being done by those who were given a State and ruling authority by the German Army.

Excellency:

In the name of the conquered Serbian population, which is now under the ruthless rule of the Croatian Ustashi and for whose culture, nobleness, heroism and military virtues the finest praises have been given by the greatest cultural and military minds of the German people, we beg of you, as a German representative of the German military, and as a human being, to take immediate steps to stop these bloody persecutions and the annihilation of the Serbian people in the Croatian State which has been created by the German armed force. We beg of you, before the civilized world, in the face of world history, and in the light of the history of the German people, not to permit the responsibility for these atrocities to fall upon the heads of the German people, or these infamous deeds of the Ustashi criminals to throw a shadow of reflection upon the honor of the

German people or the German soldier who is always high-minded, honorable and heroic.

With this plea, we respectfully submit to your Excellency the following detailed information, to-wit:

THE REPORT OF THE CRIMES AND ATROCITIES OF THE
CROATIAN AUTHORITIES AGAINST THE SERBIAN
PEOPLE UPON THE TERRITORY OF THE
CROATIAN STATE

From information substantiated by Proofs Consisting of Documentary Evidence and Verified Affidavits of Witnesses Received
up to August 8th, 1941

B. MURDERS

Upon the territory of the Croatian State a great number of Serbian people were massacred and a large number of Serbian priests were put to death by the Ustashi, in cold blood. In view of the very perplexing situation existing within said territory, and because of our inability to verify each substantial case in its entirety, or to learn about unreported cases of crimes and atrocities, and also because of existing conditions which prevent safe travelling to different places for these purposes, this report covers only partially the truly gruesome situation. It may be safely assumed, however, according to trustworthy reports which we continuously receive about the mass murders of the Serbian inhabitants in the Croatian State, that the number of those murdered at this time exceeds 180,000 victims.

1. Among the first victims of the Croatian Ustashi terror were his Eminence Platon, Bishop of Banja Luka (Bosnia) and the Archpriest Dushan Subotich of Bosanska Gradiska. They were murdered during the

night between the 5th and the 6th of June 1941, on a highway between Banja Luka and Kotor Varos, and they were thrown into the nearby River Vrbanja, which gave up their bodies after several days. When the body of Bishop Platon was found he was not immediately identified and therefore his body was brought to the hospital morgue at Banja Luka for a post mortem. During the removal the corpse was identified as that of Bishop Platon and the authorities immediately ordered the post mortem abandoned, as well as any further investigation relative to this murder and the body was hurriedly buried in the nearby military cemetery.

At the same time, the murder of Serbian priests and Serbs began in other counties of the Independent State of Croatia, and we give here a list of the names of the murdered priests which we have found thus far:

2. Archpriest Milos Mandich, County of Grachac; Archpriest Bogdan Opachich of Glina, whose body was found in the River Sava; Rev. Nikola Vuckovich of Drljaca; Reverend Dane Babich of Sinjca, whose body was found in a quarry; Reverend Grozdanich of Raduca; Reverend Peter Majstorovich of Doljane, who was tortured in Gaspic prison to such an extent that he committed suicide by hanging.

3. Archpriest Branko Dobrosavljevich of Veljun, was ordered and forced to dig a grave for his own son, a student. When he had completed the digging, the Ustashi brought the youth to the grave and tortured him until he died in the very presence of his father. Thereupon the Ustashi forced Archpriest Branko to perform the requiem for his son. During this ceremony the Archpriest fainted three times, but each time the Ustashi beat him with the butt-end of their guns until he finally completed the requiem. Thereupon the

Ustashi tortured and murdered him on the spot. The actual murder of the Archpriest and his son was committed by the Ustashi Ivan Sajfar, a teacher by profession.

4. Archpriest Pajo Obradovich, former Senator; Reverend Damjan Strbac of Bosansko Grahovo; Reverend Ilija Budimir of Crni Lug; Reverend Ilija Banjac of Drvar and Reverend Risto Jelichich of Drvar, were all taken towards Knin and on the road were murdered by the Ustashi.

5. Reverend Risto Catich of Stojkovic Village, near Livno, together with eight other male persons, was taken to the woods near Livno, and there all were murdered together, and their bodies thrown into a pit.

6. Reverend George Bogich of Nasice was murdered on June 17, 1941. His murder was witnessed by Archpriest Pejnovich of Breznik, who was hiding in the vicinity but was helpless. Father Pejnovich relates as follows: "Ustashi tied up Reverend Bogich to a tree and thereupon tortured him. They cut off his nose, ears, and bearded chin and then cut out his tongue. The unfortunate priest moaned painfully but being strong and healthy, he kept himself on his feet during the torture. Thereupon the Ustashi gouged out his eyes and noticing that he still stood straight they plunged a hatchet into his chest, which caused him to collapse. Then Father Pejnovich heard one of the Ustashi say: "This damned scoundrel's heart is still beating, he is still alive." Shortly, several shots were fired into the body of the unfortunate priest and finally his suffering came to an end.

7. Voja Vojinovich of Osek, an instructor in religion, was murdered. It is known also that all the Serbian Orthodox priests of Osek were tortured and murdered.

The nearby River Drava gave up the bodies of three Serbian priests who could not be identified by their names.

8. Archpriest Zivko Danilovich of Ljubinje, County of Prijedor, after suffering cruel torture was murdered in the vicinity of Banja Luka. Archpriest Bogdan Vranjesevich was knifed to death on June 19, 1941 at Krupa, near Banja Luka.

9. Archpriest Stevan Curcich was murdered at Ogulin. Before he was slain the Ustashi cut off his bearded chin and broke his arms and legs. Reverend Dushan Klipa of Plaski was murdered. Reverend Milan Trisich of Vrljike, was arrested June 10, 1941 and shortly thereafter knifed to death at the concentration camp at Knin; Reverend Michael Minich of Biljesevo, near Zenica, was knifed to death by a Catholic priest; Reverend Milos Petrovich of Luzane, near Derventa, was murdered; Reverend Milos Savich, Dushan Bobar, Janko Savich, Ljubo Jaksich and Drago Mashirovich, all of Vlasenica, were murdered on June 22, 1941. Reverend Borivoj Bozich of Palacha, near Vukovar, was murdered; Archpriest Spira Starovich died from a fractured skull received from a blow by a blunt instrument; Archpriest Vidak Visnjevack of Gacko was taken from his sick bed and put to death together with Archpriest Starovich; Archpriest Vlado Gvozdenovich and Jevto Vujovich, Ognjen Radich and Peter Stojanovich, priests, with a deacon, Dushan Askrabich, all of Mostar, were murdered. The monks Deretich, and Manastirlich of Ljubinje, were murdered. Reverend Bogunovich of Donji Lapac was murdered together with his wife and two minor sons, and their bodies were thrown into a deep pit located near the highway between Lapac and Borigovac, where the bodies of many other Serbian vic-

tims from Lapac and Kulen Vakuf were found. Reverend Bozin of Bolac was buried alive at Gudovac (Bjelovar) on April 28, 1941.

10. AT BANJA LUKA.—In the city as well as in the country there was an unheard of wave of terror and infamous crimes were committed. The Ustashi leader, Dr. Victor Gutic, ordered the persecution and extermination of the Serbs from the very beginning. He publicly called upon Moslems and Croats to follow his example, and on May 5, 1941 he personally led a ruthless extermination of the Serbian people of Banja Luka and vicinity and of those that were brought to Banja Luka. Mass murders followed and in addition to Bishop Platon, the priests Subotich, Danilovich and Vranjesevich, and many other Serbs were murdered. The following names of victims are also recorded: Nikola Curcija, merchant whose eyes were gouged out and whose sex organ was removed; Bosko Planica; Pero Porduva; Ljubo Srdich, a teacher; Zarko Davidovich; N. Kovacevich; Simo Marjan, parliamentary deputy from Jajce; George Bolich, Notary of Mrkonjich Grad; Dushan Brankovich, Parliamentary Deputy, who was knifed to death with the Archpriest Vranjesevich at Krupa, near Banja Luka, June 19, 1941. In several instances Serbs in Banja Luka were herded into trucks and taken outside of the city and massacred enmasse.

11. AT BJELOVAR.—On April 28, 1941, at night, the Croatian Ustashi under the leadership of Marin Cikus, Franjo Busic, and one Kurk of Gudovac, forced the peasants from the villages of Gudovac, Tuka, Brezovac, Klokocevac and Bolc to dig a large grave, and 243 of these peasants were thereupon massacred by gunfire, knives and other instruments and were thrown into

the common grave. Their bodies were sprinkled with lime and the grave closed. Among them were seven live victims buried (two of these were Priest Bozin, and a teacher, Stevan Ivancevich, of Bolc). This crime was investigated by a German commission, which also took photographs of the gruesome scenes, and the pictures are now in the hands of the military authorities.

12. AT BILECA (HERCEGOVINA).—Up to July 20, 1941, when the Italian troops of occupation arrived, the Croats had murdered and thrown the bodies of only thirteen Serbian victims into a pit known as "Kobilja Rupa", among whom was the road inspector, Cavaljuga, and Captain Ivanovich.

Thereafter, however, mass executions were begun in this city and the murders were several hundred in number. All the prominent citizens of this town and the peasants of the vicinity were the victims of this bloody orgy.

13. AT BOSANSKA KOSTAJNICA.—The first murders were those of Stanko Kunich, Stojan Krleta, and Bosko and Lazo Jajcanin, who were found about July 1st, 1941 crucified alive, nailed to the door frames of their homes. They had been tortured and then knifed to death. Reliable information from this town is to the effect that the Serbian population was totally exterminated except for a few who were able to escape in time.

14. AT BOSANSKA GRADISKA.—This town failed to escape the fate which was visited upon the entire Bosnia province and suffered likewise from Croatian crimes. Definite information has reached us of the following Serbs who fell victims: Lazo Janjatovich, Mladen Kuluzovich, Mladen Cvijevich, Stevo Njezich,

Savo Bekich, Stevo Cich and Rade Banjac. Also among these victims was Bogdan Komadina, who fell gravely wounded and who was with others thrown into the River Sava, but he succeeded in saving himself and later reaching Belgrade.

15. AT BIHAC.—Upon the assumption of power the Croatians in this town immediately began terrific persecutions and massacres of the Serbian population enmasse. According to information at hand, from June 18, 1941 to July 14, 1941, eighty-one Serbs were executed. Among the murdered victims there were the following: Mandich, a civil engineer; Veljko Mandich, a merchant; brothers Zarko and Jovo Kozomarich, merchants; Dr. Milan Vojvodich, president of the District Court; Dr. Dushan Matavulj, a physician; Bosko Popovich, Director of the Agricultural Bank; Ilija Djukich and his son George, merchants; George Brkich, a merchant; Milan Sarak and Branko Maksimovich, students; Djuro Kora, Jovo Trbojevich, Jovo Rako, Stevo Pistevich, Ilija Jovovich, all retired; Jovo Brdar and his son Vojislav, 17 years of age; Ilija Bilbija and his minor son; two brothers Pero and Dushan Stupan, merchants; Zivko Culich, Director of the Serbian Bank; Professor Michael Zarkovich; Stanko Turcidija, a civil engineer; Ljubo Banjeglav, a merchant; Vaso Cvijanoch, a City Official; Strahinja Radetich, a student of Technology; Nada Borkovich, a law student; Stanoje Sucevich, a law student; Dr. Simo Ilisevich, an attorney; Dimitrije Petrovich, Director of Gymnasium; Rista Prodanovich, Tax Inspector; Spasoje Pavikovich, a land owner.

These murders were committed by the following Ustashi officers: Anto Rozic of Sarajevo and Anto Skoric of Zenica. The most bloody executioner among

them was Ėvner Ėapetanovich with his Ustashi. The order for the murder of the above victims was given by the Ustashi committee, which was comprised, among others, of the following: Jakov Djal; Petar Simic; Mato Devud; Professor Mijo Vidovic; Murat Ibrajimpasic; David Prsut, a youthful student; Ivan Bunic, an attorney; Anto Vurgin, a bookseller; Josip Golub; Mirko Golubovic, a mechanic. By order of this committee every Serb in the town of Bihac was executed. They were all either murdered, interned, expelled or forced to flee for their lives.

16. AT BOSANSKO GRAHOVO AND DRVAR.

—In the county of Bosansko Grahovo in addition to four priests, 64 persons were executed and also 42 peasants from the nearby villages of Pec, Madesac and Oblaj. Among the victims were the following: Bogdan Kalaba, a civil engineer; Jovo Kreco, Mayor of the town; Petar Bilbija, a merchant; Nikola Josik, an agriculturalist; Milo Arezina; Petar Rasula; Marko Sabljich, an armless invalid; Milan Golubovich, a contractor; Stevan Skorich, an official of Sipad industry; Jovan Adamovich; Slobodan Djikolich; Stevo Djikolich; Vladeta Bilbija, Chief of the Employment Bureau; Kosta Vidovich; Pero Bilbija, a tailor; Strahinja Bilbija; Vlado Bilbija; Milo Bilbija; Tanasija Bilbija; Ljuba Bilbija; Gojko Bilbija; Nikola Bilbija.

After these murders were committed, the persecution, torture and rape of girls 12 years of age took place, of which there will be further statements in this report.

17. AT BOROVO.—Many Serbs were killed at Borovo. During the night between the 26th and 27th of June 1941, 16 Serbs were murdered and their bodies thrown into the nearby river. One of the victims caught in this massacre was still alive when he was

thrown into the river, but he succeeded in extricating and saving himself. He received medical treatment from Dr. Eler, a German physician in this town.

18. AT GACKO.—Here and in the neighborhood between 500 and 600 persons, among whom were many women and children, were murdered by the Croatian Ustashi. The murders began in the village of Korita where 63 peasants were slain on a hill known as "Kobilja Glava". Thereupon the bodies of these victims were thrown into the "Golubinjaca" pit, 40 meters deep. The victims were tied in bunches of three together. Among them there were many still alive and the Ustashi threw hand grenades into the pit to finish them, but in spite of all this one of the victims was able to crawl out during the night and escape across the border to Montenegro. After he told his experiences, the mayor of the village of Vucji Dol, Risto Bjelica, aided by several men, succeeded in reaching this gruesome grave pit and rescued six other victims who were still alive. One of these victims died, but the remaining ones are still alive in a hospital. After this massacre the bodies of other executed victims were thrown into this common grave, totalling 226. Shortly the stench and odor became so obnoxious that the Italian army of occupation had to pour gasoline over the victims' bodies and ignite them, burning out the pit. Following this, arrests and murders were continued in the town as well as in its vicinity and among the victims were the following persons: Gligor Lucich of Miholjac; Lazar Mastilovich of Izgora; Blagoje and Radovan Sarich of Stepen; Nikola Sarovich of Sornjice; Bozo Divljan of Kravarevo; Mico Popovich of Gracanica; two brothers Madjilovich of Gracanica; Risto K. and Risto L. Govedarica of Miholjac; Todor Starovich of Gacko; Todor

Milosevich of Virdopolje; Veljko Visnjevack, former parliamentary deputy of Nadinica; Grujo Vienjevack of Gacko; Milorad Starovick of Avtovac; Trifko and Jovan Lojevick of Livnik; Spasoje Nenadovick of Avtovac. These murders were committed in the most gruesome fashion. Nearly all of the victims were killed by sledge hammer blows on their foreheads and the brains from their skulls were scattered all over the place of execution. Many of the victims suffered gouging of their eyes and dismemberment of their limbs and they were then thrown into hollow places and finally put to death by hand grenades.

The fury struck the villages of Korila, Stepen and Gradac hardest. In these villages there is not a single Serbian soul left, as those who were unable to escape were wholly exterminated. Neither cries nor moans are heard in these villages and they resemble haunted places from which the stench of fire and burned flesh is still prevalent and becoming unbearable.

19. AT BOSANSKA KRUPA.—On July 25, 1941, mass arrests were begun in this town. Women, children, aged people and every Serb in sight, either in their homes or shops or fields or on the highways or streets were placed under arrest by the Ustashi. Up to this date there were only a few murders committed. However, between July 25th and 30th of 1941 the Sokol Hall, as well as the court and police prison and the Serbian Orthodox Church was crowded with over 800 Serbs who were placed under arrest.

On July 28, 1941, about 5 P. M., 45 Serbs from the town of Krupa were tortured in the Serbian Orthodox Church and from there taken in trucks to the town of Bihac to a place known as "Black Lake" where they were massacred enmasse. According to an eye

witness, Husejin Seferovich, a machinist from Krupa, the bodies of these victims were left floating upon the lake. During the same night 210 men and women were murdered at the Sokol Hall and just prior to that, over 300 people were murdered at the same Sokol Hall, and from all accounts and reliable estimates it is safe to say that during the period from July 25th to 30th, 1941, over 600 Serbs were murdered in the town of Krupa and its vicinity. The bodies of the murdered victims in most of the cases were buried in the yard of the Sokol Hall. In addition to the above mentioned eye witness there is testimony on hand of another Serb, who was among those massacred enmasse, but who escaped gravely wounded. After these atrocities were committed, the remaining Serbs had no other alternative but to revolt and begin their active defense. This action caused more intensified persecution and further massacres of Serbian people in this town and vicinity.

The following is a partial list of murdered Serbs at Bosanska Krupa: Savo Vilcarevich; Vaso Vilcarevich; Zivko Gulan; Bogdan Gulan; Luka Slavuj; Sveta Slavuj; Bogdan Slavuj; Bude Miskovich; Pero Djukich; Jovo Radmanovich; Djuro Radmanovich; Ilija Smiljanich; Veljko Smiljanich; Gojko Rogich; Mihailo Drmusa; Djordjo Jovicich; Nikola Beukovich; Jovo Tisma; Jefito Lujanovich; Branko Senich; Zivko Senich; Milos Strbac; Lazar Strbac; Ljubo Strbac; Ilija Studenmladji; Rado Vojinovich; Dojcin Kovacevich; Vojin Kovacevich; Milan Mazalica; Joco Londinovich; Dusan Umicevich; Mihailo Boban; Mihailo Kecman; Bosko Strbac; Milos Kalember; Djuro Eror, Dusan Jovanovich; Jovo Jovanovich; Ljupce Jovanovich; Dusan Predojevich; Djordje Majkich; Drago Majkich; Vlado Kokolus; Jovo Adamovich; Jovo Babich; Nikola Kara-

novich; Mitar Dukich; Stevo Mudrinovich; Dane Mudrinovich; Jovo Mudrinovich; Djordje Tupaich; five members of the family of Jovo Gaka; Milo Bokan; Spaso Zorich; Djuro Knezevich; Risto Polovina; Stanko Milanovich and his son Stanko; Ilija Kacavenda; Dusan Kacavenda; Bozo Stancevich; Bogdan Stancevich; Milan Stancevich; Bozo Grmusa; Stevo Cirilo; Savo Cirich; son of Sava Cirich; five members of the family of Jovo Jovanovich; Djordje Bilcarevich; Stevo Banjanin; Milan Bogdanovich; Bogdan Bogdanovich; Zoran Radich; Nikola Vukobratovich; Jovo Vukobratovich; Svetozar Gakovich; Sava Ilich; Blagoje Stulich; Rade Zorich; Aleksa Zorich and Stojan Karanovich, a total of 92 victims.

In the whole town of Krupa there remained only a few Serbian males who escaped to Belgrade and brought this information, which has since their arrival been verified through other reliable sources. The massacre of the Serbian people was committed by the Croatian Ustashi together with the Moslem residents of the town. In most cases the murders were not committed with gunfire, but with knives, hatchets or blunt instruments. All of the victims were first tortured in different manners, poked through with pitchforks, cut up with axes or maimed so that parts of their flesh and limbs were hanging from their bodies. This report on the atrocities in the town of Krupa and vicinity is incomplete because the murders are being continued at the time of writing this memorandum and it is safe to assume, on the basis of reliable reports thus far received, that the number of massacred in this town and vicinity exceeds 5,000.

20. AT BOSANSKI NOVI.—This town and environs suffered the fate of that visited upon Bosanska

Krupa in the same period of time and in the same fashion as Grahovo, Drvar and Krupa, where over 5000 Serbians were brutally murdered. The list of victims is incomplete as yet, but for the time being the following persons have been definitely identified: Milan Grubor; Sava and Petar Sucevich; Acim Djermanovich; Djordje and Sava Djorich; Jovo Godich; Jovo Milanovich; Drago Celan; Branko Tomasevich; Milan Majstorovich; Bozo Nesvanulica; Bozo Vincich; Grujo Strbac; Dragutin Bastrak; Ljuba Obradovich; Simo Drobac; Niko Sanac; Pero Sundac; Dushan Spirich and others.

21. AT BOSANSKI PETROVAC.—In this town up to July 25, 1941, there were only a few murders of the Serbs, but after this date arrests took place and the victims were taken to an unknown destination. On July 27th, 1941, there were 45 Serbian citizens so taken, and by all indications they were executed. Among them there were two Smiljanich brothers, merchants; Basara and son, merchants; Novakovich; Kreco; Dejanovich; Grubich. From the vicinity of this town the number of murdered Serbs and those taken away for alleged internment is vast, but the exact number is too indefinite to include in this report at the present time.

22. AT GLINA.—In the county of Glina, as well as in the entire provinces of Lika, Banija and Kordun, unspeakable atrocities and crimes were committed against the Serbs. In this community, in the very beginning of the existence of the Croatian Independent State, 450 Serbs were murdered. These first murders were the incentive for further massacres of Serbian people, so that Serbs were wholly exterminated from the town of Glina, which may well be said also in respect to the entire vicinity. It is estimated that there is not

a single Serb living in the town of Glina and its vicinity, all of them having been murdered, none having succeeded in escaping.

23. AT DVOR ON UNA.—In the early days of May, 1941, to this purely Serbian town came the Croatian Ustashi and by shedding Serbian blood announced their rule henceforth. On the arrival of the Croatian Ustashi the following Serbs were murdered: Joco Orescanin, finance auditor; Milan Dragosavljevich, under officer of Gendarmes; Mladen Durman, a pensioner; Vaso Mirkobrad, notary. The following days witnessed mass executions of the Serbs to such an extent that the Croatian authorities did not have time to bury their victims, but either dumped the corpses in the woods or threw them into creeks. Among the murdered victims we mention the following: Smoljanovich, engineer of forestry; Milan Kosjer, Municipal Notary; Stevo Bunac, Bailiff of the County Courts; Milan Bozovich, an agriculturalist; Djakola, a land owner from the village of Rujevac. These crimes were perpetrated by the Ustashi Bico Balta; Mila, Nikola and Ivica Rujevac; Mile Zerbac; Pero Pericevich and Jakov Katucich, and upon orders given by the Ustashi leader, the local Roman Catholic priest, Culic. The number of Serbian victims in this town and its immediate vicinity exceeds 1,000 and the Serbian population has been entirely exterminated insofar as people were unable to escape.

24. AT DERVENTA.—We have positive proof that in this town there were a great number of executions of Serbian people, but at the writing of this report we are lacking proper evidence. However, the following case is very characteristic: Mirko Radovanovich of the village of Male Brusnice was hanged for the sole reason that he complained to the German com-

mander about the Croatian Ustashi, who had previously confiscated from the townspeople and villagers everything of value and thereupon ordered them to move from there or be converted to the Catholic faith.

25. AT VLASENICA.—As early as June 22, 1941, mass executions of Serbs took place, in addition to numerous instances of persecutions and humiliations of the Serbian townsfolk. On this date, according to the verified testimony of witnesses, George Viskovich and Lazar Radakovich, who were able to escape, over 40 Serbs were massacred in the vicinity of Brgulja estate, under the leadership and by order of Mustafa Mutevelich, a Moslem of Sarajevo, and some local Moslems, Dr. Sefkije Kadich and the brothers Ragib, Suljo and Husejin Kadich, the last a former parliamentary deputy; Mehmet Manich; Salko Krtagica; Zulf Aga and Dr. Asim Busatlich. The murders were perpetrated by certain students who were known as communists; Suljo Susich and Aljo Topcich. Among the murdered victims, in addition to those mentioned, the following are also listed: Branko Zderich, a surveyor; Jovo Micich, a merchant; Gligor Djurich, an agriculturalist; Andjelko, Kosta, Novica and Dushan Drakulich; Danko Jokich, a merchant; Risto Djukovich, a hotel proprietor; Vojin Drljich, mayor of the town of Han Pijesak; Mirko Djanich; Milan Pejich, a merchant; Milutin Jeftich; Ljubo Vukasinovich; mayor of the town of Pakrac; Radovan Cectura, a court official; Luka and Vaso Devrich, agriculturalists; Dushan Jovicich and Drago Jaksich. The executions of Serbs in this town and vicinity are still in progress and while it is safe to assume that the number of Serbian victims is immensely great, at the time of the writing of this report the exact number of unfortunate victims cannot be stated.

26. AT VUKOVAR.—Prior to the coming of the Croatian authorities, there were murders committed in this town by the Hungarians. They murdered, so far as we have ascertained 11 Serbs. However, when the Croatian Ustashi came, after April 18, 1941, lootings, arrests and wholesale massacres of the Serbs began. These crimes were perpetrated at the instance of Croatian Ustashi officials at Osek, by Mayor Lucko, a merchant; Stern; Matrijevich; and Dr. Korshi, Jr., who was later himself arrested by the very same Ustashi upon the charge of being a Communist. In the very first few days about 180 Serbs were slain and cast into the river, and two others by reason of the horrible tortures to which they were mercilessly subjected committed suicide. The pogrom against the Serbs did not cease even after this wholesale massacre. The names of all murdered victims cannot exactly be stated, but we know that among them were the following: Spasoje Hmelj; Mladen Andeljich; Laza Odavich; Dushan Stoicevich; Djuro Samardzich; Dr. Knezevich and there were also other victims from the village of Balach whose fate is unknown. A part of these victims were killed at Borovo as we have stated herein in Paragraph 17.

27. AT DONJI LAPAC.—This county is among those which were stricken in the worst way at the assumption of power by the Croatian authorities. There are villages which were entirely wiped out and where all the Serbs were exterminated. The villages of Srb and Suvaja were the prime objects of persecution by the Croatian Ustashi and the Croatian Army. In the night between June 22nd and 23rd, 1941, in the village of Srb, all prominent Serbs were arrested, while the remainder who were still free fled in fear to the woods.

On June 28, 1941 the arrests were continued and at a place known as "Kuk Hill" 18 Serbs were murdered and their bodies thrown into a cave as also were the bodies of the slain foresters, Dane Batinich and Sergeant Dushan Uglica, who had been murdered in prison. On July 2, 1941, about 600 Croatian Ustashi and Croatian soldiers raided the village of Srb, rounded up the fearful Serbian inhabitants, and executed them all regardless of sex or age. On that date in these two villages alone, there were about 3,000 Serbs massacred. Thereafter, and as before these happenings, the bestial murdering of the Serbs in this County was continued and we are in possession of convincing proof that the Serbs there were thoroughly exterminated, with the exception of those who succeeded in escaping.

28. AT GOSPICH.—The persecution of the Serbs was also visited upon the county of Gospich. In the very town of Gospich, as well as in all nearby villages, the Croatia Ustashi murdered nearly all Serbs. From one village alone, Veljun, the Ustashi took 350 men in one day, of whom 50 returned beaten and mutilated, while the others were left in the nearby woods murdered, or hanged, or mutilated and in a dying condition. In this locality also the murders were committed in a most cruel way.

29. AT KARLOVAC.—In this city there were many prominent Serbs murdered. Among them were Dr. Vujcich, an attorney, who was killed in a most barbarous manner and whose body was thrown into the River Korana, and Captain Janjanin. These two victims were found by the shepherds only half buried. Dushan Dokmanovich, a railroader, was thrown into the River Kupa, with hands and legs bound, and his body was found on the beach two days later. Josip Juran was

knifed to death at the doorstep of his home in the presence of his whole family. One railroader was found in the Warehouse, tied to a table with his throat slashed. Two railroad guardsmen were found murdered between Duga Resa and Zvecaj and thrown into a ditch alongside the road. None of the Serbs in this county escaped the murderous hand of the Croatian Ustashi.

30. AT KONJIC.—Immediately upon the coming of the Croatian authorities, the slaying of the Serbs began. According to the testimony of a teacher, during the first few days there were about 400 Serbs slain in a most beastly manner. At this time we are not in possession of detailed information regarding this locality.

31. AT KORENICA.—Virtually this whole town and vicinity in Lika were completely exterminated of Serbs. Hundreds of men were killed. We are in possession of verified proof evidencing the fact that the Ustashi cut off the ears and noses of their victims and forced them to graze the grass like cattle.

32. AT MOSTAR.—Mostar, the center of Hercegovina, became once again the center of the massacre of Hercegovinian Serbs. Under the cloak of protection of the Croatian authorities, the Ustashi began the massacring of Serbs on June 24, 1941. During the period between June 24 and June 27, 1941, there were over 200 citizens murdered after being first subjected to the most inhuman tortures. Among the murdered victims were Ljubo Sain; Miljko Glogovac; Ranko Semiz, an official of the tobacco factory; George Golovich, a merchant; Risto Golovich, a merchant; Toso Munjich, a merchant; Jovo Oborina, a merchant; Pero Colich; Bora Vasiljevich; Ljubo Krulj, a merchant; Mitar Hamovich, a merchant; Dushan Hamovich, a merchant;

Dushan Mucibabich, a merchant; Milan Vujasinovich, a merchant; Cvetko Kujich, jeweler; Gavro Palikuca, a cafe owner; Ljubo Palikuca, a cafe owner; Mirko Janich, and sons; Ljubo Janich, Vaso Janich, students; Djordje Pesko, a merchant; Trifko Janich, a teacher; Djordje Tilibat, a teacher; Ljubo Kojo, an official; Miho Miljevich, a merchant; Jovo Antelj, a railroader; Aleksandar Luka, a physician; Miho Blanich, a merchant; Luka Kulas, a merchant; Mile Cerekovich, municipal treasurer; Branko Cerekovich, municipal clerk; Milan Bilich, a dispatcher; Boro Vasiljevich, court official; Boro Vanovich, a book dealer; Mirko Vanovich; Mitar Vanovich; Danilo Vanovich; Milan Sotra, a dispatcher; Aca Pervin, a court official; Rade Miletich, a book dealer; Mladen Milutinovich, power utilities director; Gojko Salatic, a civil engineer; Marko Kova, a tin-smith; Risto Kovacevich, a railroader; Branko Stojich, a merchant; Djordje Adjevac, and son; Risto Vujovich, a book dealer; Savo Kablar, a tailor; Vucicevich, a pensioner; Vukasin Petkovich, a priest; Jefto Vujovich, a priest; Pero Radulovich, a merchant; Ilija Toholj, a merchant; Cvetko Toholj, a mechanic; and many others. It is evident that all of those murdered in Mostar, were the heads of families and many were fathers. There were 6 priests murdered, 55 merchants, 22 public intellectuals, 26 public officials, 61 clerks and a great number of laborers. Of these victims there were 122 who left their families with 412 children. Many of these victims were tortured and murdered in different fashions and their bodies thrown into rivers. A large number of the tortured and slain were thrown into a cave near the village of Citluk. After this first massacre and these unheard of cruelties, the Croats and Moslems of Mostar and vicinity rounded up 500 Serbs of

various ages and from all stations of life and ruthlessly executed them so that the number of these murdered victims in this county exceeds 700.

33. AT NEVESINJE.—In the early part of June as soon as the Croatian authorities entered Nevesinje, the Ustashi arrested 21 of the most prominent Serbs and executed them immediately. In this town they murdered the minor son of the tax official, Nidzevich, in the presence of his mother. The village of Udreznje was among the first to be looted by the Ustashi. Thereafter other villages were entered by the Ustashi and the murdering of the most prominent men increasingly continued. It is estimated by the most conservative eyewitnesses that from the 1st to the 24th of June 1941, there were about 500 Serbs murdered in this county. Then came the resistance and the self-defense of the armed Serbs and what followed is not difficult to assume. Blood flowed through the rivers and creeks of this county as the massacre enmasse of the Serbs continued. According to eyewitness testimony the Serbs were tortured and cut to pieces in such a gruesome manner that the bodies could not be buried, but pieces and parts and fragments of flesh were collected in buckets and thrown into a common grave. We do not know the number of murdered victims but it is a fact that among them were women and children and only those were left alive who escaped into the mountains and caves.

34. AT TREBINJE.—The first murders in Hercegovina began in this city as early as the month of May. Nine persons were murdered here after which the massacre of Serbs in nearby villages began. According to our most reliable information the number of murdered victims in this city increased to 230, but thus far we have a detailed verified list of 60 persons. This county,

too, was visited by the same fate as other counties in Hercegovina—the extermination of the Serbs.

35. AT STOLAC.—The terrific massacre committed in this town and vicinity was preceded by the individual murders of Serbs immediately upon the arrival of the Croatian authorities. The massacre was committed in this entire county after the assassination of Mijo Babich, an Ustashi captain, who was directing the massacre of Serbs. All of the Orthodox men, women and children who were caught in the clutches of the Croats or Moslems were massacred. Entire villages, together with women, children and aged men, if Serbs, were annihilated. The towns of Capljina, Gabela, Tasovcichi, and Domanovichi, were destroyed and in some of them, especially in the village of Bekovichi, the odor of burned ruins with the stench of charred, mutilated bodies was almost unbearable. The number of victims exceeds several thousands.

36. AT LJUBINJE.—In the county of Ljubinje there were about 2,500 Serbs slain, of whom 711 murdered victims were thrown into pits "Golubinja" and "Lasto". The village of Cukovac was totally destroyed and the entire population annihilated. The county of Ljubinje was so thoroughly exterminated from Serbs that there is not a single Serb alive in that county.

37. AT NASHICE.—In the county of Nashice, the murders of Serbs were committed under the leadership of one Galicich, of the village of Tribishevac, with the assistance of Bonifacija Saric, Frano Lustig, Djuro Jozic, Bozo Zarkovic, Jozo Pavlovich and others. In the village of Gavrilovac the following Serbs were murdered: Predrag Mamusich, a professor; Pero Kovacevich, a teacher; Rade Vukobratovich, a police officer. (In

the village of Sucin the following were murdered: Rajko Novakovich; Petar Simich; Lazo Simich; Djordje Ignatich; Vlada Zizich; and some others). The greatest terror prevailed and the most horrible tortures and ruthless murders were committed in that part of the county known as "Novo Licko Selo". Among the murdered victims the identity of the following persons was established: Branko Srbich; Rade Radakovich; Milos Radakovich; Djuro Gavrilovich. These victims were ambushed and slain by gunfire causing them to fall mortally wounded and then they were assaulted by Ustashi who bayoneted them to death and smashed in their heads. Djuro Vukobratich was an eyewitness to these gruesome occurrences. In a most ruthless manner the priest of Nashice, George Bogich, was also murdered.

38. AT NOVA GRADISKA.—As soon as the Croatian authorities announced their government, the mass arrests in this locality followed and the mass murders of Serbs in this town and vicinity were begun. The Croatian authorities in charge were Peratic, a professor; Simunic, a judge, at present the Governor of Nova Gradiska and Milan Lukac. Especially ruthless massacres were noted at Staro Petrovo Selo and Broad and at Slatnik, where there were murdered 30 of the most prominent Serbian people with dum-dum bullets so that their bodies were mutilated beyond recognition. In the prison of Nova Gradiska, Rade Bogdanovich, and Sava, son of the postal official Tepavac, were murdered as well as Gavro Kovachevich and Protich, a cafe owner, upon whose death, at the insistence of the German army officials, an inquest was held by two Croatian physicians, who found that he died of a fracture of the skull. A peasant, Popovich of Poljane, and Zijalich, a priest of Bregana, municipality of Okuchani, were also murdered.

Mass murders of Serbs in this municipality were also committed but the exact number of victims is not known.

39. AT KOSTAJNICA, SUNJA, SISAK AND PETRINJA.—What happened in Bosanska Kostajnica (Paragraph 13, ante) took place also in the neighboring Hrvatska Kostajnica, where from the very first day an unheard of inquisition upon the Serbian people was conducted. At Kostajnica a great number of Serbs were murdered among them Pajo Matijevich; Zarko Drakulich; Ilija Zec, known as Strigova, and his two sons, Rade and Branko. Thereafter the massacre of Serbs was spread towards Sunja, Blinski Cut, Caprag, Sisak and Petrinja. In the village of Drljache, in addition to the slaying of the village priest and prominent heads of families, two children of a peasant, Baich, were thrown by the Ustashi from a speeding truck and instantly killed. In the village of Kinjask, Jovo Vuyovich, a peasant, and Vukobratich, a railroader, were murdered. In the nearby village of Cut, Petar, Simo and Perica Kapudzija were slain. In Petrinja on the first day the merchant Rudjesic and his son, whom they first took to Caprag, were murdered. The vicinity of Petrinja, especially the villages of Pesterne and Cepelich, was left desolate, as all of the Serbs not able to escape were massacred; Vukajlo, Krunic Gligo, Krunic Jovan, a peasant of the village of Staro Selo; Kosarich Ostojica, Vlatkovich Jovan of Velika Gradusa, and Sabljich Sava and Novakovich Djuro, teachers of Mala Gradusa, and Subanovich of Soje, a teacher, with their entire families were taken to the concentration camps at Petrinja Caprag and were subjected to terrific tortures, which will be commented upon elsewhere in this report. This entire district was flagged in black. From 30 to 40

bodies of murdered Serbs are daily floating upon the River Sava among which there are members of entire families, men, women and children tied together.

40. AT OGULIN, OTOCHAC.—The barbarities and murders in these parts are very difficult to enumerate and describe. Everything that occurred at other places like Lika, Banija and Kordun took place here also. The railroaders Jovetich and Suvaja, from Ogulin, were slain in prison after being subjected first to barbarous torturing. Vladimir Rajichich, also a railroader from Ogulin, was taken away and tortured. His fate is unknown. The number of slain Serbs is enormous and cannot be positively stated, but it is certain that all those places around Ogulin and Otochac were cleared of Serbs. Many of them were taken away to concentration camps and slain there so that neither the victims nor the circumstances of their slayings could be positively established.

41. AT OSIJEK.—The garrison jail of Osijek represents now one of the more important centers of the Ustashi inquisition. Many Serbs from Osijek and vicinity were murdered in this jail by a unique Ustashi method, then thrown into the River Drava. In that jail, by gradual torture, Jovan Djurdjevich, director of the wheat exchange, was murdered. An unknown druggist from Osijek (we believe Zorich), whose face they first mutilated by cutting off his nose and ears and gouging out his eyes, also was slain. On Orthodox Easter, Serbs were murdered at the Orthodox cemetery. The Stan-kovich brothers from Pirot, were first robbed and then murdered. Police official Agras, was terribly beaten up and slain, and his family had to pay 100,000 dinars for a permit to take his body for burial in the family lot of the Zagreb cemetery. During the first days in Osijek

alone there were 170 Serbs thrown into the River Drava; they were murdered at the swimming beach "Rampas". In the village Chepinski Martinac, 18 Serbs were arrested on April 15, 1941, tied with a rope to a truck and dragged 12 kilometers to the village Livane, where they were all put to death. Then their bodies were loaded on the truck and returned to Osijek. Branko Vranjesevich and his father were buried separately because they paid 1,000 dinars to one Ustashi just before their execution, for that purpose. Twenty-seven Serbs were killed near the village Vrljani, and thrown into a common grave. The Germans dug seven of them out, performed a post mortem and buried them again but separately. These beastly crimes are being committed against Serbs daily.

42. AT SLAV. BROD, SLAV. POZEGA, PAK-RAC AND PODR. SLATINA.—The number of murdered Serbs in these counties is beyond present computation. In the village of Dubochac, near Brod, about 30 Serbs were brought at night to a pasture and all killed by knife slashing. They were tied to heavy rocks and thrown into the River Sava. Twenty Serbs were taken from Stara Slatina, near Brod, and all were slain and thrown into a common grave. The same thing happened at St. Petrovac. George Mutich was an eye witness to these crimes. The Serbian population from other villages of that county suffered the same fate. Among those slain, we name: Nikola Muchich; Adam Samardzich; Joso Krujich; Djuro and Joco Mudich; Dushan Pelich; Milan Pavich; Proko Sundach; Nikola Latinac; Djuro Vukadinovich; Nikola Mrger; Marko Lonchar; Nikola and Dragutin Terzich; Luka Popovich and Stevan Pashich. Many Serbs were taken to an unknown destination from Slav. Kobach on July 28,

1941, among them: Andrija Ulivenovich; Sava Vukovich; Stevo Zrnich; Milan Serovinich and others. After this, the remaining males were gathered and taken away and many signs indicate that they were all murdered. At night, August 6-7, 1941, a group of 10 Ustashi, led by Ian Kalidzich, broke into the house of a former Serbian war veteran, Nikola Vukasinovich from Slav. Kobach, and chased out his wife, Mary, 52 years of age, took her out of the village, mutilated her with bayonets and then threw her body into the River Sava. Thereupon they returned to the house of these victims and looted it.

In Slav. Pozega, Senator Ljubomir Jovanovich and a teacher, Ivan Streljich, were murdered in the street. In Alexandrovetz, near Pozega and vicinity, during the first days only, over two hundred Serbs were slain. Pakrac and vicinity were also daily scenes of the murdering of Serbs. From the refugees we received shocking information regarding killings of Serbs. Dr. Milenko Markovich, an attorney from Pakrac, was so terribly mistreated and injured that, according to reports, he later succumbed and died.

In Podr. Slatina, after individual murders, between June 10-16, 1941, the Croats killed also the following Serbian peasants: Mile Buka; Djordje Turudija; Ilija Bogunovich; Dane Pancha; Simo Shoravac; Lazar Krneta; Gojko Bojenovich; Ilija Miljush; Bozo Mitrich and Luka Chucho. All these were thrown into a single pit and sprayed with liquid lime even though some were still alive. These victims left behind them 36 orphaned children. In the village of Petrovac, they cut the throats of Misko Stojanovich, his wife and his children. In the village of Sopleje, county of Gornji Miholjac, the body of Milich from Martinci was found. A post mortem

established the fact that his skull was fractured, his left arm broken, his nose and ears cut off and he was castrated.

43. AT SREMSKI KARLOVCI.—Ustashi continued their hunt for Serbs and already at the beginning of July 1941, Mile Gostovich and Slavko Savich were murdered. These killings also spread throughout the neighboring counties. The number of the murdered here is unknown at present.

44. AT PRIJEDOR.—During the first days of Croatian rule, there were murders committed throughout the county, and four peasants from Ljubinja, who were first arrested in Banja Luka and then presumably sent by Croatian authorities to their homes as innocent, were later murdered. As soon as they reached Prijedor, they were met by Ustashi allegedly to be escorted to their homes but they were killed by dum-dum bullets from the back while being escorted. After this, these beastly murders continued and the number of Serbian victims increased until, later, it reached a culminating point. According to trustworthy eyewitnesses, the number of murdered Serbs in this county totaled several thousands. In the small town of Prijedor alone, there were over one thousand men, women and children murdered. Of those slain we name here only a few: Pero Radetich; Milovan Radetich; Simo Bornoja; Simo Vujasinovich; Pero Obradovich; Ostojica Zigich; Draga Bojanich; Simo Glamochanin; Dushan Kovacevich; Mile Brdar; Dushan Grbanovich; Ljubo Stanojevich; Vid Plemich; Milutin Diovich; Stanka Radonich; Pero Razen, Micho, Mika, Luka, Ilija and Kosta Medich; Branko Hrnjak; two Stevich brothers; Ostojica Majkich; Milorad Ljubisich; Stevo and Bosko Karan; Micho and Lazo Vukojevich; two Chanak brothers; Obrad Savich;

Števan Mijatovich; Blazo Radich; Nikola Stupar; Lazo Djamich; Mirko Zikich; Krsto Srdich; Judge Gakovich; Braco Chadjo; Jovica Arambasich; Branko Boshkot; Braco Banovich; Mrs. Persa Chanak; Michica Vukojevich. Children: Braco Vujich, 12 years of age; Rade Damjanovich's son, 14 ; Niko Despot, 12; Milan Bilbija, 12; and two apprentices of unknown names. At Prijedor, at a place called "Urjama" there was brought from nearby villages over 400 peasants who were massacred enmasse. This massacre was committed on July 31 and August 1, 1941 in the day time. At night, the Croats raided Serbian homes and took men, women and children out and murdered them regardless of sex or age. An eyewitness tells us that the sight was horrible; human bodies were strewn over gardens and streets; human blood flowed through the gutters to such an extent that even the German military authorities were astonished and so horrified by these unheard of barbarities perpetrated by the Croats, that they were forced to take certain measures against the Croats and the Ustashi and take the government into their own hands.

In the main, the murders and executions were done in front of the Serbian church, the high school, and at "Urjama". The murders were committed by the regular Croatian Army Ustashi and Moslems from the city. Special squads of Moslems and gypsies were formed to take the bodies away for compensation. First they were allowed to rob the bodies, and the Moslems and the gypsies relieved these victims of clothes and even removed their gold-filled teeth and then piled 7 or 8 bodies on a wagon, taking them to great craters dug out by air bombs near the cemetery and there buried them, but some they threw into the River Sana. The eyewitness saw about 30 wagon loads of bodies.

During these same days, the Croatian Army, together with Ustashi and armed Moslems, went to all the villages of Prijedor county and executed all the Serbs that they could find, while at the same time they burned all the houses, wheat, hay and everything else belonging to the Serbs. According to a Croatian source, about 5,000 men, women and children were slaughtered in this county alone.

An eyewitness, during his flight from Prijedor to Belgrade, saw along the road many burning houses and a great many slain victims unburied. He also reported seeing about 20 bodies floating on the Rivers Una and Sana, even though it was August 6th already. Burned houses were reported all the way from Prijedor to Sunja. The counties of Sanski Most, Bos. Novi, Bos. Krupa and Bos. Dubica suffered the same fate.

45. AT MRKONICH GRAD.—This once peaceful town also suffered misfortune and the massacre of Serbs. The most recent news relates the atrocities by Ustashi who, like ravaging hordes, spread death and looted the whole vicinity. In this small town, they slaughtered in one day 200 Serbs, men, women and children. Right now, this man-hunt for Serbs is going on there in its full fury. In the village of Podrashnica they killed 47 mostly adults and there were many women and children among the victims. The hamlets of Danilovichi and Tankovichi were burned to the ground.

46. AT KLJUCH.—Ustashi of Kljuch had arrested in that town on July 31, 1941, all Serbs 17 years of age and older. On August 31, 1941, a special squad of "Flying Ustashi" came by way of Sanski Most, from Karlovac, and on September 1 and 2, 1941, they killed all the male Serbs. This they did by shooting

them in groups at three places: in one room of the public school where they first took off all the victims' clothes and then executed them naked; at a place called "Sklop" along the River Sana, and at a third place, called "Slinsko Vrelo" one kilometer from Kljuch. Those who were killed in the city, were tied up in bunches and some thrown into the River Sana and some buried at Alinsko Vrelo and Busije. An eyewitness says that between 700 and 800 Serbs from the city alone were thus murdered. Over 150 wagon loads of bodies were carted away. In each wagon there were 8 or 9 bodies of prominent peasants which were brought to the city. About 2,000 Serbs were killed there. Two peasant women were also among them. The murdered women were first arrested, then tortured in a most cruel way, as by burning matches under their noses, and denying them food. None of the local Croats participated in these murders, however. In Bravsko, about 450 peasants were slain and the murderers did not invade the other villages of Kljuch county but killed only those who were earlier brought to Kljuch.

The remaining Serbs of the city of Kljuch are: Kosto Vukovich, a restaurateur; Risto Jazikovich, a merchant; Milutin Dunovich; Risto Dunovich and Branko Jankovich. It is significant that Ustashi authorities had urged the Serbian people to adopt the Roman Catholic religion a few days before they were slaughtered. Under this coercive pressure a great mass of people did embrace the Roman Catholic religion but later they were all murdered nevertheless. The following prominent citizens were murdered: George Mladenovich, a merchant; Mirko Vukovich, a merchant; Dushan Mladenovich, a merchant; Milan Vukovich, a merchant; Jovo Jakovich, a restaurateur; Steve Mandich, a mer-

chant; Savo Savich, a butcher; Milivoje Chekulija, a school director; Micho Zivkovich, a forester; Savo Stajcich, a forester; Zivko Jankovich, a merchant; Ilija Zelenovich, a merchant; Voja Savanovich, a merchant; Milan Bokan, an invalid war veteran; Lazo Vukmanovich, retired; Josip Mijich, a merchant; George Stajcich, a butcher; Simo Shaovich, retired; Simo Bovan, a tinner; George Lacich, a tinner; Milivoj Stanich, a forester; Dushan Jankovich, a merchant; Dushan Novakovich, a shoemaker; the local postmaster with his entire personnel; the county president with all his Serbian personnel; the assistant county president, Drobac; Machkich, an official; George Stajich, a butcher and others.

47. IN SANSKI MOST COUNTY.—The Ustashi arrested 27 of the most prominent citizens from the nearby villages. Later about 50 peasants from the vicinity of Grmach were brought in. The following day, July 29, 1941 about half of the male citizens from the city were arrested, about 150 Serbs in all. Wednesday, July 30, 1941, Moslems from the villages in the vicinity of Grmach began to arrive with false reports that they were attacked by the Chetniks. By reason of these false reports all the Croatian officials left the town by special train and after their departure, a Ustashi party came, headed by Captain Markovac, and a home guard company headed by Captain Silajdzich, who took over the command of the city, and then placed guards in all the streets. All Ustashi had bicycles and left for the nearby villages.

On Thursday, July 31, 1941, a great mass of Serbian peasants was brought from the vicinity and arrested promptly, while Ustashi began to execute the Serbian population remaining in the villages. A day

before this, the local Ustashi issued an order throughout the county prohibiting anyone from leaving his home under the penalty that whoever should be found outside of his house would be killed. So the strange Ustashi, the "flying squad", found all Serbs at their homes. The local Moslems served the Ustashi as guides and informants so that if some male was absent from his home, the whole family, women and children, were slain. The Moslems committed unbelievable barbarities for they murdered women and children even with scissors.

So went the whole night and on Friday, August 1, 1941 the Serbian peasants from nearby were brought to Sanski Most. On that day, at noon, they released the women and children only for them to be slaughtered by the Moslems on their way home. In the afternoon of that day they searched all those arrested, of whom there were over 2,000. They took all of their belongings of whatever value, even their peasant-bags, and their shoes or sandals, and then they took them in parties of from 20 to 30 to one of these three places: Stock Market, City Cemetery or "The Hill", where the Moslems had already dug large ditches. There they were all executed and only partially buried so that many limbs might be seen sticking out of the ditch graves. These executions lasted three days until all of 2,000 men were slain. Nearly all executions were done by the Ustashi "flying squads" but some murders were committed by the Moslems.

On Monday, August 4, 1941, the Moslems brought more peasants, and even though further executions were forbidden, they, too, were murdered. Then they went to Lushka Palanka on Tuesday, August 5, 1941, but they found only an old man who had beaten them to it by hanging himself. The others had escaped to

Grmach Mountain. They totally burned and destroyed all buildings and everything else there. On August 6, 1941, they brought 58 peasants from Busnova, Prijedor county, and the local Ustashi murdered them instantly. On Thursday, August 7, 1941, the Moslems and the local Croats prepared a farewell party for the Ustashi and they had a great drinking orgy. The most beastly murders were committed by Philip Radosh from Hercegovina who was at Janka Pusta, in exile, and two others—Silajdzich and Makovec. This Philip Radosh, as a prelude to murder, raped women, dissecting with a knife the unborn in pregnant women and cutting off the victims' ears and noses. In regard to hostages, the judge, Macan, asked the Ustashi leader Gutich, if they too should be executed. He was advised by Gutich to kill them all, even the women and children. So all the hostages, except a Jew, Samuel Hasan, who had documentary evidence showing that he had been a secret agent of Pavelich before, and one Veselin Milinkovich, who was quarantined at his home on account of a contagious disease, were slain.

Then, after these murders the "strange" Ustashi went looting through the city and villages and took everything of value and even burned the crops and the stock of the victims. Raping was widespread throughout the villages. There were only 24 Serbs over 15 years of age left in the city, four of whom were feeble minded, all others having been murdered. Among the more prominent ones the following were slain: Veselin Nedinovich, an engineer, chief forester; Kosta Bodich, a postal official; Marko Ljubovich, a judge; Svetislav Novakovich, a tax official; Ilija Sagrdjija, a postal official; Postmaster Marko; Pantelija Lazich, a railroad official; Jovo Milkovich, a merchant; Lazar

Milichkovich, a veterinary; Dragutin Spasovich, a merchant; Ilija Basara, a restaurateur; Dushan Basara, a forester; Vid Milkovich, a merchant; Stojanovich Jovica, a merchant; Jovo Gaspar, a mason; Nikola Gaspar, a mason; Jovo Dmitrovich, a shoemaker; Svetozar Dragicevich, a chauffeur; Svetozar Dragichevich, a peasant; Vaso Kuzmanovich, a shoemaker; Bosko Lazich, a merchant; Ilija Trashpalo, a merchant; Jovo Brajich, a baker; Kosta Dokich, a baker; Veljko Dokich, a student; Tosha Lazich, a worker; Damjan Umchevich, a worker; Mirko Delich, a merchant; George Delich, a merchant; Milan Mijatovich, a merchant; Mihailo Popovich, retired; Veljko Bokan, Milan Veljkovich, bandleaders; Petar Gvozden, a merchant; Mladen Gvozden, a merchant; Milan Gvozden, an official; Djuro Bodnig, a law student; Tosho Djuricich, an attorney; Draga Djuricich, a teacher; Ognjen Borovich, a teacher; Jovo Ivazich, a peasant; Slavko Ivazich, a shoemaker; Rajko Ivazich, a tailor; Ilija Ivazich, a tailor; Pero Grbich, a worker; Mihailo Zivkovich, a tailor; Mile Marjanovich, a peasant; Djuro Novakovich, a restaurateur; Lazo Radovich, a restaurateur; Lazo Milicevich, a restaurateur; Vukasin Dragicich, a barber; Bosko Dragisich, an official; Milan Tostich, an official; Stevo Tostich, a merchant; Jovo Kragulj, a restaurateur; Trifko Milicevich, a worker; Drago Alich, a merchant; Zivko Trkulja, a cafe owner; Nedeljko Mladenovich, a student; Mile Lazich, a student; Branko Lazich, a student; Nikola Astelich, a shoemaker; Jovo Vojvodich, a shoemaker; Vid Vojvodich, a peasant; Dusan Kovacevich, a merchant; and Branko Miljanovich, a blacksmith.

48. AT CAZIN.—There is a Moslem majority in this county with about 3,000 Serbs and it borders with

the blood-drenched county of Petrinja from which the Ustashi had been sent earlier, from time to time, to murder the Serbs. For that reason about 1,000 Serbs gathered from the whole county and went to the authorities at Cazin to plead for protection. Instead of protection they found their death, for they were all under some pretext held to stay overnight in a certain nearby field, where they were massacred. An eyewitness, a Croat, related this terrible slaughter.

49. AT IMOTSKI.—In this Dalmatian bordering county, which was well known for its beastly hatred of the Serbs, every male Serb was murdered, so that in reality there is not one Serbian male left in that whole county; only women and children remained alive.

C. TORTURES

In addition to the tortures to which all of the Serbs were subjected, because cases are rare where murders were committed without preceding tortures and mistreatments, ruthless beatings, dismemberment of parts of the body, the gouging of eyes, or the breaking of arms and limbs and the like, we will refer to a few characteristic cases:

50. IN PETROVO SELO.—Where the peasants of Brodski Slatnik were murdered, as described in Paragraph 38 herein, the victims were brutally tortured before being murdered. These unfortunates' arms were broken, they were pelted with bricks, and while in agonizing pain from such terrific mutilation, they were killed by dum-dum bullets.

51. There were instances where some victims were smeared with feces while other victims were forced, at the point of a gun, to lick their bodies. The crushing

of victims' heads with iron bars, or beating victims into insensibility with sacks filled with stones were other methods used. Peasant Popovich suffered twisting of the testicles. In the Nova Gradiska jail, one Mirko Trninich, a resident of the same town, was flogged and died from the beating. Just before he died he told another victim, who has since escaped to safety, that every night between the hours of 11 and 12, a group of Croats were permitted to enter the jail and that the Chief Jailer, Koran, would turn his flashlight upon one of the victims who would then be jumped upon by these sadists and dragged away to a separate cell where they would beat him with sacks of stones. This man, Trninich, was exceptionally strong and upon offering resistance, about 16 Ustashi converged upon him and beat him so that there was no part of his body that remained uninjured. He reported that in this manner Protich, a cafe owner, a peasant by the name of Gavro Kovacevich, and another young man, were killed. In the same manner Dr. Galski, an attorney, was tortured and murdered.

52. In the statement under Paragraph 41 herein, in the Osek Garrison Jail, by order of the Ustashi, Matijkovich, a former laborer in a tannery, the arrested Serbs were tortured in the following manner: needles were stuck beneath their nails and they were tied to benches and beaten with wooden sticks. While they were so tied, their legs were forced apart causing them to suffer agonizing pains. Others were compelled to spit on the Serbian flag and ordered to tear it up with their teeth and eat it. While the victims were doing this they were receiving blows upon their heads and bodies. The unfortunates were forced also to tramp barefooted over barbed wire stretched over a board.

Upon the heads of some of the victims they placed a crown of thorns, thereafter pressing the thorns into their heads, causing them to bleed profusely. They were given food on very rare occasions and water upon still rarer occasions. Some of the victims by reason of such treatment became blind and began to faint, after which they were given 200 grams of bread. The food which some of them would receive from their homes, the Ustashi ate themselves. The priests were forced to clean latrines with their hands and refuse was thrown in their faces.

53. In the vicinity of Gracac, Dr. Veljko Torbica, a physician, was murdered. The Ustashi made deep knife gashes in his chest and thrust salt into these wounds and while suturing the wounds they asked the victim: "Doctor, was the operation successful?"

54. Milos Teslich, an industrialist of Sisak, was tortured in an especially beastly manner. The River Sava threw up his corpse with gouged eyes, a horribly mutilated face and his body and chest cut wide open. Several Ustashi, with smiles on their faces, photographed themselves standing around the body of their victim.

55. At Bosanska Kostajnica the victims were crucified alive by being nailed, hands and feet, upon the doors of their homes and after brutal tortures, were knifed to death. See Paragraph 13 herein.

56. In the village of Otoci by Krupa, the wife of Stojan Stopar and his two daughters were raped, murdered and then thrown into the river. There were also instances of the burial of live victims, which was admitted by several Croats.

57. AT BANJA LUKA.—Nikola Curcija, a merchant, was murdered in a most gruesome manner.

Having been first subjected to unspeakable tortures, his eyes were gouged, his sex organ cut off, his arms and limbs dismembered and then he was clubbed and stoned to death.

D. ARRESTS AND INTERNMENTS

From the very first days of the establishment of Croatian rule, arrests of Serbs were an every-day occurrence. Without any accusation or court proceedings they were arrested in masses. The whereabouts of many of them is unknown, while many others are in concentration camps. Many sure signs indicate that those Serbs who were taken in an undisclosed direction were murdered. Life was never certain to those arrested, for it usually happened that individuals taken away from jails at night met a horrible death. This also happened to the hostages who were arrested and of whom no account has ever been given.

The number of Serbs arrested and taken to concentration camps is an unbelievable one and exceeds 100,000, and it is known to us that in three or four concentration camps there are only about 27,000 interned Serbs.

The first man hunt began for the Serbian priests and their families, then for city residents and the *intelligentsia*. The old Metropolitan, Archbishop of Sarajevo, Petar Zimonich, the greatest moral authority of the Serbian church, was interned at first at Kerestinac and later he was taken with a large transport of priests and prominent citizens to Jadovno, near Gaspic, and put to labor on the road with others, even though he was a man of 80, very feeble and sick. According to the latest reports, many of these were murdered while

the lives of others are in constant danger. The Archbishop of Zagreb, Dositej, though in very ill health, was also taken away from Zagreb, as well as Bishop Nikolaj of Mostar, whom the Ustashi publicly maltreated and tortured, pulling his beard and beating him. According to certain and proven information, the Ustashi took Bishop Sava Trlajich of Plaski on July 17, 1941 to an unknown destination. They took his money and ransacked his residence. It has since been verified that he is also at Jadovno, where he shares a terrible fate with others.

58. Nearly the whole Croatian territory is now cleared of all Serbs, for all of them, insofar as they did not escape, are either murdered, arrested or taken away. While arresting and taking them away, the Ustashi do not allow Serbs to take with them enough food or clothing. Thousands of families are being arrested and deported without being allowed to take anything with them, and in the camps they are sometimes kept for several weeks without being furnished any food. In Dalj, about 100 families were carried away without being allowed to take along any food, money or anything else with them, nor was any food given to them on the way from home. The Ustashi finally began to totally depopulate entire villages and cities. It is well known that nearly all the cities of Croatia are purged of Serbs, beginning with Zagreb, Banja Luka, Bihach, Prijedor, Novi, Krupa. In other cities, especially in those which had a certain Serbian majority, there is hardly a single Serb left now.

During these involuntary deportations, many terrible scenes occurred for the Ustashi acted very drastically, not to say brutishly, toward those deported. They usually came into a house at night and ordered

the family to prepare for a trip in five minutes, and to take with them everything of value alleging that they would need the valuables on their way, and that they must turn over their keys to the Ustashi and assign all of their property, real and personal, to the Croatian State. Upon the assembling of all those to be deported, they would begin to search the unfortunates and relieve them of their money, jewelry and valuables and even of better shoes and clothing, leaving them with only worn out articles, and in some instances with only 500 dinars of money per family. On July 5, 1941, during the night, the Ustashi raided the homes of the more prominent Serbs, with gun and flashlight in hand, and amid the worst kind of cursing and swearing, they chased half-naked people out of their homes. Such incidents happened in nearly every town, but one of them will serve as an example: that of Zorka Kozumarich, the wife of Zarko Kozumarich from Bihach, who had been already taken away and murdered. While in mourning and grief for her husband, they told her that she must promptly prepare for deportation with her three children. In great fear and excitement, she took her life by poisoning herself with essence of vinegar. The oldest child was 8 and the youngest 4 years of age. The youngest child died of typhoid fever that same night. There are many instances where the victims from cruel beatings and terrorized by fear, have died before reaching concentration camps. For instance, the Very Rev. Pajich from Petrinja.

The condition of those deported is more than pitiful. Families are broken up, husbands and fathers are separated from wives and children, who are left to themselves and the care of the Ustashi. Deaths are

daily occurrences and it has been proved that no medical care is allowed them, not even in cases of pregnant women, that both mother and children are dying in such instances. They are not even permitted to be vaccinated against infectious diseases.

59. The Ustashi authorities are conducting a wholesale deportation of Orthodox priests with their families, from Croatian territory, so that there is not a single Serbian priest left in that territory now, except those who are in prisons. Considering the fact that there were eight Orthodox Dioceses within that territory, with a great number of priests, the terrible reality of these measures can be conceived. The few remaining Serbs there are now without their spiritual leaders, and they are left to the mercy of the Ustashis' Catholic authorities. Regarding the families of the clergy, we specifically mention here that they are especially subjected to the beastly acts of the Ustashi. It is a common occurrence for priests' wives and daughters to be raped, though there are such crimes committed against other families, too.

60. THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS OF GOSPIC AND JADOVNO. Especially known for real martyrdom is the concentration camp at Jadovno near Gospic, below Mt. Velebit, 1500 meters above sea level. The hardest conceivable manual labor and under the most difficult conditions, is enforced. Considering that at Jadovno are kept our most prominent men, many of them of very old age, that camp is for the Serbs, the most terrible one. Besides Jadovno, many of our prominent and leading men are kept in the prisons at Gospic. The lives of these men at Jadovno and Gospic are really horrible. They do not receive any food for several days at a time, or they may be given only what

is called "soup" once a day, a little bread and unprepared vegetables and the Ustashi torture them with thirst. There are over 2,500 Serbs in these two camps and the majority of them are old, and since the creation of the Croatian State, they have been forced to do hard labor in many camps and prisons. They are now all in immediate danger of sickness and death.

E. FORCIBLE CONVERSION OF SERBIAN ORTHODOX
PEOPLE TO CATHOLICISM AND DESTRUCTION
OF ORTHODOX CHURCHES

61. From the very beginning the Ustashi authorities have inaugurated a system of terror, whereby they have forced many Orthodox Serbs to be converted to the Catholic faith. The close co-operation between the Catholic Church and the Ustashi authorities is known, which is also evidenced by the fact that among the Ustashi officials there are a great number of Catholic priests. The first intimidation for conversion to Catholicism was directed against the State employees, who were advised that in the Croatian State's employ only those Orthodox people might remain who would embrace the Catholic faith, but in effect this was only a ruse. Thus depriving the Serbian people of having their clergy, the Roman church forced the Orthodox people to the Catholic rites. According to the testimony of Reverend Janko Vejakovich, pastor of Grbovich, the Catholic priests there lead the armed Ustashi in the closing of Orthodox churches and the confiscation of church records, also in the plundering of all church valuables. At Banja Luka, an official order was issued directing that all of the Orthodox Church records (of marriages, baptisms, burials, etc.) be delivered forthwith to Catholic parishes, which order was later ex-

tended throughout the territory of the former Croatian province. Catholic priests took possession of the Serbian Bishop's residence at Pakrac and locked and sealed the Cathedral, all of which occurred April 12, 1941.

This was all being done in accordance with the plans of the Croatian State officials, which is evidenced by a speech made by Dr. Victor Gutic, a high Ustashi official of Banja Luka, on July 9, 1941 at Prnjavor. Among other things in his speech on that day, Dr. Gutic said: "In this countryside there are three churches which were taken away from the Croatian people, one of these is in Prnjavor. Tomorrow you shall take possession of it and display thereon a sign: 'Croatian Hall.' Those of you who are of the Orthodox religion should at once embrace the Catholic faith so that I need not make special decisions in this respect. And as for this Serbian nest in Prnjavor, I promise, that I will come here and take twenty-four hours time to clean it up. I will kill and you shall follow me." (Apparently Dr. Gutic had in mind the three Russian Orthodox Churches which are located within the district mentioned in his speech). On the afternoon of July 10th, 1941, the Serbian Orthodox priest in Prnjavor was thrown out of his residence, his church was confiscated and upon the church edifice there was a large sign "Croatian Hall," displayed. Not long ago, Mile Budak, also a high Ustashi official, publicly declared that upon the territory of the Croatian Independent State only two religions may be recognized, to-wit: the Catholic and the Mohammedan, which meant that the Orthodox religion would not be further tolerated.

62. All over the territory of the Croatian State the Serbian Orthodox Churches are being destroyed.

Serbian churches were destroyed at Banja Luka, also in Bihac, Bosanska Gradiska, Nova Gradiska, Celinac near Banja Luka, and the two churches in the villages of Bastasi and Spasovina, county of Bosansko Grahovo, and those in Suvaja and Srb, county of Donji Lapac, were burned. The latest information relates the continuous destruction of Serbian churches, especially in the province of Bosnia, and the people are at a loss to understand this vandalism of purely Bolshevik origin.

F. BLACKMAIL AND EXTORTIONS

63. From the very beginning of their power, the Ustashi started to loot, rob, and blackmail those Serbs whom they believed to have money. They sent threatening letters (like in Banja Luka), to nearly all Serbs to bring specified sums of money within six hours to a specified place, for the benefit of the Croatian State and the Ustashi forces.⁴¹ It followed that these were not uncontrollable acts of individuals, but one of the methods of annihilating the Serbian people. Instances are all too numerous in places where individuals were blackmailed, demands being for very great sums, running into millions of dinars, where the recipients of letters were told that they would be murdered unless they complied forthwith. These threats were seriously meant, as we have proof of their being carried out in cases of individuals who were unable to meet such extortions. And even though there came a decree of the Croatian authorities that such "measures" were illegal, nevertheless the extortions continued. On the homes of the deported ones, notices were put up reading: "Appropriated in favor of the Croatian State." Business places were confiscated by official commissioners and the owners thrown out into the streets. Former

millionaires, barefooted and almost naked, without any possessions whatsoever, are being deported into Serbia. So many of these instances are well known that it is unnecessary to enumerate them in detail.

G. DECLARATIONS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CROATIAN AUTHORITIES

64. All these acts of force and anarchy are not happening just by accident nor are they being perpetrated by irresponsible elements, but they represent a planned system for the extermination of Serbs, directed by the highest functionaries of the Croatian State and this is evidenced by the following declarations:

Minister Dr. Milovan Zanich, at a public meeting at Nova Gradishka on June 2, 1941, said: "This State, this fatherland of ours, is for Croats only and for no one else, therefore, those who have come here should leave. Century long experiences, and especially those occurring during the last 20 years, show that any compromise is absolutely impossible. This has to be a country of Croats and of nobody else. We are not keeping this as a secret, as such is the policy of this State, and whenever we succeed in accomplishing this, we shall accomplish only that which is within the principles of the Ustashi."

Minister Dr. Mile Budak, at a banquet in Gospic said: "One part of the Serbs we shall kill; another we shall deport; the third we shall force to embrace the Roman Catholic religion and thus melt them into Croats."

At a public meeting at Krizevac on July 6, 1941, Budak said: "The Croatian State is Christian. It is

also a Moslem state where our people are of the Mohammedan religion. I emphasize this because it is necessary that it be known that ours is a country of two religions, Catholic and Moslem, and our Communist enemies from Serbia are attacking our religion because they know that if they succeed in destroying it, they can do anything with us they so desire."

Minister Dr. Mirko Puk, at a public meeting at Krizevac on July 6, 1941, said: "The Serbs came to our parts with the Turkish hordes as refuse of the Balkans. We cannot allow two peoples to rule in our country. There is one God and one ruling people, and that is the Croatian people. Those who came to our country two to three hundred years ago, must go back where they came from." Mile Budak also repeated in his speech at a public meeting a Croatian saying: "Either get out of our path or bow to us", which was his credo. "And I am telling you", he said in the same speech, "Either get out of our country, or we will chase you out with force."

According to the "Croatian Gazette" of June 5, the aforementioned Zanich said: "We have among us those who were never loyal to us. They came here when many of our people perished and when our homes were desolated during the Turkish wars. They came here and spread themselves like a porcupine and began to endanger our very existence and almost succeeded in overpowering us. They are Serbs. From all that has happened here, we know that they will never wish us any good, nor will they think of us favorably. We, the Ustashi, know very well, that as long as the question of Serbs is not completely solved, that there will be no peace in this country. We know that we are right when, in the interests of our very existence, and relying upon

our own strength, we say to them: "Go on across Drina!"

The head of the Ustashi authorities at Banja Luka, Dr. Victor Gutich, was especially productive in making similar statements. On May 28, 1941, after returning from Pavelich, he declared: "To my great satisfaction and for the benefit of the people, I concluded urgent and important business at Zagreb. Now I have to begin the great undertaking of clearing Croatian-Bosanska Krajina from undesirable elements and especially Banja Luka, for it is destined to be the capital city of the Independent State of Croatia. Without any doubt, most serious and drastic measures shall be undertaken to achieve this. What I have done so far is only a trifle, such a small trifle, that it can hardly be seen through a microscope, so you can imagine what is yet to happen to the enemy of the Independent State of Croatia in our beautiful Bosanska Krajina. I have complete freedom in this respect. I want to serve the will of God and the people. All undesirable elements in our Krajina shall soon be annihilated, so that in the shortest time possible there will be no trace left of the Serbs, and the only thing that will remain of them will be a bad memory."

At a convention of the Ustashi at Banja Luka, the head of the government there, Gutich, said: "Tomorrow I will begin to tighten up. Spines will be broken . . . tell that to our enemies. Tell them that spines will be broken . . . house cleaning will begin . . . there will be no mercy. Pavelich and his ministers crave to come to clear Banja Luka, and that will happen soon. We will work fast. I will be a broom of steel and I say here: "None of you need come to me to beg mercy for our enemies."

At a meeting at Banja Luka on May 30, 1941, this same Gutich said: "There is no more Serbian Army! There is no more Serbia! There are no more Gedjas (Serb Peasants), our bloody enemies; there is no more gypsy dynasty of Karageorgevich's and our highways shall soon crave in vain to see Serbs again, for there shall be no more of them. I have issued drastic decrees for their total economic annihilation and new orders shall follow. Don't be weaklings toward any of them. Always have in mind the fact that they were our grave-diggers; exterminate them wherever you see them and the blessings for your deeds will come from our Poglavnik (Pavelich) and also from me. Serbs must expect nothing; the best thing for them is to get out, they must disappear from our country." Thus Gutich set telling examples by killing the most Serbs himself in the village Kijevo, near Sanski Most.

H. REVOLT AGAINST THE USTASHI GOVERNMENT

65. The heretofore mentioned beastly acts of the Croats: tortures, murders of men, women and children, catholicizing by force, burning of buildings, churches, villages and cities, as early as June 27, 1941, were endured by the Serbs in Croatia hoping that somehow an end would come to such massacres and torture. However, things were getting worse every day. Deprived of the protection of any law, oppressed by an unheard of terrorism, the Serbs in Croatia, running away from a sure death, began to leave their homesteads and their possessions and to escape into the mountains to take up arms in defense of their very lives, for that was the only thing to which they could resort under the circumstances.

That is how the alleged "revolt of the Chetniks" began in Hercegovina, Bosanska Krajina, Lika and other parts of Croatia where the Serbs live. Revolts and disturbances caused by the methods of the inquisition of the Croatian authorities began about July 27, 1941, at different times and in various places, because this action was not a prepared or an organized one, for there was neither unity in movement nor organized armed resistance. When the Croatian authorities came to Bosnia, Hercegovina and Lika where the Serbs were in the majority, and especially to Bosanska Krajina where the Serbs were in absolute majority, about 70% as against 30% of Croats and Moslems (there are only 12% Catholics of all nationalities there), the Serbs were put into a precarious position. Efforts to exterminate the Serbs, mass murders, economic annihilation, and especially forced deportations from their own homes without any possessions at all, compelled these unfortunate people to resist. All who could escape, ran for their lives into the mountains, for they had no protection of any kind either from the authorities or from their own leaders, for they were all dead or in refuge. The people began to help themselves the best they knew how. They took up arms, and with arms, but without food, and often without water, they had to protect their very lives.

These criminal acts on the part of the Croats stirred to revolt this otherwise respectable, pious, law abiding and peace-loving people, who have always been nationalistically very conscious, because their most sacred feelings were deeply hurt. Since all of the clergy were exterminated, the people were forced to the Catholic religious rites, which was the culmination of attacks against the Serbs. It is to be understood, however, that

the people have refused to avail themselves of these and have consequently ceased to celebrate marriages or receive baptism and other religious rites, including funeral services, all of which, it is evident, tends to indicate that by such conduct on the part of the Croatian authorities, the ground for bolshevism and anarchy is being efficiently prepared in these provinces.

In the name of

THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Bishop Valerian of Budim

Vicar of his Holiness the Patriarch

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41 Ягобно

MEMORANDUM
of the
SERBIAN EASTERN ORTHODOX DIOCESE
for the
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA

in Re:
THE QUISLING-CREATED
"CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH"

41) Ягобъно

XVII

AN APPEAL TO SECRETARY HULL

To his Excellency,
Hon. Cordell Hull,
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Excellency:

In June of this year the head of the pretended "Independent Croatian State", the well-known Quisling Ante Pavelich, issued his decree at Zagreb establishing within the territory of his puppet-state a so-called "Croatian Orthodox Church". By the provisions of said decree the "Croatian Orthodox Church" consists of four dioceses with their respective seats in Zagreb, Brod, Bosanski Petrovac and Sarajevo. For the head of the "Croatian Orthodox Church" the Quisling Ante Pavelich selected Bishop Hermogenus, who was the Bishop of Ekaterinoslav Diocese, in former Czarist Russia. Bishop Hermogenus willingly accepted the appointment thus conferred upon him by Quisling Ante Pavelich.

It is evident that the primary purpose, plan and design in creating the "Croatian Orthodox Church" is—

- (a) to cause a break and disrupt the unity among the Serbian people and in the Serbian Orthodox Church;
- (b) to cover up, by such disruption, confusion and disunity, the horrible massacre visited upon

the Serbian people and the Serbian Orthodox clergy living within the boundaries of the "Independent Croatian State", by the Croatian and Nazi criminals;

- (c) to aid in the forcible conversion of the remaining Orthodox Serbs to the Roman Catholic faith, and
- (d) to offer the world fraudulent evidence of religious tolerance and freedom of worship by the "Independent Croatian State."

Whereas, the creation of the so-called "Croatian Orthodox Church" is without basis of either moral, ethnical, legal, historical or canonical justification or rights, and since the Serbian Orthodox Church is, by force of recent events, dismembered and now has no means of speaking for itself freely, or expressing itself fully upon the subject matter to protect its integrity, therefore, in the name of the Serbian Orthodox Church as her only free Bishop in the World . . .

WE PROTEST against the creation of the "Croatian Orthodox Church" and respectfully ask your Excellency to take notice of this protest to protect the interests of the martyred Serbian Orthodox Church, which has through the past centuries so nobly served Christianity and every cause of democracy.

We have directed an appeal also to the Holy Orthodox Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch, as well as to all autonomous Orthodox Churches throughout the world asking them to refuse to acknowledge or recognize such an illegally created church, in order that the canonic and spiritual

integrity of the Holy Orthodoxy may not be violated by such anarchy.

In support of the contentions of the Serbian Orthodox Church herein stated, we respectfully submit for your kind consideration a brief outline of historical data and notes embodied in the accompanying Memorandum.

St. Nicholas Day, 1942.

Faithfully yours,

Rt. Rev. Bishop Dionisije,
Bishop of the
Serbian Orthodox Church Diocese
of the United States of America
and Canada.

The above letter of protest together with the attached Memorandum, was presented to the government of the United States on the above mentioned date. Likewise copies of the protest and memorandum, concerning the same subject matter, were presented to many governments of the United Nations through their respective representatives.

A. THE CREATION OF THE "CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH" IS AN AXIS ATTEMPT TO PERPETRATE FRAUD UPON THE WORLD.

The creation of the "Croatian Orthodox Church" did not come into being as a result of a sincere and popular adherence to the principles of Orthodoxy and Christian love. There are no "Orthodox Croats", except for a few who for insignificant reasons accepted the religion—converts for reasons of marriages. Rather,

the creation of the "Croatian Orthodox Church", by virtue of a Quisling's decree, appears as evidence of exemplary proof of a deep hatred towards the Serbs and the Serbian Orthodox Church. Designed on purpose to divide, dismember and weaken Serbdom and the Serbian Orthodox Church, it aims to offer to the world an example of religious tolerance by the puppet-state, the so-called "Independent Croatian State".

What an example, in face of such well known, gruesome and horrible massacres of the Serbian people of Orthodox faith and the forcible conversion of those Orthodox Serbs left living to Roman Catholicism, within the boundaries of this puppet-state!

To illustrate the mockery of this infamous attack upon the unfortunate Serbs in the province of Croatia, we shall refer to facts supported by documentary evidence.

1. At a meeting of the "Assembly of the Independent Croatian State", held in Zagreb, February 25, 1942, Dr. Mirko Puk, Minister of Justice and Religious Education, made the following declaration, which was also incorporated in his report to the Assembly:

"The Independent State of Croatia recognizes only three religious denominations, to-wit: The Roman Catholic, the Mohammedan and that of the Evangelistic-Augsburg Confession. The Croatian Independent State cannot longer recognize the Serbian Orthodox Church".

The authenticated stenographic record of the above proceedings shows that this report was unanimously approved by the Assembly. It is to be noted that nowhere in these proceedings mention is made of a "Croatian Orthodox Church", which, had it any semblance of existence in any form, would have been eagerly recorded as a fact. But the specific mention of the Serbian

Orthodox Church and the Assembly's refusal to further recognize and tolerate its freedom of worship, destroy any and all attempts of this Quisling-state, "Independent Croatian State" to deceive the world into accepting its purported recognition of religious freedom and tolerance within its boundaries.

2. The appointment of Bishop Hermogenus, a former Bishop of Ekaterinoslav Diocese, in Czarist Russia, to act as the head of the "Croatian Orthodox Church", in itself sufficiently displays the evil design in creating this church. Bishop Hermogenus is a Russian, not a Croatian. During the Russian revolution he abandoned his flock of the Ekaterinoslav Diocese and fled to Jugoslavia. Thereafter, His Grace, Archbishop Sergius, the Metropolitan of Moscow, appointed another Bishop in his place, who was selected by the Holy Synod of Russia.

The express provisions of the canons of the Orthodox Church prohibits any Bishop, who abandons his faithful and his Diocese, from ever becoming again the head of any Church. (Council of Nicea). So, thus disqualified, by what stretch of the imagination could Bishop Hermogenus, a Non-Croat, be appointed to this high office?

3. The canons further provide that no Orthodox Bishop may act as such where there is another Orthodox Bishop.

The Serbian Orthodox Church in the province of Croatia was under the jurisdiction of Bishop Dositey, who was duly and legally ordained to his high office, and who was acting as such with the dignity of Metropolitan, at Zagreb, at the time of the invasion. He is still alive, though he was imprisoned and brutally

treated by the same Quisling, Ante Pavelich, chief of the Independent Croatian State.

The canons, rules and regulations of the Orthodox Church system still preserve all rights, title and privileges of Bishop Dositey, the Metropolitan of Zagreb, and his mere imprisonment by the ruthless Quisling does not deprive him of his high office.

The First Ecumenical Council, Article 8, provides:

"There cannot be two bishops in the same territory, especially not for the followers of identical religious faiths. The bishop, who usurps the place of another shall be relieved of his dignities and excluded."

Had there ever been any "Croatian Orthodox", laity or clergy, why was a Russian selected to head the Croatian Orthodox Church? It is obvious that no Orthodox Croatian, lay or clerical ever existed in Croatia or elsewhere.

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B. THE "CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH" IS
WITHOUT ETHICAL FOUNDATION.

Etymologically, the words "Croat and Croatia" are five centuries younger in comparison with the words "Serb" and "Serbia". It is true that Croats were mentioned by Porphyrogenetus as a tribe living south of the Kupa River and the Velebit mountains, who from their earliest days had embraced the Roman Catholic faith. Through many centuries they served foreign masters, beginning with Charles the Great and continuing to Francis Joseph.

During this period of one thousand years they have identified Roman Catholicism with that of Croatian nationalism as firmly as Serbdom and Orthodoxy are welded together, so that even the word "Croat" became

obsolete after the disappearance of the Dalmatian Roman Catholic rulers. The names "Croat" and "Croatia" reappeared in 1526, after the battle of Mohach, when the nobles of Zagreb, Varazdin and Krizevac counties began to use these designations again.

Thereafter, the name "Croat" was exchanged for that of "Illyrian". Not until about a half century ago did they resume the use for definite designation of the names "Croats" and "Croatia" exclusively. But irrespective of all these changes the Croats always remained of Roman Catholic faith.

There is not a single instance where a Roman Catholic Croat was ever compelled by force or otherwise to embrace the Orthodox faith so that he would feel as an Orthodox Croat. Even if King Tomislav who prohibited the use of the alphabet of the Slovenes and opposed famous Bishop Gregory (Grgur Ninski) were tolerant, or even if the permission to use the Slovene language by the Archbishop of Split in the church service were granted, these things of themselves would not offer proof that the Croats were ever Orthodox.

Examining these historic facts, one is almost forced to question himself:—When and where were the Croats, or any group of them, ever converted to the Orthodox faith so that a "Croatian Orthodox Church", at this time, requires official sanction?

To the contrary, history discloses that the Apostolic Roman Catholic Empire of Austria Hungary encouraged the forcible conversion of Orthodox Serbs, within its domain, to the Roman Catholic faith. Thus, as evidence of this, the Serbs in Marcha and Zumberak districts of Croatia are in union with Rome today.

C. THE "CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH" HAS NO HISTORICAL BASIS.

Before the great migration of Serbs to Austria took place in 1690, there had already existed in Austria-Hungary several Serbian Orthodox Church Dioceses with Bishops in charge, who were under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarch at Pech (Southern Serbia).

The privileges which the Serbs gained from the Hungarian Kings originated from the time of King Sigismund. From an early date in the XVth to the end of XVIIIth Century, over thirty different laws were enacted regulating the legal status of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the then Kingdom of Hungary. Those Serbs, especially those who migrated in the XVIth Century to the provinces of Lika, Kordun, Baniya, Zumberak and Marcha (within Croatia), under the administration of the Croatian nobles Zrinski and Frankopan, acquired specific rights at the assembly of Austrian Professions in Bruck on Mura in 1578. The so-called Bruck Charter also regulates the status of the immigrant Serbian people by which they enjoy all civil and religious rights for defending by their arms the Austrian Empire from further incursions of the Turks. These rights were confirmed by Emperor Ferdinand in 1630, giving the Serbs rights to have their own courts and religious institutions.

With the arrival of the Serbian Patriarch Arseniye III into the lands of Austria-Hungary, with 40,000 Serbian families, the old Serbian Dioceses in Austria-Hungary united under a Patriarch and formed a unified church organization, which was confirmed by Emperor's Charter of August 21, 1690 and of March 5, 1695, as a result of mutual agreements between the

Serbian people and the Serbian Orthodox Church on the one side and the Austrian Emperors and Hungarian Kings on the other.

Among other rights acquired by the Serbs at that time, the specific ones were as follows:

1. Free selection of their own Archbishop and Bishops from the Serbian clergy;
2. Right to build their own churches and monasteries and to hold real estate;
3. Right to their own national Assembly and a Church Synod;
4. The Serbian Archbishop was granted all rights, privileges and authority as held by the Pech Patriarchate;
5. Guarantees of freedom in religious worship, etc.

None of these rights were mere grants, but they were hard earned, through the willingness of the Serbs to fight and to defend by their own blood the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

These rights so acquired by the Serbian people and the Serbian Orthodox Church were incorporated in the Austro-Hungarian laws and extended over all Austro-Hungarian territories, including Croatia, wherever the Serbian people were settled. None of these laws were ever in any way abrogated or modified, they have remained in full force and effect ever since they were enacted.

It was the purpose and intention of those earliest Serbian settlers and their leaders, by these specific agreements, to preserve their Orthodox faith and their nationalism, hence these rights were always jealously guarded by them and many attempts to abrogate or circumvent them were always successfully repelled. They were able to succeed in the defense of their

rights only through their loyalty and their splendid cooperation with the Empire and their valiant help in suppressing the Turkish conquest of Europe.

There were eleven Serbian Orthodox Dioceses organized or reorganized in 1695 by Patriarch Arseniye, including the ones in Croatia under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.

This brief review of the earliest history of the existence and consolidation of the Serbian Orthodox Church within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including Croatia, may serve to exclude any doubt of the encroachment upon Serbian rights by an existing Croatian Orthodox Church, simply for the reason that from the facts history never knew of any such Croatian church.

D. THE "CROATIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH" HAS NO
LEGAL OR CANONIC BASIS.

The creator of the "Croatian Orthodox Church", the "Independent Croatian State", is not a recognized state, except by like puppet-states. To this date, it is not even recognized by the Holy See of Rome. It is itself without even a semblance of legality. How then could its decree-made church, the "Croatian Orthodox Church" be recognized by the world?

The Serbian Orthodox Church having enjoyed the full recognition of the world and of church forums ever since its recognition by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1219 A.D., was fully and completely consolidated into one single administrative body upon the conclusion of the first World War, when all the provinces wherein the Serbian Orthodox Church existed, including Croatia, merged into Yugoslavia.

In 1855 the Patriarchate of Constantinople issued a register of all the autonomous Orthodox Churches, in World-wide existence. According to this registry (Church Canonic Compendium, Vol. 5, Pages 513-530) the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Metropolitanate of Karlovci includes all the territories where Serbian people reside in Austria-Hungary, and the Croatian province not excepted. But nowhere in this registry is mention made of a "Croatian Orthodox Church".

The Quisling decree, by virtue of which the Croatian Orthodox Church" was established, does not offer any reason or explanation tending to show a basis upon which the right to establish such a church is based. Therefore, the "Croatian Orthodox Church" necessarily finds itself at once without foundation, or canonical rights. It is but an example of how a common enemy seeks to destroy a people by an attempt to desecrate its Faith.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Memorandum is not only to refute the creation or the cognizance of the "Croatian Orthodox Church", by facts and historical data, but also to raise a voice of most vehement protest on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church against any attempts to divide or dismember her. It is obvious that tolerance of worship or freedom of religion was not the motivating force in creating such a church. The Assembly of the "Independent Croatian State" is definitely on record as being against such freedom and tolerance.

The Serbian Orthodox Church shall always remain as one, whole and indivisible body in closest canonical

ties with Holy Orthodox Churches of the world. In no way can it permit recognition, created under false pretenses at best, of the "Croatian Orthodox Church".

Calling upon the civilized world and all the faithful to refuse the recognition of this Quisling-created "Croatian Orthodox Church", we shall remain in prayer that the guilty ones will soon reach the bar of justice and answer charges for their crimes and misdeeds for which we now indict them.

Rt. Rev. Bishop Dionisije

St. Nicholas Day, 1942.

St. Sava Monastery,
Libertyville,
Illinois.

41 | Jagobno

XVIII

AN OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM OF HUNGARIAN ATROCITIES

The Yugoslav Government in London delivered in May 1942, to the American and the Allied Governments the following memorandum concerning Hungarian atrocities against the Serbian population in Yugoslavia:

"The Government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia has only lately been able to secure some details with regard to the Hungarian atrocities to the Serbs immediately following the entry of the Hungarian troops. Such horrible atrocities as committed are almost past the comprehension of the human mind.

"At HORGOS all Serbs were murdered and the premises of the English Club were set on fire. In SUBOTICA, numberless students and school-children were rounded up and at once shot in front of the Grammar school. Serbian homes and shops were robbed and looted. The women and children of all those Serbian families whose menfolk were suspected of having taken part in the war (against Hitler) were brought down to the Lake of Palic and there killed.

"At SOMBOR, Serbs, to the number of five or six thousand were killed. Outside the Sombor church the Hungarians shot 500 Serbs, among them a General, all of whom were prisoners of war. Then the Hungarians destroyed the Serbian homes by setting them on fire. In BACKA TOPOLA they murdered every Serb.

"A native eyewitness found in Topola, only an old woman surviving of all the Serbian families, which numbered about one thousand. This old lady, Mrs. Kratich, had been locked in her home and was dying from starvation. Her husband and her four children had been murdered in her very presence. When the eyewitness inquired for his mother and brother she told him that they had been killed with others in that town. Mrs. Kratich then told of the most ghastly atrocities, how the Hungarian soldiers had raped the Serbian women, the girls, and even children of ten years of age. The raped women and girls were stripped naked, smeared with tar and in this fashion were dragged through the town to the outskirts where they were murdered. In some cases women were left to die in the most terrible agony from bayonet wounds in their breasts. Orthodox clergymen were subjected to the most terrible humiliations and maltreatments and a great many of them were murdered. Now services in the Orthodox churches are forbidden. The churches have been looted and destroyed and the celebration of the "Slava" (family's patron) and of all Orthodox holy days is prohibited.

"As a detailed example of the persecution it may be said that the Hungarians at once ordered that all clocks should be adjusted to German time and executed instantly anyone found to have disregarded the order. They summarily executed everyone who carried a cigarette lighter.

"Wherever Serbs were found, the Hungarians either killed them or expelled them, permitting no more than 300 dinars in their pockets. As, however, they were not admitted into Pavelich's Croatia, they had to return, whereupon the Hungarians killed the men and

sent the women and children to concentration camps. It is believed with reasonably certainty that the Hungarians killed about 100,000 Serbian men, women and children. Concentration camps were set up in every town, usually in the open air on sport grounds. The largest of these camps were established in SUBOTICA, NOVI SAD, PECHUJ, and BAJA.

"Conditions were worst at Novi Sad in Marija Park. Here 13,000 men, women and children, Serbs and Jews, were seen by eyewitnesses living in the open air in a field surrounded by barbed wire. They were so closely packed together that none of them could lie down to sleep, they could only sit side by side. Children as well as the grownups were dying from hunger and thirst having only grass to eat and their own urine to drink. They were not permitted to leave the enclosure even to satisfy their physical needs and the ensuing odor of necessity became unbearable. When Hungarian officers came to make inquiries the men had to stand at attention and answer the questions in Hungarian. Anyone who failed to do this was lashed with a guard's whip. The eyewitness saw a man struck so severely with a whip that his skull was fractured causing him to die instantly. The witness also saw a boy of 16 who was compelled to pull a rubbish cart which, although it had only one wheel, contained a sixty year old Jew. He was dragged across the field and dumped into a pit where he soon afterwards died. The eyewitness saw in this camp great numbers of orphaned children so famished that they were biting their fingers and sucking their own blood. The men in the camps no longer looked like human beings, they were exhausted, unshaven, vermin-infested and terrifyingly unclean. The women and children were in a

similar condition. The pictures presented of them were so horrible that they cannot be described. These savageries were so gruesome that they do not bear thinking about. When the world learns of them after the war, they will rank as the greatest atrocities known to the human race in a thousand years or more.

"In Novi Sad itself an entire block, the Temerinska Ulica, was destroyed. All the remaining Serbian inhabitants to the number of about 700, were shot at one end of the street. Serbs were ruthlessly murdered in all other parts of the town. The Tisa and Danube rivers and the Kralj Aleksandar and Kralj Petar Canals were full of dismembered corpses.

"The Hungarians do not allow anyone to enter the occupied part of Yugoslavia. In Hungary it was strictly forbidden to talk of the gruesome events which were taking place there. The Hungarians were greatly in fear lest these crimes should reach the public ear. This explains why so little has been heard of them thus far."

XIX

DOCUMENT REGARDING INTOLERANCE TOWARD THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN CROATIA

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE INDEPENDENT CROATIAN STATE

Excerpts from Stenographic Record of the Proceedings of a
Regular Session held in Zagreb, February 25, 1942

SUBJECT:

RECOGNITION OF RELIGIONS WITHIN THE STATE

The Minister of Justice and Religions of the Independent Croatian State, Dr. Mirko Puk, submitted this day to the State Assembly his report regarding the religious denominations which have been recognized and given franchise within the Independent Croatian State. Denying recognition of the Serbian Orthodox Church within the Independent Croatian State, the Minister gave the following expose:

"Gentlemen, members, of the High Croatian State Assembly:

"On the question of religious recognition and tolerance, the Croatian State Government has followed those principles which were laid down and inbeded in our hearts and souls by the founder of the Rightist Party and the father of our fatherland, Dr. Ante Starevich. Following those principles, the Croatian State Government for the time being, in reality rec-

ognizes three religious denominations within this state, to-wit: the Roman Catholic, Western and Eastern, the Moslem and the Evangelical of the Helvetian order.

"With reference to another religious group, the so-called Old-Catholic sect, the Croatian State Government has thus far refused to recognize it as a legally constituted religious group or denomination.

"Gentlemen and members of the Croatian State Assembly:

"I shall also make reference to the so-called Serbian Orthodox Church, i. e. the Greek Eastern religion. In this regard I must emphatically state that the Independent Croatian State cannot and will not recognize the Serbian Orthodox Church.

"To permit the organization or existence of the Serbian Orthodox Church within the jurisdiction of the Independent Croatian State would in effect mean to permit the Government of Serbia to prosecute a part of its state functions within the territory of the Independent Croatian State through the Serbian Orthodox Church which, of course, no state in the world would or could permit and neither will it be permitted by the Independent State of Croatia.

"Whoever for whatever reason may become opposed to such conditions and is dissatisfied with this irrevocable rule of law, is at liberty to move from the territory of this state."

Thereupon the Assembly fully approved the report of Dr. Mirko Puk, Minister of Justice and Religions, on the question of recognized religions within the state.

By this exemplary action of religious intolerance the Assembly of the Independent Croatian State left the Serbian people of the Orthodox religion to choose one of the following courses: to change to the Roman Catholic faith, to leave their homesteads or to be forcibly exterminated.

41 | ЯгобѠ

41 Ягобно

XX

OFFICIAL DECREE OF CROATIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS IN REFERENCE TO FORCIBLE CONVERSION OF ORTHODOX SERBS TO CATHOLICISM

The Council of Croatian Bishops at a conference held in Zagreb on the 17th day of December 1941, upon deliberations in regard to the conversion of Serbians of Orthodox faith to Roman Catholicism, promulgated the following decree.

1. Concerning the vital question of the conversion of those of Serbian Orthodox faith into Roman Catholicism, the Catholic Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, according to divine right and church canons retains sole and exclusive jurisdiction in issuing necessary prescriptions for said purpose, consequently, any action from any other but ecclesiastical authority, is excluded.

2. The Catholic Ecclesiastical Hierarchy has the exclusive right to nominate and appoint missionaries with the object of converting those of the Serbian Orthodox into the Catholic faith. Every missionary shall obtain permission for his spiritual work, from the nearest local church authority. It shall be regarded as against existing dogmas and canons, if the so-called missionaries should obtain permission for such work from representatives of the local civil councils, regional directors, Ustashi or from any other secular authority.

3. Such missionaries shall be responsible only to the local church authorities, or directly to the local Catholic priests.

4. The Roman Catholic Church may recognize, as binding, only those conversions which have been made in accordance with these dogmatic principles.

5. Secular authorities shall have no right to annul conversions made by the Church representatives.

6. The Croatian Catholic Bishops constitute a directorium consisting of three persons: the President of the Council of Bishops; Bishop Victor Buric, and the administrator of the Bishopric of Krizevci, Janko Simrak. They are authorized to consult with the Minister of Religions on all questions relating to necessary and proper procedure.

7. The Executive Committee dealing with the conversions of those of the Serbian Orthodox faith to that of the Catholic, consisting of Dr. Franjo Kerman, professor of the Theological Faculty in Zagreb; Dr. Janko Kalaj, Professor of Theology in secondary schools; Dr. Augustin Juretic, Consultor of the Bishops' Council; Nikola Boris,—Juris, Consultor of the Bishops' Council in Zagreb; and Dr. Krunoslav Draganovic, shall discuss all preliminary questions concerning conversions of followers of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Roman Catholic faith, under the supervision of the Bishop chosen for these converts.

8. Into the Roman Catholic Church, only those can be received who decide to enter it of their own free will and convictions and who are fully convinced of the truth of the Roman Catholic doctrines, and who fully conform to the doctrines.

9. Concerning the rites to be applied in the conversions, the Croatian Roman Catholic Bishops will adopt in full the rule prescribed by the Holy Congregation of the Eastern Church as of July 17, 1941, and which has been communicated to the President of the Bishops' Council. It is recommended that in the spiritual work of the church no secular organization should interfere, not even the Ustashi organization, because it may only do harm to the good cause itself.

10. The committee of the Croatian Catholic Bishops for conversions, will organize courses for those priests who are to act as instruments in the conversions of the Serbian Orthodox into the Catholic Church. In these courses they will receive both theoretical and practical instructions for their work.

11. It is necessary that for conversions to be achieved, a psychological basis should be created among the Serbian Orthodox followers. With this object in view, they should be guaranteed not only civil rights, but in particular they should be granted the right of personal freedom and also the right to hold property. All unlawful procedure against the personal freedom and property of the Orthodox shall be strictly forbidden; eventual punishment shall be administered to offenders only after a court trial. Above all, the destruction of Serbian Orthodox Churches and Chapels and the seizure of private property shall be henceforth forbidden.

41 Ягобно

XXI

A BULGARIAN RECTOR'S APPEAL

A LETTER FROM A WELL-KNOWN RECTOR OF A BULGARIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY ADDRESSED FROM SOPHIA, BULGARIA, TO THE BISHOP OF THE GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCH IN BERLIN

Your Eminence:

In connection with my letter of October 18, 1941, which was delivered to you by my countryman, Ivan Tutekoff, I feel it my duty to advise you briefly of the gruesome and continuous persecution of the Orthodox Church in Croatia, basing my report upon the facts obtained and verified by the German command of occupation in Serbia. I hope that it will be within your power to consider favorably my plea on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church contained in my report of October 18, 1941, and to undertake necessary steps before the proper authorities in Germany for an immediate intervention so that this terrible persecution of a Christian church may be stopped. I hope that you will succeed, though I am well aware that it is difficult to fulfill this Christian obligation.

The true facts of the conditions in Croatia are as follows:

According to official Austro-Hungarian statistics of 1910, upon the present Croatian State territory there were 1,575,478 Serbian Orthodox and 2,257,395 Catholic Croats.

According to the statistics compiled by the present Croatian minister of foreign affairs, Dr. Lorkovic (in his work "Croatia and Croatian People" published at Zagreb 1939) there are within said jurisdiction 1,855,490 Serbian Orthodox people and 5,021,334 Croatian Catholics.

According to the official Croatian Gazette ("Croatian People" of May 19, 1941) there are within said jurisdiction 1,850,000 Serbian Orthodox and 4,800,000 Croatian Catholics.

It may be said that the Serbian Orthodox people migrated to those provinces between the XVth and XVIIth century, during the wars with the Turks, and by permission of the Hapsburg Dynasty (which is a favorite thesis of the leading Croats of today in order to justify the persecution and annihilation of the Serbian Orthodox people in Croatia). Be it as it may, within said territory there are about 2,000,000 inhabitants of Serbian Orthodox faith.

After the collapse of Yugoslavia and the creation of the Independent Croatian State there were organized Croatian National troops (known as Croatian Ustashi), the organizing of which was enabled by the ruling party of this State. These troops have committed upon the Serbian Orthodox people and their churches many atrocious persecutions, the likes of which are not recorded in any history.

According to verified statements contained in a memorandum of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Church dated July 1942, which was delivered to General von Schroeder, Commander of German forces in occupied Serbia at Belgrade, the following facts, verified at their source, are to be noted:

- (a) A group of Serbian Orthodox Bishops (among whom was the well-known Metropolitan Dositey, who was physically mistreated and beaten until he fell from exhaustion) were driven away from their episcopates in Croatia, while others were ruthlessly murdered (Bishop Platon of Banja Luka), or were as common criminals dragged to prisons. These have since remained unheard of and it is unknown whether or not they are still living (as is the case with the Archbishop Petar Zimonjich, Metropolitan of Sarajevo, and Bishop Sava of Karlovac).
- (b) The same fate befell the entire Orthodox clergy. They were either ruthlessly murdered or were thrown into prison dungeons or concentration camps, or were driven from the territory after being subjected to terrific tortures and maltreatments. All of the Orthodox Serbs within the territory of the Croatian State are at present without their clergy and without anyone to perform pastoral services for them, because all of the Serbian Orthodox Bishops and priests were either simply exterminated in a most ruthless fashion, or were forced to do hard labor, or were thrown into concentration camps, or driven away from their charges. And so the 2,000,000 Orthodox people in the Croatian State have no one to preach them the Gospel, hold church services, baptize, perform marriages or burials.
- (c) In the same manner the entire Serbian population is subjected to the worst, unheard of, persistent persecution and torture. It is reliably estimated that the number of victims thus far

exterminated is in excess of hundreds of thousands. This ruthless extermination of the Orthodox population is apparently not accidental because when the official statements of the leaders of the Croatian State were published they read: "Hundreds of thousands were murdered, hundreds of thousands were expelled from Croatian territory and the remainder will be restrained and converted to Catholicism so that within a decade we shall have in Croatia purely Catholic people". (From a speech made by Dr. Victor Gutic, followed by similar statements made at a mass meeting by the Croatian Ministers, Dr. Mile Budak, Dr. Milovan Zanic, Dr. Mirko Puk). The front line victims of this wave of terror are the spiritual elite and the spiritual leaders of the Orthodox population.

- (d) Many of the Orthodox churches were destroyed, others were burned and still others, including church institutions and their properties, were confiscated for the benefit of the Croatian State. Many of the Orthodox churches were desecrated, some of them were transformed into public markets and a number of them converted into Catholic edifices. All holy ikons and church vessels were either taken away, destroyed or burned. Fifteen Serbian Orthodox monasteries and churches at Fruska Gora (near Sremski Karlovci, which have always been, from time immemorial, Serbian Orthodox Religious Centers and had acquired the name of Serbian Sion) were given to the Catholic monks of the Franciscan order, as was

also done with other church properties (Orahovica, Pakrac, Lepavina).

The famous Krusedol monastery, about 500 years old, where several Serbian Orthodox Patriarchs lie buried, was completely plundered while valuable historic and art relics were stolen or destroyed. Even the still older monastery of Vrdnik-Ravanica (wherein the remains of King Lazar were buried, who led and died in the historic battle of Kosovo against the Turks in 1389, in defense of Christianity) was taken over by the Catholic church. So was Sremski Karlovci, the former seat of the Orthodox Patriarchate, spared from destruction. The great cathedral of the patriarchate was first plundered of all valuables and thereupon sealed. The much treasured library of the Patriarchate (famous for its old manuscripts and books) was completely pillaged as well as the palace of the Patriarch. The possession of the physical properties was taken over by the Roman Catholic Church.

- (e) It is quite evident that the Roman Catholic Church in the Croatian State, together with the Roman Catholic clergy and Catholic leaders, were spiritual instigators and in some instances actual leaders in these persecutions, all in an effort to enforce the conversion of the Serbian Orthodox people into Catholicism. With the same purpose in mind the state employees of Orthodox faith were warned by printed pamphlets, a copy of which is on file, that in the Croatian State employ only those might remain who embraced the Catholic faith.

As early as last summer the Croatian minister of State, Dr. Mile Budak publicly declared that upon the territory of the Croatian State only two religious denominations would be recognized—Roman Catholic and Mohammedan. "Catholic Weekly", official organ of the Catholic Diocese in Sarajevo, approves the methods of the destruction of the Orthodox Church as being "to the Glory of God" and concludes: "Today the hour has struck when even we among the Catholics, now and forever, shall part with the prejudices against the revolutionary methods which serve truth, justice and honesty. The Catholic church is the best educator and instigator of such movements, but there have been many Catholics, among whom there were even organs of the church, who have failed in their mission. Therefore, once and forever, idiotic arguments shall cease, as they are not becoming to those in the service of Christ. The fight against evil and rottenness shall not be waged with gloves or in a fine or noble manner."

I am well aware, your Eminence, that in many places an open and bold voice raised against such persecutions of Christianity and a Christian church is regarded as an unfriendly or treasonable act, perhaps even as an act of treason against the state and the people in question. But I am firmly convinced that you are in full agreement with me, and that only he thinks well of his people, his state and government, who does everything possible to prevent such crimes. No sin remains unpunished, and God's eyes cannot be blinded.

I, therefore, believe that I am performing my duty in this tragic moment, and I am taking the liberty for the second time to address myself to you with my plea for your intervention, with firm conviction that in so doing I am performing my duty to a great Christian people, which is fighting for the new order of justice and religious tolerance.

41 | Ягоб#0

XXII

CONFESSION OF A CROATIAN USTASHA*

"In 1938, I came to Belgrade where I have lived continuously up to the present time. At first I peddled various articles along the streets, and later I was engaged as a handy man with the Central Transport Society in Belgrade, No. 1 Kolarcheva Street.

On the day of the bombardment, April 6, 1941, I was in Belgrade. Immediately I went to my army command at Sisak, according to my war orders, and there I reported to the commander of the 44th Infantry Reserve Regiment. The Regiment had received orders to proceed to Slavonska Pozega, and from there we left to take up positions in a village on the outskirts of Pozega. I don't remember the exact date, but I believe it was the 17th or 18th of April, 1941. I was at home only eight days when I received a notice from the military command in Petrinja to report at once to the Military District in Petrinja. When I reported, I was immediately given a uniform and there I remained in the barracks for a month, where we did military drills according to new regulations.

At the beginning of the month of June, 1941, my regiment received orders to go to Glina, to restore peace

*From the official stenographic record taken in the examination and hearing of Hilmiya Berberovich, who with other Croatian Ustashi participated in the massacre of Serbs in the Serbian Church at Glina. The witness, Hilmiya Berberovich, was arrested on a charge of suspicion by the Belgrade police, where he was identified as a former building janitor, residing at No. 1 Kolarcheva Street, Belgrade. The witness was born April 15, 1915 at Bosanski Novi, his parents being Hasan, his father, and Halina Hajtovich, his mother. The witness is single, of Mohammedan religion and without previous criminal record.

and order in the Glina district, and to collect all weapons and ammunition from the civilians. Before the departure of the regiment, the commander, Captain Josip Dobrich, born in Split, and by profession a teacher, ordered us to search every house and all premises in every town we came to, regardless of whether these homes were of Orthodox or of Catholic citizens. He also ordered us to kill anyone who would resist us.

Upon our arrival in Glina, we accomplished the searching of the buildings there first, and then after that we went to the surrounding villages. This search lasted for about 15 days. When the search ended, the Ustashi from Zagreb and Petrinja came and then we were ordered to round up all men between 20 and 45 years of age in the villages. During this round up, one Orthodox man, in the village of Cemernici, resisted and fired at us. My companion was wounded so I used my rifle and killed him. I do not remember the name of the dead man. In the beginning we arrested men, we rounded them up from the villages and brought them to Glina, and there we placed them in the Court jail. They remained in jail for a few days until the jails were filled and then the prisoners were killed. The killing was accomplished in more than one fashion.

Some were locked in the Orthodox Church in Glina. About 1,000 men could stand in that Church. Then the commanding captain would order 15 men to execute the work of killing. Before they would leave for this job, they were given alcoholic drinks, to some rum, to others strong whiskey, and when they became intoxicated, they were given knives and sent inside the Church. During the slaughtering, guards were posted outside the Church. This was necessary because some of the Orthodox men would climb to the belfry, and

jump into the churchyard. All of these were killed by the guards in the churchyard. Three times I was ordered to execute the Commander's orders and participate in the killings in the Church. Each time some officers would go along, Josip Dobrich and Mihajlo Cvitkovich, and besides them some of the officers of the Ustashi.

Upon entering the Church, the officers would stand at the door and watch our work of slaughtering. The killing was done by striking some directly into the heart with a knife, and some across the neck and others wherever we landed with the knife. If some Serbian survived the first blow, the Ustashi would finish him up with a knife. At the time of these killings, no lights were burning in the Church, but special soldiers were designated to hold flashlights which would throw light in the room. Many times it would happen that some Serb would throw his fist at us or kick his foot into our stomachs but he was immediately cut to pieces. During these killings, there was a great deal of noise in the church. The Serbs would cry out: "Long live King Peter! Long live Queen Marie! Long live Serbia; Long live the Serbs! Down with Quisling Pavelich! Down with the Ustashi! Down with the State of Croatia!"

These killings would usually last until about two o'clock in the morning or until the last Serb was killed. These killings in the Church took place seven or eight times, and I participated in them three times. During these killings we were so soaked with blood that our uniforms could not be cleaned, but we would change uniforms at the storehouse, and later wash them out. After each slaughter, the Church was washed up and the trucks would come to take away the corpses. They

would usually throw them into the river, but some they would bury.

Some of the men of the Orthodox faith would be taken from jail and taken to the shores of the nearby river where they would be lined up and shot to death with machine guns. This sort of killing would take in from 300 to 400 men at one time. They would be lined up in two groups along the shore with their hands tied to one rope, and thus standing, they were mowed down by machine guns which were not far away. These executions were done by the Ustashi. The corpses of those killed along the shore were thrown into the river. Some groups of Serbs were taken from the jail and killed in the woods near Glina, and later their bodies were buried in the same place where the killings occurred.

The round-up of Serbs was done by having about 70 Ustashi and about 30 of us soldiers go to a town, all being under the command of Ustashi officers. The town was always surrounded and a designated group went in to round up the Serbs. When gathered, they were taken, under guard, to the court jail in Glina. At first, we took only men, but later we were ordered to bring along women also from 15 to 50 years of age. During these trips I saw some of the Ustashi and my companions rape the women and girls, and later they would take them to Glina. Here they would all be placed in the court jail, and later taken to some requisitioned houses which were transformed into military outposts. They remained there from eight to ten days, after which they were permitted to return to their homes. I saw outposts some of the Ustashi would enter at night and take away the women upon whom they wanted to force their lovemaking, to some spot on the outskirts of town, and later return them to the outposts. This

practice was not forbidden by the officers, and some of the officers did the same thing.

My regiment had the task of gathering all the Serbs in Glina and in the Glina district, but it was ordered that all the Serbs from the districts of Topusko and Vrgin Most were to be taken to Glina, and there executed. I don't know how many Serbs were executed, but from conversation with my companions, I should say there were about 120,000 Serbs killed in Glina. During these round-ups of Serbs, many of them escaped to the forest with weapons, and some of them are still in Petrova Gora. Once the Ustashi went to find them, but the Serbs pounced upon them and fought them. About August 20th of this year, a notice was posted inviting all Serbians to return to their homes and their work, and this time we were ordered not to touch or kill any of them. Whoever should disobey this order was to be court martialed. I stayed in Glina until September 3rd, 1942 when I was discharged because other soldiers were called for drilling. From Glina I returned to Belgrade with the intention of returning to my old job, but I was jailed by the police.

To the above I have nothing more to add. These minutes were read to me and my statements were recorded exactly as I stated them. I am literate.

At Belgrade, October 20, 1942

(Signed) Hilmija Berberovich.

XXIII

CROAT'S PLEA WHICH REMAINS UNHEEDED

(The following is a letter written by Mr. Prvislav Grizogono, a Croat—former minister in the government of Yugoslavia, to Dr. Aloisius Stepinac, Croat Roman Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb. The letter was written at Zemun, February 8, 1942)

Your Grace:

I write this to you as man to man, as a Christian to a Christian. I have held this up for months in the vain hope that the terrible news from Croatia would cease so that I could settle my mind and write you in a more amiable atmosphere.

For fully ten months now, however, the Serbs in Croatia are being exterminated in a most beastly manner, with billions of their property subjected to destruction, while the face of an honorable Croat blushes with shame and anger. Since the first day of the Independent Croatian State the Serbs have been massacred (Gospich, Gudovac, Bos. Krajina, etc.) and this massacring has continued to this day.

These atrocities do not amount to simple killings alone. They aim at the extermination of every Serb, men, women, and children, and with terribly-wild tortures of the victims. These innocent Serbs were stuck on poles alive and fires built on their bare chests. Literally they were roasted alive, being burned to death in their homes and in their churches. In many cases boiling water was poured on living victims before their mutilation, their flesh was salted and their eyes gouged

out while they were still living, their ears and noses were lopped off and their tongues cut out. The beards and mustaches of priests, together with their skin were ripped off by knives, while the victims' sex organs were cut off and stuffed into their mouths. Some were tied to trucks and dragged, while other victims had their arms and legs broken and their heads spiked.

Their heads were smashed by crowbars, many were thrown into the deep cisterns and caves, and then literally bombed to pieces. Their children were thrown into fire or scalding water, and then fed to the fired lime furnaces. Other children were torn apart by the legs, their heads were crushed against walls and their spines were broken against rocks. These and many other methods of torture were employed against the Serbs—tortures which normal people cannot conceive. Thousands upon thousands of Serbian bodies floated down the Sava, Drava and Danube rivers and their tributaries. Many of these bodies bore tags: "Direction—Belgrade, to King Peter." In one boat on the Sava, there was a pile of children's heads with a woman's head (presumably that of the mother of the children) labelled: "Meat for Jovan's Market—Belgrade" (meaning meat for the Serbian market).

The case of Milenka Bozinich from Stapandza, is a particularly gruesome one, because they ripped her unborn child out of her with a knife. In Bosnia, a huge pile of roasted heads was found. Utensils full of Serbian blood were also discovered—this was the hot blood of their murdered brothers that other Serbs were forced to drink.

Countless women and girls were raped; mothers in the presence of their daughters and daughters in the presence of their mothers, while many women, girls,

and small children were ushered off to Ustashi garri-
sons to be used as prostitutes. Rape was committed
even before the altars of the Orthodox Church. In
Petrinja County, for instance, a son was forced to at-
tack his mother. About 3,000 Serbs were murdered in
the Serbian Orthodox Church at Glina and the mas-
sacre of Serbs before the altar at Kladusha with sledge
hammers is something that may never be mentioned
in history.

There are detailed and official minutes (reports)
of these unheard of crimes. They were so terrible as to
have shocked even the Germans and the Italians. Many
pictures were taken of these massacres and torture
orgies. The Germans claim the Croats did these same
things during the Thirty-Years' war and that, since
then, there has been a proverb in Germany: "God save
us from cholera, hunger and the Croats." Even the
Germans from Srem hate us and act more or less
humanely towards the Serbs. The Italians have photo-
graphed a utensil holding 31 ½ kilograms of Serbian
eyes, and one Croat who came to Dubrovnik decorated
with a string of eyes and with two wreaths of Serbian
tongues.

The horror in the camps where thousands of Serbs
were murdered or left to die from hunger, cold and
mistreatment, is indescribable. The Germans tell about
one camp in Lika in which the Croats confined thou-
sands of Serbs. Yet when they came there, they found
the camp empty, flooded with blood, and clothing
strewn everywhere. Today, in the camp of Jasenovac,
thousands of Serbs are being tortured and murdered.
In this bitter winter, they're kept in Gypsy barracks
without enough straw or covers, and their food con-
sists of but two potatoes a day.

Nothing like this has ever happened in the history of Europe. We must go to Asia, to the times of Tem-erlan and Ghengis Kahn, or to Africa, to the states of beastly Negro rulers, to find anything similar. The Croatian name has been blemished with dishonor and shame for centuries for these atrocities. Nothing can clear us now. We won't dare mention our "thousand-year-old culture" even to the last Gypsy in the Balkans anymore, because even Gypsies were never so beastly.

Why do I write this to you, since you are not a political character and not responsible for this? Here is why: In all these unprecedented crimes, worse than pagan, **OUR CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS ALSO PARTICIPATED IN TWO WAYS.** First, a large number of priests, clerics, *friars* and organized Catholic youth actively participated in all these crimes, but more terrible, even Catholic priests became camp and group commanders and, as such, ordered or tolerated the horrible tortures, murders and massacres of a baptized people. **ONE CATHOLIC PRIEST SLIT THE THROAT OF AN ORTHODOX SERBIAN PRIEST.** None of this could have been done without the permission of their Bishops and if it was done, they should have been brought to the Ecclesiastical Court and unfrocked. Since this did not happen, then ostensibly the Bishops gave their consent by acquiescence at least.

The Catholic Church has used all means to Catholicize forcefully the remaining Serbs. And, while the land streamed with the innocent blood of martyrs and while the moanings of the surviving unfortunates were still audible, the friars and the nuns carried Ustashi knives in one hand and a Cross and a prayer-book in the other. The province of Srem is covered with the leaflets of Bishop Akshamovich, which were printed in

his own print shop at Djakovo. He calls upon the Serbs, through these leaflets, to save their lives and property; recommending the Catholic faith to them. It would seem our Church wanted to prove it could murder souls like the Ustashi do bodies. And worse suspicion falls here upon the Catholic Church because, at the same time, many Serbian Churches were destroyed, while others were converted into Catholic; all Serbian monasteries were confiscated, all properties sized and carted away; many historical monuments were destroyed with even the Patriarchal Cathedral at Sremski Karlovci not untouched. All these brutalities against conscience and soul have heaped more shame and dishonor upon the Croatian name.

Though we Croats shall never be able to erase this shamefulness which we have brought upon ourselves with these crimes, we can at least lessen our responsibility before the world and our consciences if we raise our voices in protest against all this infamy.

This is the last hour for us to do so. After all the great crimes in history, punishments follow. What will happen to us Croats if the impression is formed that we participated in all these crimes to the finish?

Again, it is the duty of the Church to raise its voice: first, because it is a Church of Christ; second, because it is powerful. The great Catholic Bishop in Germany had the courage to raise his voice in behalf of the haunted Jews, yet in our country not one Bishop has decried the fate of the innocent Christian Serbs who have suffered more than the Jews in Germany. For this reason the greatest responsibility and both divine and human punishment shall fall upon the heads of the Catholic Church and also upon the people if they do not repent in time for these grave and terrible sins.

I write you this—about these terrible crimes—to
save my soul and I leave it to you to find a way to save
your soul.

(Signed) Prvislav Grizogono

Former Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

At Zemun, February 8, 1942.

41) Jagobno

XXIV

COMMENTS BY AMERICAN STATESMEN

Commenting on the reports that 24 Slovene hostages have been shot by the Nazis, in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, in retaliation for the assassination by unknown persons of an Axis occupation official, Justice Robert H. Jackson, of the United States Supreme Court said that "Such Nazi crimes are a throwback to the earliest dawn of civilization."

"It is becoming increasingly evident that these wholesale slayings of innocent people by the Nazis, as well as the deliberate starvation of entire nations, are undertaken for the purpose of thinning out the peoples which are being subjugated, and to provide more loot for the conquerors. Evidently, the Nazis believe that, thinned out, the occupied countries can be more easily enslaved and handled.

"Thus, the so-called Nazi 'new order' is fast becoming the deadly enemy of humanity—a 'new order' in which Hitler has been bathing himself in blood and degrading his minions from honorable soldiers to murders.

"But, as surely as day follows night, this Nazi terrorism against innocent civilians will be avenged. As President Roosevelt said on August 21 of this year, 'The Government of the United States has been aware for some time of these crimes. Our Government is constantly

receiving additional information from dependable sources, and it welcomes reports from any trustworthy source which would assist in keeping our Government fund of information and evidence up to date and reliable . . . 'It seems only fair,' said President Roosevelt, 'that the Nazi criminals should have this warning that the time will come when they shall have to stand in courts of law in the very countries which they are now oppressing and answer for their acts.'

"These straightforward and explicit words of President Roosevelt certainly left no doubt of the firm determination of the United Nations to mete out proper punishment to the sadistic Nazi leaders."

Hon. George Wharton Pepper, Senator from Florida and member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, made the following statement on the floor of the Senate, June 18, 1942. (Included in the Congressional Record No. 115.)

"Mr. President, I wish now sadly to submit the report of a great tragedy which is today gripping and tearing the heart of the earth.

"A few days ago, the Yugoslav minister to the United States, Mr. Constantin Fotitch, filed with the State Department a memorandum which charged the Axis with horrible atrocities perpetrated in Serbia.

"This memorandum, as well as another recent memorandum of the Yugoslav Government in exile, listed the following executions of Serbs:

"More than 100,000 by Hungarian soldiers in northern Yugoslavia.

"More than 365,000 Serbs massacred by Germans, Italians and pro-Axis Ustashi troops throughout Yugoslavia.

"Mr. President, 'man's inhumanity to man' never was better exemplified than by those harrowing stories of atrocities trickling out of Nazi-infested Yugoslavia.

"The Yugoslav memoranda list the most sadistic crimes in the world's history and constitute the blackest indictment of the Axis Powers.

"According to these documents, almost the entire Serbian population in the areas of Banat and Bachka were either massacred or thrown into concentration camps.

"Entire populations of towns were exterminated. The good people of Horgos, Subotica, Sombor, Backa-Topola and Novi Sad, exist no more.

"In Subotica 100 children and their teachers were shot outside the grammar school.

"The women and children of the town were taken to the shores of Lake Palic, where they were shot and their bodies thrown into the lake.

"Scores of thousands of Yugoslavs are living in concentration camps. Thirteen thousand were reported to be crowded in the camp of Novi Sad, with hardly more than space to sit down."

Some time ago, Yugoslavia's Premier-in-exile, Dr. Jovanovitch, in a broadcast from London said:

"In our fatherland there reigns a regime of terror, massacre, and extermination. Our brethren, the Slovenes are being chased from their homes without pity into the freezing cold. The Serbian people are exposed to torments and slaughter unheard of in the world's history.

"The so-called German punitive expeditions", said the Yugoslav Premier, "destroyed entire Serbian provinces with sword and flame.

"In Kragujevac," said Dr. Jovanovitch, "the Germans shot all the pupils of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades of the city's high-school, as well as the professors and the directors.

"The children died singing," he added. "While like sheaves the children collapsed under the fire, cries were heard: 'Long live the King! Long live Serbia! Shoot! we are children of Serbia!'"

"The Germans," said Premier Jovanovitch, "had to drug their soldiers to carry out the execution of the children. The horror was too much even for them."

Mr. President, I wish to register here the most categorical condemnation of these inhuman barbarities. The Hungarian, Nazi and Italian authorities and Ustashi criminals responsible for these criminal acts stand condemned in the eyes and hearts of free men everywhere; and a condign punishment should be reserved for them when the day of reckoning comes.

Woe to the brutal Axis savages when their victims rise and throw off the abominable yoke of their conquerors with the help of the United Nations.

Mr. President, one would have to go a long way to find a people with greater spirit and endurance than the Yugoslav people.

In spite of the sufferings of the people of the heroic Balkan country, resistance there to the Axis oppressors is boiling even more fiercely. One hundred thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand Yugoslav patriots are fighting the Nazi, Italians and Hungarians.

These Yugoslav heroes are led by a great soldier, General Draza Mihailovitch. Basing his men in the rugged mountains of Serbia and Bosnia, Mihailovitch has managed to conduct a fairly large offensive against the German, Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian troops of occupation in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav patriots have been making forays against Axis garrisons and cutting vital Axis communication lines.

Thus the Yugoslavs have been immobilizing at least 23 Axis divisions in the unconquerable Balkan country. With General Mihailovitch and his army on the loose, the Axis dare not withdraw large forces from Yugoslavia to fight on the more crucial Russian front.

Fighting desperately in the east and watching fearfully in the west, the Nazis simply cannot spare the men nor the equipment to stamp out this growing resistance of the Balkans. Therefore, they resort to cruel and cowardly reprisals against innocent victims.

General Mihailovitch's wife, daughter and two sons long ago were taken as "hostages" by the Germans and a price was placed on the General's head. Probably the Nazis will make good their threats to kill the Yugoslav hero's family in revenge, but they can break the spirit neither of this man nor his kin.

Hitler and his satellites are learning that the light of liberty is hard to extinguish. It may be temporarily

suppressed, but it will blaze forth to consume those who would destroy it.

Let this message from the halls of the American Senate reach the heroic people of Yugoslavia. This is the message:

Stand fast, people of Yugoslavia. Keep the fires of liberty burning. The ever-growing might of the United Nations will soon be felt in every front of this global war. God willing, the dark forces of tyranny will be crushed, and happiness and liberty restored to you.

Stand fast, heroes of Yugoslavia."

Commenting on the reports that the village Martinci near Ruma, in Yugoslavia, has been razed to the ground, and its male inhabitants massacred, Senator Lester Hill of Alabama, member of the Military Affairs of the Senate, said:

"All of these samples of medieval horrors are conclusive proof of Nazi desperation.

"Only desperate men, who have lost all hope of consolidating their abominable system, only men who have divested themselves of all human feeling can indulge in such ghastly crimes.

"While we lack details of the massacre at Martinci, we can visualize the horrible scenes that must have taken place in this unfortunate Yugoslav village. Following their usual pattern, the Nazi must have invaded every cottage, dragged out the men over 15 years of age, herded them together and shot them. Then the Nazi soldiers must have separated the mothers and children. The women must have been led off to concentration camps. The children probably were taken to so-called

'Education Centers' in Germany, there to be taught the beauties of the system that had made them orphans.

"Later the Nazis burned the village systematically, and erased its name from the records. Nazi thoroughness! Nevertheless, the Yugoslavs will always remember Martinci and the other towns and villages that have been razed to the ground and, with grim determination, will say 'these villages must and will stand as a flaming sword around which all fighters for freedom must rally until victory is won.'

"And then, following the final defeat of the invaders, a condign punishment will be awaiting the Nazis who are responsible for these crimes. Free men everywhere have learned with great relief and satisfaction, that President Roosevelt has some time ago announced as one of our war purposes, the trial and punishment of enemy officials found responsible for atrocities against subject populations. A joint commission appointed by the Allied countries will ferret out the guilty and present them for trial.

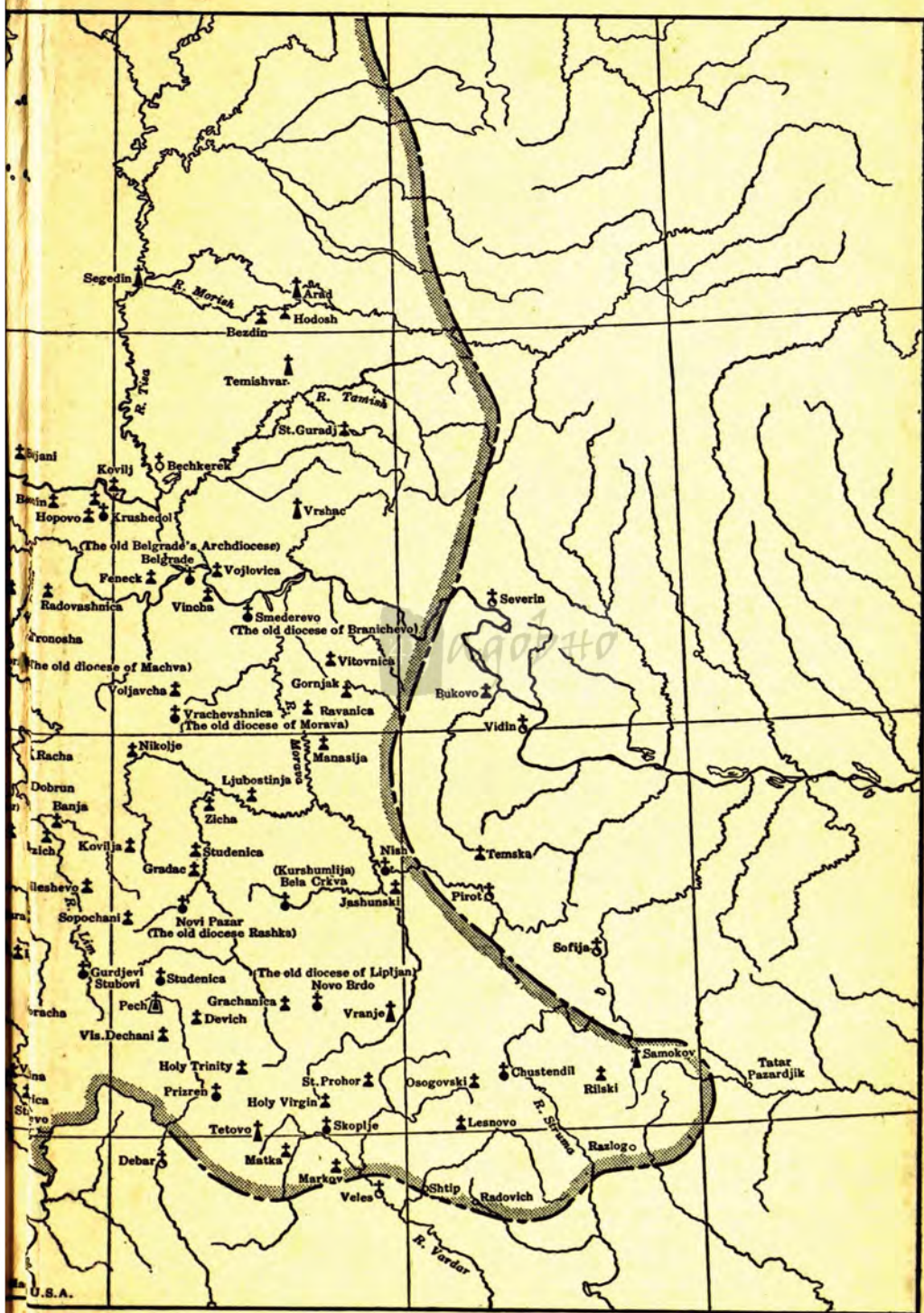
"Yes, indeed, the crimes of the Nazi have been so black, so wholesale and so calculated as to cry out for retribution."



SERBIAN PATRIARCHATE OF PECH – YEAR 1557

Territory of the Serbian Orthodox Church throughout the Balkans and the Danube basin, when the Old Serbian Patriarchate of Pech was restored within the borders of the Turkish Empire.

- ⚡ The Old Residence of Patriarchate.
- ⚡ The Old Serbian Dioceses before restoration.
- ⚡ The Serbian Dioceses founded in 1557 year
- ⚡ The Serbian Dioceses during the 17th Century.
- ⚡ The Serbian Dioceses outside of borders of the Patriarchate.
- ⚡ The famous Serbian monasteries founded between XII to XVII centuries



41) Ягобно