The Yugoslav Auschwitz and the Vatican

Vladimir Dedijer

Foreword by Gottfried Niemietz
English Translation by
Harvey L. Kendall

THE • CROATION • MASSACRE • OF THE • SERBS • DURING • WORLD • WAR II

The Yugoslav Auschwitz and the Vatican

Contents

A Preliminary Note on the Historical Background of the Present Yugoslav Crisis

Mihailo Marković

I

In order even to begin to understand the present complex and dramatic situation in Yugoslavia, especially the nature of the national conflict in Croatia, one must take into account several historical facts.

(1) Both the Serbian and Croatian peoples developed powerful medieval states: Croatia flourished in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Serbia especially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A strong sense of ethnic identity and national pride is grounded on those memories of past greatness. Unfortunately, these two peoples of common South Slavic origin, speaking nearly identical languages, suffered a series of divisions. Croats accepted Catholicism and came under the zone of influence of the Vatican, whereas Serbs established their independent Orthodox church in the fourteenth century. In 1102, Croatia was conquered by Hungary and became a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire until the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918. Serbia lost its independence in 1459 and became a part of the Ottoman empire until its liberation in the nineteenth century. Thus the demarcation line between the Roman and Byzantine civilizations, the Roman Catholic

and Greek-Orthodox churches, and the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Turkish empires separated Serbs and Croats for centuries.

(2) To escape brutal Turkish repression, hundreds of thousands of Serbs moved out of the Ottoman empire and into the regions of Krajina and Slavonia (areas of the present-day conflict) in the seventeenth century. They were well received by Austrian authorities, given free land, various privileges, and a high level of autonomy, with the obligation to defend the borders from the Turks. They were ruled directly by Vienna and were never subordinated to any Croatian authorities who were ruled by Hungary. In the nineteenth century, when Croatian intellectuals began to make plans of national liberation and their own national state, they found the existence of more than one million Serbs in Krajina and Slavonia an intolerable "obstructing factor." While some Croats saw the solution in the creation of a common Yugoslav state with Serbs and Slovenes, most of them believed that Serbs must somehow be eliminated by forcing them to accept Catholicism and Croatian national identity or by expelling them. Thus, with Ante Starćević in the late nineteenth century, a vehement, purely racist Serbophobia developed, which continued to exist with the parties of Frank and Pavelić in the first part of the twentieth century. It flared up again with the nationalist Croatian mass movement in 1970–1971 and today finds its conclusion in the present ruling party in Croatia (Croatian Democratic Community).

(3) As a part of Austro-Hungary and its army, Croats had to fight Serbs on Serbian territory during World War I. Realizing the inevitable defeat of Austro-Hungary near the end of the war, Croats decided to join Serbs and bring into existence a new state of unified South Slavs. Their decision to enter Yugoslavia was voluntary. But it was made under the pressure of several unfavorable circumstances: they faced payments of heavy war damages; they were defenseless against the social revolution approaching from Hungary and Bavaria in 1918; and they had to face the loss of the entire Dalmatian coast, which was promised by the Allies to Italy (according to the 1915 London Treaty) as a compensation for entering the war against Austro-Hungary. Yugoslavia was for them a marriage out of interest which, they believed, could be dissolved later. For this dissolution strong separatist forces worked incessantly in both the first (1918–1941) and the second Yugoslavia (1945–1991).

(4) The important fact is that Croatia did not enter Yugoslavia as a state with recognized borders. It was neither a state nor did it have state borders since 1102. During all those centuries it was divided into Slavonia, Croatia proper, and Dalmatia. The former two were ruled by Hungary, the latter and Serbian Krajina by Austria. As a matter of fact, Yugoslavia was created by the free kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro and by three

South-slavic nations that lived within the territory of Austro-Hungary: Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes.

(5) Invasion of Yugoslavia by Nazi Germany was an occasion for separatist Croatian forces, organized in the Ustasha party of Ante Pavelić, to establish an "Independent State of Croatia" under direct protection of Hitler and Mussolini. Taking inspiration from the Nazi persecution of the Jews, the Croatian fascist government tried to implement a "final solution" for Serbs (that "obstructing element" in Croatia): one third had to be killed, one third expelled, and one third converted to Catholicism. One of the worst genocides during World War II took place in Croatia. In one huge concentration camp alone—Jasenovac—750,000 Serbs were exterminated, together with Jews and Gypsies (according to German sources). Only those Serbs survived who escaped to Serbia or to the woods, where they organized into a national liberation army. The army was already created in April 1941, three months before the Yugoslav Communist Party invited all Yugoslavs to take up arms against the fascists.

(6) Surviving Serbs tried to distinguish between bad Croats (like Pavelić and the Ustashe) and good Croats (like Tito and the partisans). They believed in Tito's policy of "brotherhood and unity" and agreed not to talk about the past. Leading Croatian communists invited them to forget about Ustashe crimes and to look only to the future. A rather ominous sign of what was coming was the fact that those leading Croatian communists kept diminishing the numbers of Ustashe victims and dismissed any serious inquiry into those crimes as an expression of Serbian nationalism. And yet Serbs in Krajina and Slavonia trusted Tito and kept quiet for a long time, in spite of the fact that all political and cultural rights were denied to them, even those that they had enjoyed in Austro-Hungary: the right to use their language in the schools and to have their own press and cultural societies. They got alarmed for the first time in 1970–1971 when another movement for an independent Croatian state developed that once expressed extreme hostility toward Serbs. But they were reassured when in December 1971 that movement was defeated. Then came Franjo Tudjman.

(7) Tudjman was one of Tito's generals and a hard-core communist who became a militant nationalist by 1970. His party won election in Croatia in 1990 owing to an extremely nationalist program and substantive material aid from the extreme right wing (Ustasha) emigration. Tudjman praised the fascist Independent State of Croatia (1941–1945) in his electoral speeches and expressed the view that the centuries-long aspirations of the Croatian people were brought to life in that state. What especially alarmed Serbs were changes in the constitution of the Croatian Republic. Croatia used to be defined as the state of Croatian and of Serbian people. The official language according to Serbs was "Serbo-Croatian." Now any reference to

Serbs was omitted. The language imposed on all citizens of Croatia was "literary Croatian," a new artificial variant, deliberately made different from the common vernacular language, spoken by both Croatian and Serbian people. New state symbols introduced by constitutional changes were the same as those used by the Ustasha state and associated with the Ustasha crimes.

The next move of Tudjman's government was to systematically dismiss Serbs from any important positions: managers, heads of departments, university professors, judges, even ordinary militia men. Thousands of people lost their jobs merely because of their nationality.

What frightened Serbs in Croatia even more were steps undertaken by Croatian authorities to secede from Yugoslavia. All federal laws protecting citizens of all nationalities were suspended, large amounts of armaments were illegally imported and distributed to paramilitary formations (members of the ruling party), and Ustasha war criminals returned in large numbers after decades of emigration. Seeing the similarities with the situation that immediately preceded the massacres of 1941, Serbs in Croatia started a similar process of self-organization and preparation for self-defense.

II

At this point in early 1990, it would still have been possible to avoid further escalation of the conflict had Croatian authorities shown any readiness for negotiations. The leader of the Croatian Serbs, Professor Jovan Raskovic, tried twice to talk to Tudjman and his Minister of Interior Boljkovac. On both occasions conversations were secretly taped and published in the daily press in order to damage the reputation of Raskovic with his followers. With enormous lack of realism the Croatian government declared that the vast majority of Serbs in Croatia were loyal and obedient citizens of Croatia and that their leaders were a bunch of troublemakers following the orders of Serbian nationalists in Belgrade. Thus all existing possibilities for negotiation and a peaceful solution of the conflict were destroyed.

Serbs in Croatia organized a referendum in which an overwhelming majority supported the idea of regional autonomy for territories in which Serbs live in majority. When on June 26 Croatian authorities declared sovereignty and secession of Croatia from Yugoslavia, Serbs in Croatia declared their determination to stay in Yugoslavia. Croatian authorities sent recently formed national guards to pacify and subordinate them. By that time the entire Serbian population became aware that that would be the beginning of a new Ustasha massacre and that their lives, homes, and families were at stake. They responded to force by force and that was

the beginning of the present warfare.

The federal presidency gave the Yugoslav army the task of separating the warring parties and preventing mass bloodshed. However, the federal army was regarded by the Croatian authorities as the last viable institution of the federal state (which they intended to disintegrate before seceding) and as an obstacle to their plans to discipline Serbs and reestablish "law and order" on the territory of their republic. Therefore the federal army was treated as an enemy and attacked. After much hesitation and vacilation, the army started striking back and returning fire. This led to a dramatic further escalation of the conflict.

Foreign interference played a considerable role in that development. Germany and Austria (allies from both world wars) became heavily involved in favor of Croatia and Slovenia and demanded international recognition of both seceding republics as well as sending military forces of the European Community to protect their borders. German minister of foreign affairs, Hans Dietrich Genscher, declared that each day of Croatian fighting would push the federal army toward international recognition. The message was clear and Croatian leadership followed it. Each ceasefire was only a means to reorganize, better arm their military forces, and to attack again. The most recent act in the escalation of the warfare on the Croatian side was encircling all federal army barracks on their territory and cutting off all water, electricity, and food supplies. Surely, no army in the world would stay idle under such conditions.

The present tragic national conflict in Yugoslavia can be solved peacefully and justly in only one way: on the ground of the principle of self-determination of people.

Slovenes and Croats have already expressed their common will in the referendums taken in the spring of 1991 and in the decisions of their national assemblies from June 25 and 26 to secede from Yugoslavia and form their own independent sovereign states. One can doubt whether it is rational for those nations to sacrifice very important and obvious political and economic advantages of living in a supranational community in order to realize a typically nineteenth-century aspiration of establishing a separate national state. And yet nobody has the right to deny such a delayed aspiration—not other Yugoslav states, the European Community, or the United Nations. The world can decide to recognize or not some new states. But it would be wrong to force them to stay together contrary to their will.

However, if the principle of national self-determination is thus given priority over the principle of non-violability of state borders, it has to be applied consistently to all Yugoslav nations—to Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, and Macedonians as well as to Slovenes and Croats. The main cause of

the present conflict is the refusal of Croatian authorities to grant Serbian people in Croatia the same right of self-determination that is the ground of their own demand for secession.

Serbs and other Yugoslav peoples agree that Croats should have freedom to leave Yugoslavia; clearly without that agreement secession of Croatia would be a much more complicated affair. However, Croatian authorities do not agree that Serbs in Croatia have the same right to stay in Yugoslavia with the rest of their people.

It is absurd to hold that the external, internationally recognized state borders of Yugoslavia can be changed, whereas the internal, administrative, provisional borders between Yugoslav republics cannot. It is also absurd to hold that the constitutional order of Yugoslavia can be violated in order to permit secession of Slovenia and Croatia, whereas the internal order within Croatia or any other Yugoslav republic cannot.

Thus the only consistent, peaceful solution would be an internationally supervised plebiscite in the controversial territories of Croatia. This would permit each citizen to vote on whether to leave Yugoslavia within an independent state of Croatia or to stay in Yugoslavia within an autonomous province of Krajina and of Slavonia. The rights of minorities who for various reasons decide to stay on the less desirable side of the border would have to be internationally guaranteed. In some cases, exchange of population could be negotiated.

The world must not forget that during World War II the fate of Serbs in Croatia was very similar to that of the Jews. With little imagination one can guess how a Jewish minority in Germany would feel if another pro-Nazi, racist government would come to power and begin to make militant anti-Semitic moves. Serbian people in Croatia, described by a poet as "the remnant of murdered people," deserve a similar understanding.

MIHAILO MARKOVIĆ
Professor of Philosophy, University of Belgrade
Member, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Foreword to the American Edition

Since the decline of the Soviet Union and the war against Iraq, which was largely made possible by the demise of the U.S.S.R., the United States finds itself in a position that the ancient Romans or the European colonial powers could only have dreamed of. Using the United Nations as a cover (which has been reduced to this one essential function) and without fear of any military opponent, the U.S.A. rules the entire world. Whether they appreciate the "new world order" or not, U.S. citizens must keep themselves better informed about the state of the world than ever before; for they who—nolens volens—have been put into a position of power over all other peoples of the world now have the responsibility of becoming knowledgeable about the histories and cultures of the many peoples under American influence.

The current situation in Yugoslavia is a case in point. While the present edition of this book is being printed—the first English translation ever—a civil war of amazing intensity is going on in Yugoslavia, the motives, but most of all the gravity, of which are difficult to understand for the average observer. The essential question of the conflict is: whether the border regions of the old Yugoslavian province of Croatia,* which are mainly inhabited by Serbs, should be affiliated with Serbia according to the model of the eastern regions of the former German Reich, which had been mainly inhabited by Poles after World War I; or whether they should remain under Croatian government. There is also the question of a harbor for

*Croatia's extremely advantageous borders with Serbia are, among other things, a legacy of Hitler.

Serbia, which would be cut off from the sea after a separation based on historical borders. The reason for the interference of the Serbian-dominated federal army in favor of their compatriots—the reason they also gave repeatedly at the so-called "peace negotiations" in The Hague forced on them by the European Community—is the fear that their countrymen left under Croatian rule would sooner or later become victims of genocide or compulsory assimilation. How very founded these fears are this book proves with its crushing abundance of horrible but little known facts.

These facts, however, are little known not only to the American public, well out of harm's way, but (and this will surprise) also to the European public, which lives not only close to the theater of war but was involved in the war at the same place only fifty years ago. The reason for this lies with the perpetrators responsible for the atrocities, documented here for the first time to this extent: Hitler indirectly, who for a long time has been very handy as the source of all atrocities, and directly, the still so powerful Catholic Church.

And here the American reader is particularly addressed. It is obvious that the Catholic Church, though by no means as powerful in the United States as in Europe, has in the past been courted and given preference by the U.S. government; for the Church was excellently suited as an ally in the destruction of the main military opponent during World War II. Yet now, since this goal has been achieved, U.S. citizens should ask themselves, not only for moral reasons but also in their own interest, whether this utterly determined organization, prepared to take any action to its advantage,* should be continued to be given privileges. One such privilege—and certainly not the least important one—has been up to now the public silence about the crimes of the Church. This book breaks the silence at an important time and anyone who spreads its message increases this morally so necessary break. Besides the fact that the military reasons for keeping silent about the truth of the Catholic Church's very determined secular politics have long since become obsolete, there is another, higher motive to reject this historical privilege: namely the conviction that the historical truth should come to light in any case. No free citizenry should tolerate the writing of history slanted in favor of a political ally, the type of history propagated by Orwell's "Ministry of Truth." This thought alone should override any scruples about attacking a venerable institution such as the Catholic Church.

Any U.S. citizen who realizes this historical truth should consider whether the American government—whose influence is practically almighty,

*In ancient times the only organization ever able to subdue from within the militarily invincible Roman Empire.

particularly in Germany—does well by continuing to allow the German government (admittedly its most important ally on the European continent) to interfere so massively in the Yugoslavian civil war in favor of Croatia, that is, the successor state of the bloodstained Pavelić regime. The German government—the first to recognize the separatist Yugoslavian governments* —has not only done everything within its power to cut off the Serbian-dominated rest of Yugoslavia from all transport by air and surface, and from all essential oil supplies, to force the surrender of mainly Serbian regions to the Croatian separate state, but also pressures all other European governments—which, after all, are more or less dependent on it—to agitate against Serbia.

The United States often proudly points to the fact that it is inhabited by free citizens. These free citizens, out of a sense of moral responsibility, should decide whether their government ought to continue supporting or even tolerating the German position in favor of Croatia and against Serbia at exactly the same front-line positions as existed under Hitler; for the German government will not lift a finger without the permission of the United States. This book provides the information to facilitate that decision.

December 1991 GOTTFRIED NIEMIETZ

*Without the historical background that this book makes known, little could be said against this act.

Foreword to the Second German Edition

When I wrote the preface for the first edition, I did not expect that I could be writing another for the second edition just nine months later. For along with the intensified reclericalization of recent years, there has been a general lack of interest in writings of an enlightening nature, and, in particular, it was to be expected that the press would not present this book to the public as they do with clerical writings. And in actuality there was not one single review for months. The concealment in the German press scene was carried so far that the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ), which regularly promotes its allegedly liberal attitude, refused to print a paid advertisement intended to present the book to the public, knowing very well that a book which is not advertised cannot be read by anybody, and is just as effective as a burned book.

In explanation the SZ indicated that it might be legally prosecuted for printing the ad; of course they meant the blasphemy article.* However, this did not keep them from refusing another advertisement—for the journal *Ketzerbriefe*†—in *the same letter,* explaining further that the journal was giving the false impression that in Germany one could be prosecuted on the grounds of just this [blasphemy] article.

Naturally, the SZ was aware that both reasons were contradictory and furthermore hypocritical. But they acted with the certainty that the whole

*According to this article of the German constitution, it is against the law to print blasphemy against a church or religion.

†The periodical *Ketzerbriefe,* published by the Ahriman publishing house, gives regular reports about the prosecution of critics of church and religion in Germany.

thoroughly streamlined German press establishment would not break the unanimous news embargo, and that therefore it was not to be feared that information about these events would come to light. When thereupon the Ahriman publishing house nonetheless with a great deal of effort informed the public, especially abroad, about the press ban of the SZ, they even threatened the publishing house with legal steps if we should further spread this information. Only when letters began to arrive at the SZ regularly—especially from abroad—protesting against this modern version of book burning, and when this was reported abroad, so that they feared that not only their reputation but with it the confidence in the allegedly objective reporting of the SZ (and thus also of the whole German opinion-maker cartel) might be damaged, did they refrain from the threatened measures. Not only that but—one can hardly believe it—they even reported about the blasphemy trial in Würzburg against me in a considerably objective form. And after several foreign newspapers had published reviews, the *Zeit* printed a long and excellent (i.e., truthful) review. The one and only reason for these two "miracles" is that by informing the public about the advertisement and news embargo, the confidence in the objectivity of the press was in danger of being shattered. To act against this, they decided to revoke the news embargo for a short while. Up to now this review has been the first and so far the only one in Germany.

In view of these difficulties that the publishing house had to contend with, I am especially pleased that despite all of the unfavorable conditions there was such a great demand for the book that it has to be reprinted after only nine months.

Before presenting the second edition to the interested reader, I should like to refer to a publication by a Munich lecturer in east and southeast European history that I happened to come across. The book,* whose author cannot in the slightest be suspected of anticlericalism, confirms with further facts the main responsibility of the Vatican for the massacres among the orthodox population that is verfied in detail by Prof. Dedijer in this work: that it was actually the Catholic Church who committed the crimes, while the Croatian fascists like compliant marionettes served as "front men" to conceal the identity of the real perpetrator. The figures that Sundhausen gives in his book verify that at the time of the takeover, the Ustasha party had only several hundred members, so that they would never have been in the position to control a country the size of the [former] Federal Republic of Germany [West Germany] for even one day. In contrast to this, the Catholic Church has an excellent organization that was fully used in

*Holm Sundhausen, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens* (*The History of Yugoslavia*), Stuttgart, 1982.

Croatia, and by means of which the bloody reign of terror was possible at all. With its priests the Catholic Church not only provided the leading cadre of the Ustasha fascists, but, by its various clerical suborganizations (e.g., the cultural associations, etc.) it also recruited—a fact that Sundhausen also points out—the new members for the Ustasha party, who were urgently needed for the "great task" which was to be carried out. At this point I want to stop, as I do not wish to anticipate the book, and herewith I present the new edition to the public in the hope that this most unknown chapter of Church history may become just as well-known as the crimes the Church committed in the Middle Ages.

June 1989 GOTTFRIED NIEMIETZ

Foreword to the First German Edition

While Auschwitz over the years has become known to every European school child, hardly anyone has any concrete idea of what Jasenovac is. Thus this short clarification: In Jasenovac, a small Yugoslav city in Slavonia on the border with Bosnia, the largest Yugoslav concentration camp was built during the Second World War—as Auschwitz was built in German-Polish territory. In this infamous "death camp," over 200,000 people, mostly Orthodox Serbs, met their death. The reason for their liquidation was solely the fact that they were not Roman Catholic but of the Orthodox faith. This concentration camp was built, as were numerous others, by the Yugoslav fascists, the Ustasha (Ustasha [sing.], Ustashe [pl.] = rebels), who in 1941 proclaimed the "Independent State of Croatia" (NDH). It was, however, in no way independent, but in reality was a satellite of the Nazis with a puppet government established by them after their entry into Yugoslavia and headed by Ante Pavelic, the founder of the Ustasha Party. Jasenovac was thus to a certain degree a concentration camp administered autonomously abroad by the like-minded followers of the German fascists.

In contrast to Auschwitz, the reason for this Yugoslav concentration camp not finding its way into school history books becomes clear immediately when one knows the fascists' accomplices. What is supposed to be hushed up is in no way another crime committed by the Nazis or their Yugoslav counterparts, but rather the leading role played by the Catholic Church in the slaughters carried out not only in Jasenovac but also in all of Yugoslavia, in which a total of over 800,000 people lost their lives. In contrast to Hitler, who lost the war and therefore can no longer affect recorded history, the Church has maintained its position of power until today more

or less unchanged. This power does not ultimately rest on ignorance of its history—and the Church knows that all too well. Since it could not prevent its "doings" in the Middle Ages from becoming known, it employs all of its available means to keep its recent crimes under cover. For otherwise the rug would be pulled from under its claim that it has changed.

The significance of this historical lie is proven by a "blasphemy case" in which I was active as the defender. In 1984 the Göttingen atheist Birgit Römermann was charged with "libeling a religious confession" (§ 166 of the Penal Law Book), because in an informational brochure in reference to the grand total of murders by the Catholic Church, she drew the conclusion that this institution is "one of the biggest crime organizations in history." The charge against Römermann was founded—as was the condemning pronouncement from the Superior Court judge—with this claim: It is well known that the Church in the course of its history has committed some crimes. But because of the generally held definition, Mrs. Römermann has insinuated that the Vatican has not changed and even in modern times has committed crimes. This can be proven untrue and is therefore slander.

While preparing the defense, I discovered the book by the well known Church historian Karlheinz Deschner: *Ein Jahrhundert Heilsgeschichte* (*A Century of the Sufferings of Christ*). In it he describes the massacres among the Orthodox population in Croatia in the years 1941 to 1945, in which numerous Catholic priests took part, especially in influential positions such as the Commandant of Jasenovac, the Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic Majstorovic. In a speech for the defense—in anticipation of a pronouncement of innocence—I made reference to these modern crimes; however, I was obliged to learn that the judges simply skipped this part of history and condemned Mrs. Römermann. Whereas I was initially perplexed by this judgment—since with an objective assessment of history one can come to no other conclusion than did Mrs. Römermann, or such a conclusion must at least be possible in a democracy, considering the background of undeniable facts (nobody objects when the Nazis are called criminals)—it became clear to me after a short while why the judges were able to deny this additional dark chapter of church history: They did not have to fear an enlightened public, because with the exception of Deschner's book, there is until now no other source of information in the German language.

On the basis of these considerations, I came to the conclusion that this "ignorance"—arrogance of power would be a more fitting expression—could be countered only with a broadly distributed elucidation. I therefore decided to become active myself and to see to the distribution of this suppressed information. At this time I met the internationally known historian Professor Doctor Vladimir Dedijer and learned from him that he was just at that time working on a comprehensive study of this subject,

which was to appear in Serbo-Croatian. With the cooperation of the Ahriman publishing house, I was able quickly to win him over to the idea of publishing his book also in German.

The book is a compilation of documents and various contemporary testimonies, which appear for the first time in German. The selection and compilation of the texts and documents was carried out by Professor Dedijer, who is recognized internationally as an authority in this field. The author is known to German readers especially as the president of the Russell Tribune. With the same fearlessness with which he in this function condemned among other things the unconstitutional *Berufsverbot* in the Federal Republic of Germany, he brings light into this additional dark chapter of Church history and shows through comprehensive documentation the extensive participation of the Vatican. When the original work appeared about a year ago in Yugoslavia, there was no lack of reaction: The Church immediately set its whole propaganda machine in motion. It was hit in a sensitive spot.

The text presented here is a shortened version of the original under the approval of Professor Dedijer. A compilation of various book excerpts made as complete as possible necessarily leads to overlaps. The same is true for documents that depict the same facts. Since it is my intention to publish a book on this subject precisely for the nonhistorian, that is, for the interested lay person, I have shortened the repetition present in the Yugoslav original or have selected only a few of an abundance of documents on the same subject. In doing so I was very careful to avoid losing any essential information. I hope I fulfilled this stipulation.

In closing, I would like to draw attention to the fact that this book was originally written for the Yugoslav public, i.e., it assumes a certain knowledge of historical background and relationships that cannot be known automatically to the German reader. For this reason I have prefaced the work with a short historical introduction, which should fill this gap.

With these remarks, I would like now to turn the book over to the interested readers, but not without thanking especially the Yugoslav translator [Durdica Durkovic] of this long and ponderous volume of documents, as well as Ursula Dunckern from the Ahriman publishing house, without whose dedicated effort the manuscript would never have received its final form on time, and those numerous volunteer helpers, who must remain unnamed but through considerable labor in their normally very scarce free time made it possible for this book to appear in the present, technically perfect and attractive form; their only motivation was merely a service to the suppressed historical truth on which this volume sheds light.

September 1988 GOTTFRIED NIEMIETZ

Editor's Preface

"Himmler of the Balkan is Dead" proclaimed the headline of a little newspaper article published at the beginning of this year. If one would not recognize the "Fourth Estate" in our land, one would—in ignorance of the historical facts—only with great difficulty recognize that behind this "ten-liner" lies the tragedy of a whole nation. The person described as "Himmler of the Balkan" is Andrija Artukovic, Interior Minister of the "Independant State of Croatia" (NDH) proclaimed in 1941. After a delay of 35 years, the extradition request urged by the state of Yugoslavia since 1951 was finally honored in 1986, although it was known already back then to the USA that Artukovic was guilty of the genocide of over 800,000 people, not to forget the violent assault on a further 240,000 people who were forced to be "rebaptized." What the article neglects to say and what is also known to very few: in Catholic Croatia, the "Kingdom of God," everyone who did not belong to the Catholic faith—for the most part Orthodox Serbs—were compelled to convert to Catholicism. Those who refused—as well as many who had already converted—were murdered, usually after long torturing in which the order of the day was the cutting off of noses, ears, or other body parts or poking out eyes. Children were cut out of the bodies of pregnant women and subsequently beheaded; people were chopped to pieces before the eyes of loved ones, who were forced to catch the spurting blood in a bowl, etc., to list only a few horrors as example. These butcheries assumed such an extent that even German Nazis, who in this regard were not exactly sensitive, protested.

If this historical fact is little known where we are, another fact completely escapes our knowledge: the decisive involvement of the Vatican in these

massacres. These "Catholic Battle Celebrations" (Karlheinz Deschner) in the "Kingdom of God" were also no more of a "mistake"—how can one err a hundred million times over—than all the other deeds of the Catholic Church in its nearly 2000-year history. It was much more the consequent continuation of the policy pursued by the Vatican for centuries in the Balkan area, which during the Second World War attained only its temporary conclusion.

The Orthodox Church has been since the beginning a thorn in the eye of the Roman Curia, and its elimination at least since the fall of Constantinople seemed possible. To that extent, the Balkan has been since then of decisive importance to the Catholic Church. It was the dividing line between Catholicism and Orthodoxy and therefore was built up as the bulwark against the Orthodox Church, whose further expansion was feared. Already for centuries Papal hatred has been levied loudly against the Orthodox Serbs. Pope Lucius III called the Serbs "slanderers of the Holy Church, plague of the Church, thieves of priestly income," etc. Pope Honorius III (1221) scorned them as "foxes, rebels, heretics, perfidious beasts." Gregory IX (1234) painted the phantom of the *perfidia hereticorum Slavoniae* on the wall, while Boniface VIII (1298) called them "evil vermin." For Pope John XXII (1319) Bosnia was a "land of heretics and filthy spots of infidelity." For Clemens VI (1351) the Serbs were *iniquitatis filii* and *fidei Christianae adversi.* And the record holder among the mass murderers in the name of the Church, the Spanish inquisitor Torquemada, scorned the Orthodox as *pestilentes homines.*

In regard to the history of the Serbs, in order to justify the mass executions—as if one could justify them at all (!)—abominations of lies were spread especially by the Vatican regarding their nature, saying that the Catholic Serbs had been forced to accept the Orthodox faith and were now being led back into the lap of the holy Church; therefore, the historical facts must be listed briefly here:

In the Middle Ages, the Serbs were a separate independent nation on their own territory, which corresponds approximately to the southern part of present-day Yugoslavia. After their defeat by the Turks at the "Battle of Kosovo" in 1398, they moved northward into areas that were under Hungarian rule. After Austria had united with Hungary in 1526 and formed a military belt from the Adriatic Sea to the Carpathian Mountains, this area was populated as a protective wall against the Turks mainly with the Serbs, who were known as good warriors, and at the same time the Serbs were always living in the hope of someday being able to return to their former areas now occupied by the Turks. And although the Serbs in the course of time were recognized as lawful citizens, they saw themselves continually exposed to the greatest of difficulties. North of the areas they

occupied lay Croatia, a strictly Catholic land. And every subject who was not of Roman Catholic faith was exposed to appropriate persecution if he resisted conversion. The "missions" carried out by the bishops of Zagreb and Senj with the aid of Viennese Jesuits were commonly accompanied by military actions although Austria stood officially and formally on the side of the Serbs. In brief: the Serbs during this whole time found themselves in a state of self-defense in order to be able to maintain their religion and their national identity. Their formally existing rights were severed because they were not Catholic, to the point of facultative withdrawal of freedom and even torture. And although Kaiser Joseph as King of Hungary in 1706 granted the Serbs civil independence, the military pastor of Lika, Marko Mesic, could publicly announce: "Convert to Catholicism or disappear." In the eighteenth century the Croats even demanded laws in parliament that were to make life in this country impossible for the Serbs and the Orthodox Church. Among other things Serb schools were to be forbidden as well as the construction of Orthodox churches; all possessions were to be confiscated from the Orthodox cloisters, etc. However, since Maria Theresia depended on the might of the Serb military units, she did not yield to these demands.

Whereas in the beginning harassment and open violence originated mainly from the official Church representatives, the anti-Serb, in reality anti-Orthodox, propaganda in the nineteenth century was also common among the Croatian populace. At this time a key figure, a certain Ante Starcevic, appeared, who announced: "The Serbs are a task for the slaughterhouse." He founded a political movement that was continued after his death by Josip Frank and from which, after the coalition with Croatian clerics, the Frankian Party was formed. This, however, collapsed in 1918 after the defeat of Austro-Hungary when Serbia and Montenegro along with Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, the Hercegovina, and other areas united into the common state of Yugoslavia.

In this newly founded, multiethnic state, the Orthodox Church was the largest religious community, followed by the Catholic Church; in addition, there was a Jewish minority and a strong Islamic minority. There were indeed tensions, especially between the Orthodox Serbs and the Catholic Croats. The latter demanded their independence, which was strongly supported by the Croatian Peasants Party (HSS) under its leader Dr. Vlatko Macek. In regard to religion, however, complete freedom and equality reigned, even for the Catholic Church in predominantly Orthodox areas. Its press, schools, lecture series, hospitals, and other organizations flourished thoroughly, and it enjoyed "the most complete freedom of action," as even Dr. Anton Korosec, Slovene Catholic Church leader felt obligated to state—"even without a concordant." And Vjekoslaw Wagner, a Catholic priest,

stated that "such progress is possible only in a country in which religious tolerance and equality are living reality." Nevertheless, there were now as before clerical elements in Croatia who could not stand living in a country that was not purely Catholic. One of them was the former attorney from Agram (Hercegovina), Dr. Ante Pavelić. In the tradition of Ante Starcevic, along with the former Austrian officer Slavko Kvaternik and others, he founded on 7 January 1929, a day after the proclamation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia under Alexander, the Ustasha Party. Their declared goal was to destroy the Yugoslav state in order to found an "independent Croatia," the "Realm of God," in which only Catholics were to have the right to exist. To attain this goal, they availed themselves primarily of terrorist means such as bomb attacks on passenger trains, etc. Their most prominent victim was King Alexander who upon a visit in France along with the French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou was murdered in 1934 in Marseille. For this, Pavelić was sentenced to death in absentia by a French and by a Yugoslav court. But the Italian fascists granted him asylum, so that he was able to escape just punishment. It was this same Pavelić who on 10 April 1941 after the entrance of the German troops had the "Independent State of Croatia" proclaimed. The proclamation said among other things: "God's providence and the will of our great allies . . . have ordained that today before the resurrection of the Son of God, our Independent State of Croatia, too, is resurrected."

This was the beginning of martyrdom for 750,000 Orthodox Serbs, 60,000 Jews, and 26,000 Sinti and Roma (Gypsies).

And what role did the Vatican play during this whole time? What the popes of the Middle Ages thought about the Serbs has already been explained briefly. And since, as is known, the Church never abandons its goals and the Pope is actually infallible—when it is a matter of securing and enlarging the size of the herd—the development in Croatia found not only the agreement of the popes but they did everything in their power to force it. The whole second half of the nineteenth century was imprinted with a close cooperation between the Vatican and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Between the two there was a type of symbiosis, for the Vatican needed the strictly Catholic monarchy as a bulwark against the Orthodoxy in the east, as the monarchy at this point in time was the most solid support of the papacy in Europe: conversely the monarchy needed the good Catholic sheep. In front of this backdrop arose also the suggestion of Leo XIII concerning the founding of a "League of Catholic States" with the "Austrian Emperor and the apostolic king of Hungary" at the head. The Pope especially supported the imperialistic plans of the imperial monarchy to conquer sizable portions of the Balkan, which ended with the annexation of Bosnia and of Hercegovina in 1908/09. And contrary to the widely spread rumor that

he died from grief over the outbreak of war, Pope Pius X died in 1914 more likely from his blood swelling due to a superabundance of joy, thus causing the papal heart to stop. For it was not just that Emperor Franz Joseph, who discussed any bagatelle with Christ's viceroy and who called himself the truest son of the church, declared war on Serbia only after approval of the pope. Documents show clearly that the latter simply ordered him to! The "peace pope" had years before this given expression again and again to his regret "that Austro-Hungary neglected to punish its dangerous Danube neighbor." For him Serbia was "a gnawing disease that is gradually destroying the marrow of the monarchy and in time will cause its dissolution." Austro-Hungary has been and remains, according to the view of the Curia "as an admitted Catholic state the strongest bulwark remaining to the Church in this century. The dismantling of this bulwark would mean for the Church the loss of its strongest support. In its struggle against Orthodoxy, it would lose its strongest champion. As it is absolutely necessary for Austria thus for purely self-preservative reasons to free its organism from the evil that threatens it,—and if necessary by force—it is also necessary for the Catholic Church to undertake every effort and to sanction every effort that can lead to the accomplishment of this goal." This telegram from the then Austro-Hungarian ambassador in the Vatican, Count Moritz Pálffy on the 29th of July, 1914, leaves nothing in doubt. It proves quite clearly—and it wasn't intended for the public —that the realm of the Church contrary to other views is thoroughly of this world.

But to the dismay of the Vatican, the war ended in a way that they would not have wanted; Austro-Hungary fell apart and Yugoslavia came into being. This destroyed for the time being the centuries-old plans for a bulwark against the Orthodoxy, which is why the Pope, now Benedict XV, confronted the new state belligerently and didn't recognize it until a year after its founding—let us not forget in this regard that the Vatican conversely was the first state in the world to recognize the Third Reich. It could not come to terms with the idea that Catholics—N.B., amid all imaginable freedoms—would have to live in a state that was not purely Catholic. And with such states, the Church declares peace only for a limited time. Its own time, so this book proves, is surely about to come.

But since it first had to recognize this status quo as a reality, the Pope tried to reach his goal by other means. Thus the Vatican worked with the high clergy of Yugoslavia intensively on the radicalizing of separatist national movements. From this cooperation emerged the clerical Nationalist Front, a classic clero-fascist organization. The already mentioned Ustasha party of Ante Pavelić received a strong influx of Catholic priests, who very early became the central column of Ustashadom and set up adminis-

trative cadres.

At this time also came the concordat signed with Yugoslavia. To quiet the Catholic Croats in the country, the young state still under King Alexander had signed a concordat with the Vatican that was approved by the parliament in 1937 but which eventually had to be dropped because of massive protests—especially by the Orthodox Church. This concordat was supposed to create rights for the Catholic Church that the Orthodox Church was not entitled to. Accordingly the Yugoslav state was supposed to compensate the Catholic Church, for example, for confiscations that Austria had carried out in the years from 1780 to 1790—which was rejected even by Catholic Austria. Additionally it was to pay a settlement for the fact that the Church had lost land through agrarian reforms. And it was not simply that all the norms of the realm opposing the concordat were to be disempowered: In Article 37 it was even stipulated that any points not covered therein were to be decided according to Catholic Church law! Yugoslavia thus was to become a satellite state of the Vatican.

But as always in history—Raymond of Toulouse can verify it from the beyond—concessions and retreats in the Catholic Church only whet the appetite. Pacelli, the later Pius XII, who gave us the still valid concordat with the Nazis, immediately threatened: "The day will come when not a few will regret that they have rejected this magnanimous and generous offer to their country by Christ's earthly kingdom."—That wasn't just talk.*

GOTTFRIED NIEMIETZ

---

*All historical facts are taken from the following books:
Avro Manhattan, *Terror over Yugoslavia*, London, 1954.
Edmond Paris, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia 1941-1945*, Paris, 1962.
Karlheinz Deschner, *Ein Jahrhundert Heilsgeschichte*, vol. II, Cologne, 1983.

Introduction

For me, the question of genocide is not just a matter of law.

I was an eyewitness to the brutal bombing of Belgrade by the German Luftwaffe on 6 April 1941, during which thousands of people were killed and numerous cultural institutions were destroyed, including the Serbian National Library, which among other things had contained numerous medieval documents.

In October 1941, I was the political commissioner of the command at Kragujevac when German army units cold-bloodedly shot 7,000 inhabitants there including whole school classes along with their teachers. Our headquarters was in the village Toponica, which lay about 25 kilometers from Kragujevac. We learned of this blood bath when in the neighboring villages, the women according to an old Serbian tradition broke out in loud lamentations over the dead. A wave of lamentation went from village to village as the inhabitants of Kragujevac realized the full extent of the mass murder.

Later I saw with my own eyes in Croatia, Bosnia, and in Hercegovina numerous trenches into which thousands of Serbian women, men, and children had been thrown with slit throats. I learned that Orthodox Serbs were forced to convert to Catholicism in great numbers.

On 17 July 1942, I was staying with the Third Brigade of the partisans near the city of Prozor. In a written report from those days, I recorded that a battalion of the First Proletarian Brigade while marching past the cloister Scit were suddenly shot down by machine guns. In this attack six partisans were killed. A fight broke out and the fortified cloister was destroyed. We captured several Franciscan monks who were armed with

guns. One of them named Victor Sliskovic reported that the German Army had sent specialists to fortify the cloister. It was defended by a unit of fascist Ustashe and about twenty monks.[1]

On the 27th of July, I met with Milovan Djilas, a member of the chief command of the partisans. He was in the process of formulating a report to Tito about a massacre of numerous Serbian farmers in the village of Urije, which had been brutally violated by an Ustasha unit under the command of Colonel Francetic. Djilas had arrived at the village a half hour after the massacre. After he had finished his report, I asked him to write down the report in my diary. I am publishing it in this collection of documents as an important piece of evidence.[2]

At the end of 1942, the partisans liberated a large area on the border between Croatia and Bosnia including the largest city of this region, Bihac. We arrested several Ustashe who had taken part in mass murders in this area; more than 12,000 people had been slaughtered.

Mose Pijade, member of the chief command of the partisans, established a commission that had the task of collecting evidence of war crimes and genocide that had been committed against the Serbs in this area. I helped him with the work.

We received a lot of information about the concentration camp at Jasenovac, which was the third largest execution site for innocent people during the Second World War. A group of prisoners, among them Jewish friends of mine, escaped from this camp. In the village of Drinic in the liberated area of western Bosnia, their reports were published with my help; we printed a small brochure that represented the first witness to the happenings in Jasenovac.[3] A few months ago, a friendly archivist uncovered this unique document again and placed it at my disposal for publication in this collection.

In the bitter battle of Sutjesca in 1943, the divisions of Germans, Italians, and Ustashe surrounded 20,000 partisans in the mountains around the Sutjesca river. About 7,000 of our people were wounded—I was among them—and another 7,000 died, including a great number of wounded that the enemy slaughtered mercilessly.

Since I had suffered a serious head wound, Tito asked General M. Wilson, the commander of the allies in the eastern Mediterranean, for permission to have me operated on in Cairo, because our surgeons did not have the necessary equipment. At the end of 1943, I went to Cairo, where I underwent an operation from which I recovered relatively quickly. At this time I met a number of war reporters from England, the USA, and other countries. They reported rather correctly on what I told them about the war in Yugoslavia and the victims of genocide. But when I began

to describe the role of the Franciscan monks in the compulsory conversion of the Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism, not one word about this was published in the newspapers and magazines of the Allies.

Something similar happened in San Francisco, where in the spring of 1945 I attended the opening session of the United Nations. There I met with several statesmen and diplomats as well as with numerous writers, film directors, and actors, and I tried to discuss with them why the clearly proven participation of the Roman Catholic church in the genocides in Yugoslavia was a tabu subject. I had the feeling that there was a purposeful and coordinated news blackout about the genocides in Yugoslavia. Only later did the English philosopher and humanist Bertrand Russell come to the conclusion that the Vatican was responsible for the fact that the truth about what really happened in Yugoslavia was withheld.

From 1945 to 1953, I was the Yugoslav delegate to the United Nations and during this time took part in the ground work for the convention on genocide.

In addition to the diary that I kept during the war and which contains numerous hard-proof documents on genocide, between 1945 and 1954 I gathered in Yugoslavia a great collection of documents of varying origin about genocide. In 1954 in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade, I began to hold lectures on the methodology of historical research regarding the history of war including genocide. But since I was forced to abandon my academic position because of my views on the necessity of freedom of opinion and tolerance, none of my books was published for thirteen years, and I had to give up my work at the university.

Not until the end of 1959 did I receive permission to travel abroad and there to resume my teaching at various universities. I taught in Manchester and Oxford, Lund, Stockholm, and Upsala, Aarhus, Kopenhagen, and Oslo, at numerous universities in the USA (Harvard, Cornell, Michigan), and finally at the Sorbonne. I conducted several seminars on the systematic research of genocide. I collected numerous documents on the genocide of Jews in the second world war and wrote a thorough treatise on this theme that has not yet been published.

On the initiative and with the support of the Nobel Institute, the Norwegian Institute for Foreign Policy, and the Staatsvitenskapelig Institute on January 14, 1965, in the Nobel Hall in Oslo I held a lecture on the subject: "Could the Jews have offered a stronger resistence to annihilation by the Nazis? A coming to terms with violent and nonviolent forms of resistence."

I was able to accommodate a large part of my investigations on genocide in the scope of my work in the Bertrand Russell Tribunal. We first concentrated on theoretical aspects of genocide, legal, sociological, and philo-

sophical aspects, and occupied ourselves then with historical questions about genocide.

The first case that we studied was the genocide in Vietnam by the American regime and the US Army. Jean-Paul Sartre assigned me the task of making a historical analysis of the connection between the worldwide increase of despotism and the frequency of genocidal crimes.

Between 1961 and 1986 I participated in the work of the Russell Tribunal and its committees regarding a dozen cases of genocide throughout the world. (See Appendix I.)

In 1984 I was elected the chair of the committee on the genocide of Serbs and other peoples in Yugoslavia in the twentieth century, which was established by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In this committee we coordinate the gathering of documents on genocide in Yugoslavia, but the greatest part of our work is dedicated to scientific and methodological questions in connection with the investigation of all aspects of genocide.

In the meantime, I have written several works on the concept of genocide, about its modern forms in the twentieth century, and on cases of genocide in the past, e.g., in Spain in the year 1492.[4]

Compulsory Conversion and Genocide: Historical Patterns

History shows that a church, as soon as its interests coincide with those of a conquering state, undertakes compulsory conversions. Every religious organization pursues the goal of ruling the world as the sole and best religion. Conversely a state, when it conquers another, instructs the church of its land to force the population of the newly conquered area to convert so that it will have better control of the latter. Even Jewry—perhaps the most commonly persecuted religious community in history—undertook compulsory conversions in its beginnings. When the Jewish army commander John had subdued the Edomites, he gave them the choice of death, expulsion, or conversion to Judaism.[5] (Appendix II)

Historians have thoroughly studied the development of Islam from a religious sect to a powerful state religion. The second Mohammedan caliph, Omar Ibn Al-Khattar, beat the Persians at Cardesia in 637 A.D.; soon thereafter came the conquering of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. After the second victory over the Persians, Iran fell under Arabic control; Omar proclaimed the Koran-al-Raya, which later became the basic law in the Ottoman empire.

All religions that are based on scriptures (Judaism and Christianity) remained protected from direct eradication; the position of their adherents,

however, was strictly controlled by edict. The Yugoslav author Ivo Andric showed in his doctor's dissertation that this edict from Omar II formed the basis of the Turkish dominion in Bosnia up until 1878. It contained several restrictions and was the strongest weapon to convert Jews and Christians to Islam. (Appendix III)

Buddhism contains numerous elements of tolerance. Nevertheless, to the extent with which the Indian state consolidated its power, the use of force among religious groups also increased. When the modern Indian state was finally constituted, the massacre of Moslems by the Hindus and vice versa greatly increased in intensity. It is estimated that in the years 1947 and 1948 approximately seven to eight million people were killed. I was in Calcutta just a few weeks after Ghandi's death and saw with my own eyes the enormous extent of the gruesome deeds that were committed here out of religiously based hatred. Even today this hatred is the basis for the tumult and the massacre in the Punjab. Prime Minister Indira Ghandi, too, was a victim of these hostile conflicts between Sikhs and Hindus.

History demonstrates numerous examples of compulsory conversions in Christianity. All Christian churches have taken part: the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans, the Protestants, and the Orthodox, as well as numerous sects such as the Baptists, for example. As we will see later, compulsory conversions in the age of colonialism were especially frequent. In this regard, it must be pointed out that compulsory conversion is an important instrument for subduing conquered peoples. A glance at the history of the expansion of czarist Russia makes clear that the same pattern was followed here as in western Europe. The Russian Orthodox Church, which was controled directly by the czars, formed the most important instrument of imperialistic and nationalistic policy of the ruling circles in Russia.

> One of the main tasks of the church was the Russification of the national minorities in the conquered lands. In the instructions of the missionaries there was frequently the indication that after they had converted the members of the national minorities, the missionaries were to get them to wear Russian clothing, assume Russian names, and give up their own folk culture. Everyone who was converted was to be given certain privileges in order to incite conflicts between them and those who refused to be converted. As a matter of foreign policy, the missionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church in connection with a planned or imminent conquest by the czarist regime frequently had the preparatory function to assault the economy and the army of the land to be conquered. Czar Peter the First gave the Russian Orthodox missionaries in China the instructions to gather information about the Chinese

> army and military encampments and about trade and foreign influences in China.[6]

A similar procedure was practiced by numerous sects, even by those that had the reputation of being especially tolerant.

Missionary pursuit in Africa and in other continents was closely associated with the colonialism of European states. Missionaries were frequently sent ahead in order to prepare the conquering of a country by acting as informants. In many cases the missionaries represented the best propagandists in the strengthening of the colonial power in these countries. Historical documents show that even major powers such as France and the USA, which had introduced the separation of church and state, deliberately established in their budgets official positions for the financing of missionary schools and hospitals. Even Great Britain, where there is no separation of church and state, financed missionary schools, for example in Tanzania and Zambia, in order to gain influence on the population.

In the New Testament, an apostle is simply an emissary appointed by Jesus who had the assignment of being an eyewitness and of spreading the doctrine of the kingdom of the messiah. As we have seen, the Roman Catholic Church dedicates itself to its apostolic duties with the greatest zeal. For this purpose it has constructed its own organization within the church and has founded numerous orders to serve this purpose.

The Roman Catholic Church is an organization with extensive economic interests. It therefore carries out its world mission in arrangement with the moneyed classes and the relevant regimes, who conquer and exploit other lands.

Disregarding the admonishment to love one's neighbor, the Church preached and organized hatred right from the beginning, especially against Jews, who were labelled murderers of Jesus Christ. Through the centuries—and especially after the destruction of the Jewish realm in Palestine—the attempt to force them to convert has been a constant element of suppression of the Jews. Along with the feudal lords, the Roman Catholic Church introduced laws that forbade the Jews to own land and to practice certain professions. The third and fourth Lateran Council (1179 and 1215) forbade Jews to live with Christians. That was the origin of the institution of the ghetto: The Jews had to live in separate sections of the city. The Church with its sermons of hate incited the faithful masses in all Christian states to oppose the Jews; those Jews who declined to be baptized were evicted from numerous lands; the first mass murders of Jews took place.[7]

The Christian churches—the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox—were the main practitioners of Jewish persecution in the nineteenth

century. Adolf Hitler first met the practitioners of anti-Semitism and of racism (especially against Serbs and Slovenes) in his homeland Austria. The political climate in Austria was at that time characterized primarily by the influence of the Catholic Party of Austria under the leadership of Dr. Lueger and by the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was considered the strictest Catholic among the European rulers of the twentieth century. Both propagandized the physical annihilation of both the Jews and the Serbs.[8]

One should not forget that the Vatican and Adolf Hitler on July 12, 1933, signed an imperial concordat. Although the Vatican reserved the claim of moral superiority over all other nations for itself, it was the first state to give the Hitler regime its blessing.

In actuality, Hitler and the Vatican had a lot in common: anti-Semitism, anti-liberalism, anti-communism. Later we will see that Hitler and the Vatican pursued common goals in Yugoslavia in the genocide of Serbs, Slovenes, and Jews.

Compulsory conversions were prevalent especially during the eight crusades in the time from 1096 to 1270. Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont-Ferrand summonsed the Christian western and central Europe to "liberate the grave of Jesus in Jerusalem." The social and economic conditions in the feudal states of Europe, the growing significance of money in economic relationships, and the increased demands of the ruling nobility drove the feudal lords to thieving raids outside their own dominions. The popes, themselves high feudal lords, delivered the religiously grounded justification for this armed assault in the Middle East at a time when the power of the Islamic caliphs was dwindling.[9]

Two centuries of crusades revealed the great ability of the Roman Catholic Church to influence precisely the poorest levels of the European population as it saw fit.

The popes declared the crusades to be holy wars, a "new path to heaven" (*novum salutis genus*), which would lead to the forgiveness of sins (*peccaminum remisso*).

However, the Roman Catholic Church did not always succeed in mobilizing enough pilgrims and crusaders. In the year 1212 the priests therefore began to preach to the youth and even to children that they should go to Palestine to free the grave of Jesus and thus set an example for their elders. Thus tens of thousands of children from all parts of Europe came to Marseille. The Venetians, who had negotiated with the pope to transport the children to Palestine, instead brought them to northern Africa and sold them to sheiks of the land, who took these unfortunate children into their harems. European historians even unto today have withdrawn

from the task of writing the history of this children's crusade.

The crusades left deep memories in the consciousness of the people in Europe as well as in the Middle East. A new wave of hate had been aroused by the Church, whose catastrophic consequences are still visible today, not only in Beirut but also in the whole Middle East.

Already at the time of the crusades, the Roman Catholic Church founded the inquisition—an "especially holy tribunal for the control and destruction of heretics," as reads the definition in the Catholic encyclopedia.[10]

The inquisition was instigated by Pope Gregory IX, who appointed permanent judges from the ranks of the Franciscans and the Dominicans (*inquisitores dati ab ecclesia*) and who gave them the task of persecuting the heretics and simultaneously forcing the victims to convert to Catholicism. The history of the inquisition shows that heretics were burned until the beginning of the nineteenth century, especially in the former Spanish colonies such as Mexico (1822), for example.[11] Yet today there is no comparative history of the methods of the inquisition and those totalitarian states of the twentieth century. Jean-Paul Sartre illustrated, however, that the inquisition was the Church's decisive instrument of control and that its methods were adopted by all dictatorships, for the inquisition was instigated not only for the annihilation of heretics but also—and this is of even greater significance—to convert them (with the words of the church: "to save their souls and to bring them into the proper faith").[12]

After Jean-Paul Sartre and I had already discussed this topic upon several occasions, in Bohinj, Florence, and during a trip through Norway, we made the decision to collect historical documentation about the persecution and murder of heretics. We called this project *Le baiser du mort*. This book basically represents an encyclopedia of the heretic movements.

We were especially interested in the various reactions of the heretics to the persecution. We distinguished three groups. There were numerous heretics who were killed for their beliefs and their convictions and whom no clever inquisitor could break. Next to them were numerous reports about heretics who tried to escape the persecution by disguising themselves. A third group broke under torture and identified themselves with their persecutors.

Sartre and I worked for years together on this project. Even after Sartre's death I continued to collect documents on this subject. But when it became clear that I would not be able to finish this work in my lifetime, I arranged with Professor Rudolf Rizman for him to continue the work on this project with several young friends.

Still during Sartre's lifetime, I conducted various seminars at large American universities (Brandeis, Michigan), among which were seminars on the history of the heretic movement. I pictured the development since

the Essenes and emphasized the history of the neo-Manichaeans (Albigenses, Patharenes, Cathars, Bogomiles, etc.) and their annihilation. Every time that Sartre and I met, we discussed in detail the varying philosophies of this heretic movement. The results of some of these discussions were published, for example, in *Heresy: Ancient and Modern.*[13]

The historian E. Grekulov determined in his 1930 book *Die Geschichte der Heiligen Inquisition in Rußland* that inquisitorial methods were used not only in Catholic countries against heretics, but were also used by the Protestants in England and in Calvinist Geneva, where Servetus was burned at the stake. Grekulov names examples of the use of inquisitorial torture in Russia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; then some heretics were burned in barricaded cloisters.[14]

When one compares the history of compulsory conversions and genocide in Spain at the end of the fifteenth century on the one hand and in Yugoslavia in the years 1941 to 1945 on the other hand, another important viewpoint emerges.[15] In both cases there were secret talks between the Roman Catholic Church and the state, in which the Church held the leading role in the ideological preparation and justification of these mass crimes.

As an organization with significant economic and financial interests, the Roman Catholic Church pursued its world mission in talks with colonial and imperialistic states. At the end of the fifteenth century, the development of trade capitalism was beginning, first in the important Catholic Mediterranean countries of Spain and Portugal. At the same time the collapse of feudalism was beginning. With the development of the productive powers, the division of labor as well as the possibilities of distribution and exchange increased. The bankers of this time, money lenders and profiteers, took up relations with industrial capital. The trade capital was not yet able to organize production but controlled the transport of all produced goods. With the growth of the product and money economy, the importance and the power of the cities increased. The goal of the bourgeoisie was the creation of national markets and at the same time the establishment of a central state power, because only through this could the protection of national domestic markets be guaranteed. The local feudal lords, on the other hand, were opponents of this new form of state and economics. Merchant capital is the only power that can unify the national market. Money became the most important means of trade. Therefore a real hunger for gold arose. The great feudal states entered into competition for the control of the most important sea routes, which represented the shortest connections between Europe and distant continents for the transport of gold, spices, and raw materials. Because of the expansion of the Arab and Turkish empire, the old trade routes in Egypt and the Near East were not accessible to Euro-

pean trade. Therefore, the Atlantic rim states in Europe, who could turn to the discovery of the compass, the progress in geography, and an improved technology in the construction of big ships, had the best possibilities of developing the newly arisen economic form and international trade. At the same time, the European states were developing their military technology to a high standard, especially by equipping their sailing vessels with canons, and were thereby far superior to all opposing armies outside of Europe.

The Bull of Pope Alexander VI to the kings of Spain and Portugal *Inter cetera divinae* of 1493 reveals quite clearly the trade interests of the leading colonial powers of the world as well as the character of the apostolic mission of the Roman Catholic Church:

> We have learned that you are planning to discover and explore some distant and unexplored islands and continents in order to convert their inhabitants to the Roman Catholic faith and to the honor of our redeemer. Since up until now you were occupied with the struggle for the subjugation and liberation of the kingdom of Granada, you were formerly not able to accomplish this holy goal as your wishes would have it. Now, however, since you have conquered the above-mentioned kingdom with God's blessing and help, you have realized your wish, and have dispatched your beloved son, Christopher Columbus, a man of high virtue. You have granted him ships and armed soldiers; you have taken great pains, dangers, and even expenses upon yourselves so that now those distant and unknown continents and islands can be discovered that lie in waters that until now no one has been able to penetrate with ships.[16]

The Roman Catholic Church in agreements with the Spanish rulers King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella organized the first genocide in modern European history.

Lemkin coined the concept of "genocide" shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War: a people or an ideological group are exterminated solely because they belong to a certain nation or religion that is different from that of the murderers. This definition was taken as a basis at the convention of the United Nations in 1948. It fits perfectly the genocide that was committed at the end of the fifteenth century in Spain: Jews and Arabs were sacrificed or expelled for no other reason than their religious belief or their nationality. They were able to save their lives only if they assumed Christianity. We should keep in mind that in this genocide at the end of the fifteenth century in Spain the state and the Roman Catholic Church coordinated their efforts in the destruction of ethnic and religious aspects of Arabs and Jews. Through pressure from the state and the terror

of the Church, these Arabs and Jews were to be made into Spaniards.

From then until today there have been numerous cases of compulsory assimilation in European history. The compulsory conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism and their Croatianizing in the Second World War is the most obvious example.

In 1492 the Church in Spain declared that all inhabitants of the conquered kingdom of Granada—Moors and Jews—had to be converted to the Roman Catholic faith "so that their souls would be saved." If Moors and Jews resisted conversion, they were threatened with immediate expulsion from Spain. Many Sephardic Jews emigrated from Spain into a new Diaspora. In many Spanish cities, editions of the Koran and of the Talmud were burned in great numbers in public squares. The Moors organized numerous rebellions, which, however, were put down by Spanish troops. King Philipp III issued an edict saying that all Moors were to be driven out, even those who had transferred from Islam to Christianity. In all, 300,000 people were driven out.[17]

In this regard, it is of great interest to compare the methods of the Spanish inquisition at the end of the fifteenth century with those of the Vatican and the fascist states in Croatia between 1941 and 1945, as will be shown in the documents of this book. (See also Appendix IV.)

In Spain at the end of the fifteenth century and also in Croatia in the twentieth century, the Vatican used every means to make disappear and even destroy all written historical documentation that reveals the Vatican's responsibility for the murder of hundreds of thousands of victims.

What was the historical background for the genocide crimes in Croatia during the Second World War? In this collection we have published numerous documents for this important historical question. We are of the opinion that among the Vatican, Hitler, Mussolini, and Pavelić there was a secret agreement.

Together with Professor Andrej Mitrovic, we have worked on a scientific investigation of the historical bases for the genocide by the Germans in the Second World War.

The significance of Ante Pavelić and right-wing circles of the ruling class in Croatia for the rise of the genocide of Serbs is evident from the documents of this collection.

As in numerous other parts of the world, the Roman Catholic Church made the Balkan states, too, their missionary province and with all means at their disposal carried out conversions there. Long before there was a state there, the Vatican attempted to bring the Balkan into its sphere of influence. The Franciscan order, which had already distinguished itself in

its papal mission in Latin America, China, and Japan, undertook great efforts in Bosnia and in Hercegovina to convert the Manichean sect of the Bogomiles.[18]

One of the methods that the Vatican used to convert numerous Orthodox members to Catholicism in eastern Europe and in the Balkan was the creation of the so-called "United Church." This church was founded officially already at the Council of Brest (1596). The decisive factor for the accession of this "United Church" was the subjugation of the relevant Orthodox churches to the Vatican. They had to declare their allegiance to the pope publicly and received permission to read the mass in their own Slavic languages and to retain their traditional church rituals.

Already since the beginning of the thirteenth century the Vatican made secret agreements with the relevant state heads to force the non-Catholic population of the Balkan into Catholicism. In the thirteenth century the popes collaborated with the Hungarian kings and the Venetian doges, later with the Austrian emperors and in the twentieth century with Austro-Hungary and Hitler's Germany.

The great historian J. Sidak has described how the Vatican, with the help of Hungary and Venice, organized crusades against the Bosnian heretics:

> In their centuries-long efforts to eradicate the heresy in Bosnia, the Roman Catholic Church also conducted crusades against the heretics there. After the failed attempts of 1203 to convert the Bosnian heretics to Catholicism peacefully, Pope Honorius III in the year 1221 summonsed his legate Acontius and the Hungarian episcopate to apply all means to achieve this goal. Although he did not explicitly mention the "sign of the cross" upon this occasion, he nevertheless admonished the Catholic archbishop—who was willing to carry out this summons—to preach the crusade and the power authorities, who were willing, to carry the sign of the cross under punishment of excommunication. At that time he even guaranteed him ecclesiastical rights to Bosnia, Sol, and Usora, which Andreas II, in the framework of this crusade, was to subjugate to his worldly power. This plan for a first crusade in Bosnia perished, however. Not until the year 1234 was Pope Gregory IX successful in giving a character of a crusade to the campaign of the Slav Duke Koloman against Bosnia. He granted absolution to him and his cohorts, gave them various privileges, and placed them under his papal protection as if they were fighting for the liberation of the Holy Land. In actuality, Koloman subjugated Bosnia in 1238 and apparently eliminated the heresy with the aid of the Hungarian Dominicans who also proceeded with burnings against the heretics there. Kolomon assured Catholicism through the reorganization of the Bosnian bishopric following the pattern of the western church. Even this decisive event, in which the political interests of the Hungarian court and the goals of the Roman Curia were intimately woven,

did not, however, lead to any sort of permanent results in the sense of the conquerors. The Catholic bishop even saw himself soon forced to withdraw to Slavonic Dakovo for good.

Furthermore, the Roman Curia also paid special attention to the "Bosnian Heresy" and from the end of the thirteenth century increasingly deployed the Franciscan order into battle against them. Although the Hungarian court attacked Bosnia several times still and justified this as a battle against heresy, Rome did not give these campaigns anything more than the stamp of a crusade. This happened only one more time, in the year 1407, when Gregory XII rallied an army for a crusade against Turks, Arians, Manicheans (i.e., Bosnia heretics) and other heathens in various countries in order to support King Zigmund. He granted absolution to the participants in this crusade, the same as the pilgrims to the Holy Land received it in those times. Zigmund in 1408 indeed did crush the rebellion in Bosnia supported by crusade knights from various lands, especially Poland; but there were still no deep changes. This common action of the Hungarian court and the Roman Curia had only the lasting result of making further advances easier for the Turks.[19]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Vatican stood in close relationship with the Catholic party in Vienna, whose leader was Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The followers of this party demanded the physical annihilation of Serbs and Jews. In this regard, I would like to quote a passage from my book *Sarajevo 1914,* in which I have processed numerous documents:

Whenever ecclesiastical institutions have appeared directly in politics, it has happened under the slogan of the "defense of sacred Christian values." Since the French revolution, the Catholic Church has fought especially against liberalism and rationalism. The significance of the fact that the Catholic Church in Italy as well as in Austro-Hungary has pursued important economic interests, especially wherever the possession of land is concerned, should not be underestimated. As Salvemini charged, the Vatican suffered great financial losses when it tried to convert a part of its feudalistic agrarian economy into a commercial-capitalistic basis, because a sharp competition existed with the capitalists, who advocated a policy of laissez-faire and the principles of liberalism. The fact that there were some Jews among the capitalists served the Vatican in the eighties as an excuse for the reviving of anti-Semitism. The old religious anti-Semitism combined with the new economic and political anti-Semitism. Theories appeared saying that "evil" forces from outside, especially "Jews, Freemasons, and Protestants," had set the French Revolution into motion. The idea of equality was denounced as the product of a Jewish conspiracy. The Jews were accused of striving for status equal to all other people and under the pretense of equality wanting to achieve dominion of the world. This new form of Catholic anti-Semitism was promulgated under

the rule of Pope Leo XIII. The major bearer of this policy was the order of the Jesuits, who deployed its journal *Civita Cattolica* as a propaganda instrument in the battle against the Jews.

Numerous law-oriented Austrian aristocrats, pressured by the rising bourgeoisie welcomed this new Vatican policy. But if one expected this new course to bear fruit, then one, at least partially, had to find the support of the masses. One had to see to it that the latent anti-Semitism would be revived. After the announcement of the Enzyklika Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII, the Catholic Party was founded in Austria. Its unusually dynamic leader was Dr. Karl Lueger.

A part of the Austrian ruling circle pursued the activities of Dr. Lueger with suspicion. His efforts to involve the bourgeoisie in political life disturbed them. They were not anti-Semites—in actuality there were some Jewish bankers among them who played a decisive role in the financial affairs of the court. Emperor Franz Josef did not agree with the strict economic and political anti-Semitism of Lueger and refused several times to give his support for Lueger's election to the position of mayor of Vienna.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the representatives of the aristocracy who were committed to battle, on the other hand, supported Dr. Lueger. From a comment by Lisling, it is deduced that Dr. Lueger was a prominent political personality in the eyes of the archduke. Franz Ferdinand after 1890 was in personal contact with Lueger and planned to appoint him some day to prime minister.

Dr Lueger, along with Georg von Schönerer, an Austrian politician, was one of the founders of modern anti-Semitism at the end of the nineteenth century. It is generally understood that Dr. Lueger's anti-Semitism was more religious and economic, while that of Schönerer, on the other hand, was mainly racist. But it is difficult to distinguish between these two forms of anti-Semitism.

Dr. Lueger made no secret of the fact that anti-Semitism served him only as a tactical instrument in politics. He scorned especially Jewish intellectuals but as Vienna's mayor, he at the same time cooperated with leading Viennese bankers, among whom Jewish families such as the Rothschilds were influential. Alexander Spitzmüller, chair of the credit institution, asked Dr. Lueger about the logic of his anti-Semitism. He expressed his astonishment about the fact that Lueger, in spite of his anti-Semitic attitude, was cooperating so successfully with Jews in public offices. The mayor answered with astonishing frankness: "Anti-Semitism is an excellent means of political agitation to achieve a certain goal; but once you have achieved it, it becomes superfluous. Otherwise anti-Semitism is something for dummies."

The speeches of Dr Lueger and his adherents as well as the documentation for the introduction of anti-Jewish laws are, however, not characterized only by religiously and economically motivated anti-Semitism but rather also by racism; they even contain demands for the eradication of Jews. In the year 1889 Dr. Lueger declared: Only "the fat Jews" could survive the "murderous

free competition in the economy. The Christian world must be protected from the insatiable capitalism. Anti-Semitism is no explosion of brutality but rather a cry of the suppressed Christian people for the help of the Church and the state." In an address before the parliament in 1890, he accused the Jews of unquenchable greed for revenge on all those who remembered their deeds; he compared them to wolves and lions and accused them of not being able to escape their past. At the end of his speech, he suggested—without any objection from those present—the use of the "medication" that his friend Ernst Schneider had prescribed for the solution of the "Jewish problem." Ernst Schneider, one of the most adamant anti-Semites, had expressed the desire that all Jews board a big ship and it sink during a severe storm on the high seas along with every man and mouse. This, in his opinion, would be a great burden removed from humanity.

In 1896, as Dr. Lueger again was elected mayor of Vienna, his followers greeted him as is noted in the city annals as "our messiah." In the address with which he thanked the city for his re-election, he attacked the Hungarian regime intensely and declared that the most important goal of his policy was the liberation of Catholics from Jewish suppression and the realization of Austrian independence. His party colleague Gregorig made the proposal that Jews, whether they were baptized or not, be excluded from citizen rights. He added that the Jews were the root of all social evil and there was no possibility to protect the general populace from Jewish aggression other than by confiscating Jewish property. As long as this could not be done on a legal basis, one could keep these infamous individuals in check only with a whip. Schneider supported this proposal with the comment that in human society only humans could enjoy citizen rights: "I cannot grant Jews the right to be considered humans, and I think we should punish every relationship between humans and Jews as an inappropriate act against nature."

In a later speech in 1901 Schneider declared: "The Jewish question is, as history teaches, a question of race, a question of blood and steel, and this fact cannot be ignored. I would not want to get involved in any discussion about the baptism of Jews; but I will say: If I had to baptize Jews, I would improve on the method of John the Baptist. At a baptism he dipped them in water only briefly; but I would submerge them for five minutes."

As far as the ideology as well as the concrete measures of persecution are concerned, the anti-Semitism of the German National Socialists was greatly influenced by the Austrian anti-Semitism shaped by Dr. Lueger and Georg von Schönerer.

As we will see later, occasioned by the mobilization of Austro-Hungary, conflicts arose between the archduke and certain banks that were under the influence of Jewish financial circles. He tried to favor banks with which he had personal relationships.

Anti-Semitism strengthened the anti-Hungarian policy of the archduke since Jews played an important role in the political and cultural life of Hungary. Franz Ferdinand was not able to get over the fact that the Hungarian

parliament in 1894 passed a law making civilian marriage obligatory and that in Hungary state registration was introduced that made marriages between Christians and Jews possible. Under the influence of the archduke, Dr. Lueger began to launch a propaganda campaign against "Judeo Magyarism." Dr. Lueger was an opponent of the pact of 1867, through which, as he said, "Austria has been subjugated to the Hungarian state." At the time of the crisis with Hungary in 1906, Vienna saw a demonstration of 15,000 followers of Dr. Lueger, which the annual register characterized as "Anti-Semites." Dr. Lueger held a speech on this occasion in which he ranted against "Judeo Magyarism." He ended it with the cry: "Separation from Hungary!"

Puntigam, a Catholic propagandist from Bosnia and loyal to the Austrian crown, was frequently a personal guest of the archduke in Konopiste and in the Belvedere. Colonel Bardolf was commanded to apply to the director of the regional bank, Count Montecucoli, in order to get a credit of 50,000 Kronen for Puntigam. On the twentieth of March, 1914, Puntigam wrote the archduke that he hoped that the cornerstone of the planned youth home could be laid on the twenty-eighth of June, 1914:

"The news has just appeared in the papers that Your Imperial Majesty intends to visit Bosnia with Her Highness in July. Your visit will encounter great enthusiasm in Bosnia, where a love for Austria is not made easy for the people. All hopes of the population, especially of the part that is Catholic and loyally dedicated to the emperor, are on you personally. How nice it would be if by then the cornerstone of the youth home could be laid. With deep feeling of submission, the truest servant of Your Imperial Majesty, signed Anton Puntigam."

Puntigam was known for measures that were to thwart any liberal and socialist influence on the youth. He had promoted himself in 1906 on the occasion of the general strike in Sarajevo by sermons in the cathedral there, in which he scolded socialists as atheists and as enemies of the state and the Emperor. He had emphasized that no Catholic be permitted to join socialism. Puntigam continued his propagandistic activity until 1914.

After General Potjorek had been appointed the head of the government in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the military became increasingly involved in actions to spread Catholicism in Bosnia. In a letter to the military chancelry of Archduke Ferdinand on 3 March 1913, Potjorek suggested that the state furnish means of constructing fifty Catholic churches in Bosnia and Hercegovina: one Roman Catholic Church in Bosnia and Hercegovina must be helped quickly and generously, for it is not just a matter of religious interest but rather political and dynasty interests also." Potjorek asked Bardolf to act as go-between with the archduke so that the aid would be granted as quickly as possible. He gave the advice to ask Pater Galen and his "Boniface Union" to assist in the acquisition of credit in Austria. In a second letter he offered further incitement: "One should support the Catholics in Bosnia and Hercegovina in the construction of churches. Up until now, it has been primarily the Bosnian Franciscans who have helped in this task; but the

cloisters are not so rich that they can accomplish this alone. In Bosnia and Hercegovina approximately fifty churches have to be built. Of greatest importance is the construction of a new church in Sarajevo and a cathedral in Mostar."

General Potjorek expressed his agreement with a memorandum from Dr. Peter Bastijer, member of the order "Society of St. Boniface," in which it is stated: "The aid for the Catholics in Bosnia and Hercegovina is of equal interest to the church and to the monarchy. Whoever acts for the Church in this land also acts for the benefit of the monarchy."

Bastijer made it clear that the main goal had to be the founding of Catholic educational institutions and the systematic promotion of a Catholic intelligence in Bosnia and Hercegovina: "By giving the youth a Catholic education, the foundation will be laid for the future." Furthermore, since the Orthodox Church and the religious institutions of the Moslems in his opinion had greater financial means, he suggested that the aid program for the Catholic Church be conducted through an esteemed body headed by Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

Potjorek's policy was the practical translation of the ideas of Archduke Franz Ferdinand regarding the conversion of the southern Slavs. The position of the archduke regarding the Serbs was especially determined by dynastic and religious viewpoints. When Margutti questioned the archduke about his view on the differences between the Catholic Croats and Slovenes and the Orthodox Serbs, the answer was: "Of course the Catholics must have dominion." In a note from Kristofi we read that the archduke "wishes that the spread of Orthodoxy be prevented by having as many Serbs as possible convert to Catholicism."

In another comment, the archduke described the method that one should use, in his opinion, regarding the non-Catholics in Bosnia and Hercegovina: "To begin with, we should put all of them (Orthodox, Moslem, and Catholic) in a great big kettle and then let them pop up again as Catholics."[20]

When one analyzes the historical process up to the ultimate decision by Hitler, Mussolini, and the Vatican to destroy Yugoslavia in 1941 and notes the diplomatic decisions regarding this secret agreement, one should not underestimate in this regard the significance of the concordat between Pope Pius XI and Hitler of 20 July 1933. The Vatican granted the Nazi regime of Hitler, first above all other European countries, great moral support. In the thirties and forties of this century, it pursued very cleverly a multi-track policy. The Vatican entertained close relationships with conservative forces in the USA, in France, and to a certain degree even in Great Britain. At the same time, the Vatican was urging a crusade against the Soviet Union and supported clerical-fascist parties throughout the world.

It is true that up until today there has been no final historical resolution concerning whose influence was decisive in Franco's usurping of power

in Spain—the Vatican's or Hitler's and Mussolini's. But there is, however, convincing historical evidence that the Vatican played the decisive role.

Slovakia after 1939 was another land in which Hitler and the Vatican had close cooperation. As the documents in this book show, Nazi Germany and the Vatican, with Mussolini's support, are equally responsible for the genocide in Croatia during the last world war.

The Vatican reacts today extremely sensitively when the concordat of 1933 is mentioned. In recent years, we have been obligated to note, for example, how the Church in the Federal Republic of Germany addressing Paragraph 166 of the West German penal code has started proceedings against citizens solely because they insist that the truth about the historical cooperation between the Vatican and Nazi Germany be made public.

I was first made aware of the systematic prosecution of Church opponents by the *Bunte Liste Freiburg,* a radical-democratic and atheist organization, which asked me for my support in the fall of 1985.

Four co-workers of the *Buste Liste* were charged under §166 because they had published an anti-clerical caricature on a poster advertising an event. It showed a grinning priest with a raised hand holding God as a puppet. One of the main charges was that on the lapel of the priest there was a label with the inscription "Concordat 1933." In the decision of the district court in Freiburg on 3 June 1985 (Document II Qs 117/85), with which the suit against the *Bunte Liste* was opened, this was established as follows: "Additionally, the Catholic church has been slandered again in an especially injurious manner. This is obvious from the evidence that the inscription 'Concordat 1933' in the depiction connects the Vatican with Hitler fascism. . . ." The act of bringing into the public consciousness the incontestable historical fact that the Vatican in 1933 with this concordat was the first state in the world to recognize the Nazis is to be prevented by means of criminal prosecution.

This suit is by far not the only case; numerous other critical activist citizens have been prosecuted because they had cited the facts of Church history and had drawn conclusions from them. Information about these suits, by the way, has been almost completely suppressed by the West German media; the largest daily newspaper in the Federal Republic, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* refused to print a paid advertisement (!) consisting of an appeal from me and the *Bunte Liste* to internationally respected individuals for the repeal of §166. Under these conditions it was possible only through a broad solidarity campaign abroad to get a dismissal of charges in some cases, among which was the suit against the *Bunte Liste.* But the situation still remains extremely disturbing.

Long before the attack on Yugoslavia actually took place, the Vatican was prepared. With the military destruction of Yugoslavia, it saw a splendid opportunity to convert compulsorily the Orthodox population in the Serbian areas and thereby realize a thousand-year-old wish of Vatican foreign policy.

In this collection we document how the Vatican already before the war prepared the justification of the genocide. Franciscan theology students were encouraged to write dissertations in which the claim was made that the Orthodox Serbs had been Roman Catholic centuries ago and that therefore the compulsory conversion of the Serbs had to be undertaken as a return to their former nationality and religion.

From Ustasha documents that were published after the German troops had occupied Zagreb on 10 April 1941 and the collaborator state of Croatia had been established, it is clear that the Vatican had given the Catholic Church of Croatia the assignment of supporting the fascist Ustashe in the construction of their secret organization.

In an article that appeared on 3 July 1941 in *Ustasha* Nr. 3 on page 4 under the headline "The first Ustasha Troop," it was reported that the ecclesiastical chancellery on Capitol Nr. 4 was the place that served the first members of the Ustasha movement—Marko Hranilovic, Matija Soldin, Mijo Babic, and Zvonko Pospisil—as an organizational meeting place. These first Ustashe had all already at the time of the old Yugoslavia instigated the formation of their movement and had carried out terrorist attacks.

In this article is the following depiction:

> The above-mentioned four Ustashe worked undercover and unnoticed by the public and prepared very carefully for the difficult battle. The historical "catacombs" of the building on Capitol Nr. 4 were witness later to nocturnal meetings of a small group of people, the first active Ustashe, who after their day jobs in the workshops came there to hold discussions and prepare everything for the battle, which was known by no one in Croatia, and which was nevertheless to occur soon.

The Ustashe erected a plate as a memorial to this Church chancellery, which was maintained until the liberation.

The article confirmed that in the chancellery even Field Marshall Slavko Kvaternik had met with Mirko Puk, one of the most notorious Ustashe. The latter was personally responsible for the horrible blood bath in the church of Glina, at which nine hundred Serbs were slaughtered; in Glina and in the vicinity up to the end of 1941, eight thousand people were killed.

Several Franciscan cloisters served as organizational and educational centers for the Ustasha criminals. An important role was played by the Franciscan cloister and the adjoining school in Siroki Brijeg, about which

there was an article under the headline "The struggle of the Ustashe in Siroki Brijeg" in *Hvratski narod* on 4 June 1941 in edition Nr. 110, page 13. There among other information is stated:

> . . . after the deal of Macek-Cvetkovic in 1939, a struggle for life and death began. At that time the young and energetic Franciscan Dr. Radoslav Glavas came to Siroki Brijeg and began to conduct this struggle systematically. In the beginning he was supported only by the middle-school attenders Vlado Mandic, Lyubo Stojcic, Pavao Klajo, and Drago Putica and by the old Ustasha warrior Ivan Zovko, a farmer from Lis. The struggle was difficult, since the local authorities were informed about the plans of the youth. In the summer of 1940, new comrades joined them, Ante and Ilija Saravanja, Milenko Dzato, Josip Stojcic, Mato Penavic, Karlo Susak, and Petar Bubalo, academicians already known in Zagreb.

This cloister also played in infamous role later at the time of the Ustasha rule in Hercegovina; in the adjoining Franciscan school, the Ustasha ideology was spread among the youth.

Dr. Radoslav Glavas, Franciscan and member of the Ustashe, became one of the most prominent Ustasha priests during the occupation.

Well known is also the pastor and honorary canon in Ogulin, Ivan Mikan, the cofounder of the Ustasha organization.

Nova Hrvatska published in Nr. 128 on 1 June 1943 on page 6 upon the occasion of Mikan's death an article with the headline: "The death of the iron Croat, Honorary Canon Ivan Mikan."

Document Nr. 12796 of the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers contains an entry by Father Dr. Berkovic, pastor in Drnis, on 10 November 1941 directed to the Ministry for Agriculture of the NDH, in which he reported:

> For 14 years of my activity as pastor in Drnis, my parsonage was a regular Ustasha quarters. Here was the meeting place not only of the local Ustashe but also of those who came from outside in order to organize the Ustasha movement here. From here Ustasha pamphlets were distributed. Before the overthrow and revolution, I was the chair of the Ustasha organization in Drnis.

We cannot here list all members of the Catholic clergy individually who long before the usurping of power worked actively through the Ustashe on the organization of the Ustasha movement. But we will see later that the named examples in no way represent exceptions but that a remarkably large number of Catholic parsonages and cloisters throughout the country took part in the organization of the Ustasha conspiracy and were the breeding places of fascist propaganda.[21]

In this collection we are publishing documents that testify to the fact that the highest dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church gave their blessing to Ante Pavelić at a time when the so-called independent state of Croatia was proclaimed, i.e., at a time when the Yugoslav state and its army still existed.

Roman Catholic priests and monks organized mercenary troops that attacked the Yugoslav army units while the latter were also severely pressured by Hitler's divisions. Throughout the whole war in more than 150 newspapers and magazines, the church justified the fascist state under Pavelić as the work of God.

Many Roman Catholic priests served the Ustasha state in high positions. The pope appointed the highest military vicar for Croatia. The latter had a field chaplain in every unit of the Ustasha army. The task of this field chaplain consisted among other things of repeatedly goading the Ustasha units in their mass murders of the peasant population. High dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Ustasha state together organized the mass conversion of the Orthodox Serbian population. Hundreds of Orthodox churches in Serbia were plundered and destroyed; the three highest dignitaries and two hundred clerics were murdered in cold blood; the remainder of the clergy were driven into exile. In the concentration camp of Jasenovac, hundreds of thousands of Serbs were murdered under the command of Roman Catholic priests.

The papal emissary Marcone was in Croatia during this entire time. He sanctioned silently all the gory deeds and permitted pictures of himself with Pavelić and the German commanders to be published in the newspapers. After the visit to Pope Pius XII, Ante Pavelić exchanged Christmas and New Year's greetings with him that were published in the Ustasha press.

In mid-year 1986 the government of the United States released documents of their counter-espionage agency. These reveal that the Vatican had organized a safe-flight route from Europe to Argentina for Pavelić and two hundred of his advisors known by name. The fascists hid frequently during their flight in cloisters and in many instances disguised themselves as Franciscan monks.

Ante Pavelić was a man of great piety. In his palace in Zagreb he had a chapel built; he had two confessors. Shortly before his death in Madrid in 1959, Pope John XXIII granted him his special blessing; on his death bed, Pavelić held a wreath that was a personal gift from Pope Pius XII from the year 1941.[22]

In the preparations for this collection of documents, I have tried to collect as many eyewitness accounts of victims of the genocide crimes in the last war as possible.

The victims who survived the hell of Jasenovac report of their sufferings, horror, and fears; they testify to the tortures and murders of thousands of their fellow camp inmates who cannot testify for themselves.

Already during the war, some eyewitnesses who had fled from Croatia and Bosnia to Belgrade wrote down their horrifying experiences. As I already mentioned, Mose Pijade, member of the high command of the partisans, had begun to gather documents about the genocide. Immediately after the end of the war, the National Commission for Determining Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers published a collection of documents about Jasenovac under the title *Crimes in the Concentration Camp Jasenovac.* Recently Anton Miletic published numerous new documents about the concentration camp of Jasenovac in a three-volume work.

The second important source is the documents of the German army and of the German Reich as well as Italian documents and documents of the Ustasha government and Hungary. Unfortunately most of these documents were destroyed, but those that were preserved before the destruction represent important pieces of proof of the genocide. Many of the preserved Ustasha reports, however, have not yet been sorted in the past forty years, so that they are of no direct use to the present-day historian. But there are still numerous documents of German and Italian origin. Thus, for example, Jasenovac and all other concentration camps stood directly under the control of the Gestapo and the German military defense. These important documents, which are in the USA, the USSR, and the FRG [Germany] are not available to scientific research. The Italian government also holds yet today various archives under lock and key, among which is the archive of their highest secret service (Ovra).

For this reason, I have tried to use all other historical sources at my disposal. Thus I have also extracted documents from the official biography of the Vatican on Cardinal Stepinac, *Alojzije Stepinac, Croatian Cardinal,* written by O. Aleksa Benigar and published by ZIRAL (Society "Wounded Swan") in 1974 in Rome.

How many people were killed in Jasenovac?

In order to examine methods for the statistical assessment of people killed in the war, a symposium of the genocide committee of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts took place on 20 and 21 June 1985. The first method is to compare the results of censuses before and after a war and from this to estimate the losses. This method is surely appropriate when dealing with a nation in its entirety; but we have to find out how many people were murdered in the concentration camp at Jasenovac. Here there are three methods of procedure:

1. determine the number of victims from the documents of the camp itself and from the reports sent to Germany and to the main Ustasha authorities,
2. consult the eyewitness accounts of the survivors,
3. consider investigations resulting from the discovery of bodies in the camp.

Professor Nikola Nikolic, a survivor of the concentration camp at Jasenovac, wrote a comprehensive report on the methods of execution practiced there, excerpts of which we are publishing in this book. He described more than 50 of the methods used by the slaughterers. Many thousands were killed in cold blood and then thrown into the Save, which carried the bodies down river to Belgrade and even into the Danube. Because of this, our calculation of the number of dead was made difficult. In addition, thousands of prisoners were thrown into incinerating ovens.

Most of the dead, however, were buried in one huge mass grave, the Gradina Ravine. In 1961 veterans organizations from Dubica, Bosnia, entrusted a group of archaeologists, court doctors, and anthropologists with the exhumation of Gradina. The work unfortunately had to be interrupted when only one-tenth of the graves had been opened; just up to this point, the investigators had found over 58,000 skulls crushed by wooden mallets. Still today, when the Save water level is low, new mass graves are discovered.

When I visited Jasenovac in 1985 with other members of the Genocide Committee of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, we saw one of these mass graves that was opened by the current of the Save; it was more than 150 meters long.

Among the most important sources of our research are the photographs and films made by the Ustasha authorities during the war and fortunately preserved. I have examined these photos and films carefully and consider them to be thoroughly convincing documents. From the whole period of the war, photos have been found that show the papal legate in Croatia, Marcone, together with Pavelić, e.g., leaving the cathedral in Zagreb together while a group of youth give them the fascist salute. Another photo shows Roman Catholic priests at the baptism of Orthodox Serbs.

We also discovered photos of the Roman Catholic priests who were among the most important commanders and henchmen in the Ustasha concentration camps. Another picture from the year 1944 shows Pavelić surrounded by eighteen Franciscan monks. Under the headline *"Rome: Croatian military police visit the Holy Father. Pius XII grants a special audience to Croatian military police upon the occasion of their training in Italy," Hrvatski Narod,* the most important press organ of the Ustasha state, in an edition from 5 September 1943, published the following report:

> On Thursday afternoon, Pope Pius XII in a special audience received 110 Croatian military policemen who were in Italy for training. They were accompanied by Monsignore Madjerac, the director of the St. Hieronimus Institute in Rome, and by four Croatian officers. The Holy Father conversed for some time with the Croatian military police, greeted each of them personally and inquired about their work in Italy. The pope explained that he knew Ante Pavelić. Upon leaving, the Holy Father gave each military policeman an appropriate gift and imparted to each individually his papal blessing.

Of these 110 military policemen, several served in the concentration camp Jasenovac.

In their retreat from Zagreb at the beginning of May 1945, the Ustasha and the Germans turned over to Archbishop Stepinac the major part of their archive material and the gold stolen by them. Both were found again later. I received several photos of this horde, which for the most part consisted of the gold teeth of thousands of victims of Jasenovac.

In order to reconstruct the history of the concentration camp at Jasenovac, one can refer to the reports of the surviving prisoners and the available documentation of the Germans, the Italians, and the Ustasha regime.

Documents of the Vatican and of the Roman Catholic church in Croatia, on the other hand, are hardly available. The complete archive of the foreign ministry of the Ustasha regime has been found, which had been hidden in the Capitol, the central headquarters of the Catholic Church of Croatia. It contains many documents that reveal the character of the relationships between the Vatican and the Ustasha regime of Ante Pavelić. The archives of the Vatican, however, are as yet unavailable. We are publishing in this collection documents that were released only recently by the American secret service and which prove how the Vatican after the war helped Pavelić and hundreds of his most important followers flee to Argentina. When American journalists asked the official speaker for the Vatican for an opinion on these reports, he would give no comment at all.

Just as the Vatican still keeps documents from the time of the inquisition under lock and key, it also does not release documents about the compulsory conversion of the Orthodox Serbs and the genocide in Yugoslavia between 1941 and 1945.

Together with one of the leading members of the Russell Tribunal, I sent the following letter to the pope on 9 September 1986:

> Concerning these crimes, we are in possession of a very comprehensive documentation composed of documents of the Germans, of the Ustashe, and of eyewitness reports of the victims. We, however, have no documents from the Vatican. It would be very useful for uncovering the truth if you

would open your archives, which we herewith ask you. For our part, we are prepared to present our documentation through a small commission and would like to ask you to assemble a corresponding committee from the Vatican that would present your documents. In this manner, both collections of documents could be compared and studied.

Any regime that fears the truth will do its best to suppress documents. The Vatican has here a good opportunity to prove that its position regarding truth is different. The Church has always taught that "grace and truth were given to the world by Jesus Christ" (John 1,17). If the Vatican should here follow the example of secular states, it would be a grave assault on the principles proclaimed by the Vatican itself.

Notes

1. Vladimir Dedijer, *War Diary*, pp. 242-44.
2. Vladimir Dedijer, op. cit., pp. 252-55.
3. Vladimir Dedijer, op. cit., p. 371.
4. Vladimir Dedijer, "Literature and History in the Totality of Historical Process" (reprint of individual issues of the Serbian Academy of Science and Art, vol. DV; Section on Language and Literature, vol. 30; collection of writings on Ivo Andric), Belgrade, 1979.
5. *Wetzer und Welte's Kirchenlexikon*, Freiburg, 1897 (reprint), vol. X, p. 474.
6. *Malaja Sovetskaja Enciklopedija* (M.S.E.), vol. IV (1936), p. 754.
7. H. Reinch, *Texts d'auteurs Grecs et Romains rélatifs au judaisme* (1895); I. Juster, *Les juifs dans l'empire Romain* (1917); J. P. Sartre, *Antisemite and Jew* (1948); A. L. Williams, *Adversus judaeos*, England (1935); B. Lazare, *Anti-semitism. Its history and causes* (1903); J. Maritain, *A Christian looks at the Jewish question* (1939); H. Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (1955); A. Steiger, *Der neudeutsche Heide in Kampfe gegen Christen und Juden* (1924); A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1925); A. Leroy-Beaulieu, *Israel among the Nations* (1895).
8. Vladimir Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, vol. I, Belgrad, 1978 (second edition), 12; R. Röricht, *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzugs* (1901).
9. R. Röricht, *Geschichte des Königreiches Jerusalem* (1898); R. Röricht, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge in Umriss* (1898); A. Luchaire, *Innocent III.—La question d'orient* (1907); B. Kugler, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (1880); S. Grayzel, *The church and the Jews in the 13th century* (1933); S. D. Toitein, *Mikhtavim me-erez yisrael mi-tekupat ha-zalbahim. Heubauer Stern, Hebraeische Berichte über die Judenverfolgung während der Kreuzzüge* (1892); M. Benvenisti, *Crusaders in the Holy Land* (1970); F. Uspenskii, *Istorija krestovoix pohodov* (1901); P. Matkovic, *Putovanja po balkanskom polvotoku za srednjeg vieka* (1878); P. Skok, *Tri starofrancuske horike o zadru* (1202); S. A. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (1951–54); H. A. Zaborov, *Krestovnie pohodnji* (1956), 13; *Encyclopaedia cattolica*, Citta de Vaticano, Nihil obstat, Romae, 29 July 1951. Dominicus Mondrone et Henricus Baragli, Revisores Delegati.—Imprimatur ex vicariatu urbis, die 4. Augusti 1951, + Aloisius Traglia, Arciop. us Caesarien, Vicesgerons.
10. *Encyclopaedia Cattolica*, Citta del Vaticano, Nihil Obstat, Rome (1951).
11. Ph. Limborch, *Historia inquisitionis*, Amsterdam (1692); P. Frédéricq, *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis neerlandicae* (1889); B. Guidonis, *Practica inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis* (1886); H. C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle*

Ages (1887); A. S. Turberville, *Medieval Heresy and the Inquisition*, London (1920); J. Havet, *L'hérésie et le bras seculier au moyen age jusqu'au XIIIe siècle*, in: *Oeuvres complètes* (1881); C. Domais, *L'inquisition* (1906); Ch. V. Longlois, *L'inquisition d'après des travaux récents* (1902).

12. Vladimir Dedijer, *Diary: Kiss of Death* (unpublished).

13. *Essays on Socialist Humanism in Honour of the Centenary of Bertrand Russell. 1872–1970*, ch. X, in: Vladimir Dedijer and Jean Paul Sartre, *Heresy. Ancient and Modern*, pp. 147–58, Spokesman Books (1972).

14. M.S.E., vol. IV, p. 754.

15. H. C. Lea, *History of the Inquisition of Spain* (1905–1908); E. N. Adler, *Autodefé and Jew* (1908); B. Ilorca, *La inquisicion en España* (1946); B. Lewin, *La inquisicion en hispanoamérica* (1962); S. Lozinski, *Svjataja inkvizicija* (1927); E. Grekulof, *Iz istoria svjatoj inkvizicij y rossij* (1929).

16. Vladimir Dedijer, *Interesne sfere*, pp. 48–49.

17. Vladimir Dedijer, op. cit., pp. 52–54.

18. *Bullarium Franciscanum*, vol. I-IV, H. Sbaralea, B. de Rossi (ed.), Rome, 1759–68; vol. V-VII, K. Eubel (ed.), Rome (1898–1904); vol. VIII (new series: vol. I), U. Hüntemann (ed.), Quaracchi (1929); vol IX–X (new series: vol. II-III), J. Pou y Marti (ed.), Quaracchi (1939–40); Suppl. vol. I, F. Annibali de Latera (ed.), Rome (1780); Suppl. II, K. Eubel (ed.), Quaracchi (1908); *Acta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum vel ad Ordinem quoquomodo pertinentia*, vol. I-V, Rome (1882-86); vol. VI ff., Quaracchi (1887 ff.); L. Wadding, *Annales Ordinis Minorum* (8 vol.), Lyons (1625-54); continued by J. M. Fonseca et al. (25 vol.), Rome (1731–1886), second printing; continued by A. Chiappini et al. (30 vol.), Quaracchi (1931 ff.), third printing; *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, T. Ripoll, A. Bremond (ed.), (8 vol.), Rome (1729–49); *Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica*, B. M. Reichert (ed.), (14 vol.), Rome (1896–1904); continued, Paris (1931 ff.); K. Eubel, *Die avignonesische Obedienz der Mendikanten-Orden sowie der Order der Mercedarier und Trinitarier zur Zeit des Großen Schismas. Beleuchtet durch die von Clemens VII. und Benedikt XIII. an dieselben gerichteten Schreiben.* Quellen und Forschungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte, Paderborn (1900), published by the Görres Gesellschaft; K. Hallinger, *Corpus consuetudinum monasticarum, cura Pont. Athenaei S. Anselmi de Urbe editum*, ca. 25 volumes planned, of which 3 have been published, Siegburg (1963–67); H. Holzapfel, *Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens*, Freiburg (1909); R. M. Huber, *A Documented History of the Franciscan Order* (1182–1517), Milwaukee (1954); A. Léon, *Historie de l'Ordre des Frères Mineurs*, Paris (1954); T. Nyberg, *Brigittinische Klostergründungen des Mittelalters*, Leiden (1967); A. Walz, *Compendium historiae Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Rome, 1948 (second edition); A. Mortier, *Historie des maitres généraux de l'ordre des frères prêcheurs*, Paris (1903 ff.).

19. M. J. Dinic, *Verti Eberharda Windeckea o Bosni, Jugoslavenski istoriski casopis* (1935); J. Sidak, *"Ecclesia Slavoniae" i misija dominikanaca u Bosni*, Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta u Zagrebu (1955).

20. Vladimir Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914.*

21. Joza Horvat, Zdenko Stambuk, *Dokumenti o proturnarodnom radu i zlocinima jednog dijela katolickog klera. Profasisticka djelatnost i ucesce jednog dijela katolickog klera u teroristickoj ustaskoj organizaciji prije rate, period I.*, pp. 3–11.

22. Bogdan Krizman, *Pavelić u bjegstvu*, Zagreb (1985), pp. 437 and 438.

PART ONE

THE BALKAN AS A BULWARK AGAINST ORTHODOXY

1

The Vatican's Attitude toward the Yugoslav Peoples Since the Nineteenth Century

The role played by the Church under the leadership of the Vatican in the Second World War—the collaboration of the pope with Mussolini's Italy, with Hitler's Germany, and with the Ustashe of Ante Pavelić, the gravediggers of Yugoslavia and betrayers of the Yugoslav people—has its roots already in the earliest history of this organization.

A glance at history beginning in the sixth to seventh century would yield enough material to confirm again and again the quintessence of the following presentation: that the Church avails itself of sinister figures and does not shy from any crime, no matter how terrible it may be, if it can thereby reach its goals. The goals of this publication will be served if we limit ourselves to that part of history that immediately precedes the period of time in question, namely the events of this century, especially at the time of the First World War. It can be determined that the role of the Vatican in the Second World War and the relationship with Yugoslavia are the completely logical and natural result and development of old trends and interests.

The second half of the nineteenth century was characterized by an ever closer collaboration between the Vatican and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII worked intensively on the consolidation of this alliance, since Austro-Hungary, as a feudalistic and

reactionary monarchy, had remained the only solid support of the papacy in Europe. Both sides had many reasons to fear the progress that was being felt at this time in growing liberalism, bourgeois democracy, and the first signs of socialism. The suggestion by Leo XIII to King Franz Josef I shows the hopes instilled in the Viennese monarchy: to create a "league of Catholic states" with the "Austrian emperor and the apostolic king of Hungary" at its head. Its main purpose was to return to the papacy the secular and spiritual position and influence that it was about to lose partially and in many respects no longer had.

The pope tried with all his personal powers to place the power of the Church in Austro-Hungary at the service of the monarchy. For this reactionary state, the sustained influence of the clergy on the disadvantaged people was an important aid. Thus the Church, especially the upper clergy, became a political factor of the first rank and at the most stabilizing moment for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Especially in areas with a Slavic population, the Church played an outstanding role where dissatisfaction and resistance to Vienna and Budapest were evident during the whole second half of the nineteenth century and were becoming more and more dangerous for the monarchy. The national rebirth of the northern and southern Slavic peoples in Austro-Hungary, their longing for a free political, economic, and cultural life, which took on the ever clearer contours of an emancipation movement and of an independent government, galvanized the Church and the monarchy ever more defensively. The first efforts of the Slavic peoples in the south to unite into their own Yugoslav state, which also included the Slavs outside the borders, disturbed the monarchy and the Vatican immensely. A united Slavic state appeared to be very dangerous both to Catholicism and to the monarchy. For the pope, the monarchy represented a "*Bulwark of Catholicism*" in central Europe, a barrier, a defense against the threat from the east, i.e., against Orthodoxy. The borders of Austro-Hungary on the east were to remain the borders for the Catholic Church too. But there was no intention of preserving them there, but they were to be extended as far as possible to the east in order to gain new territory for Catholicism. The Vatican especially feared the fact that these areas would be more difficult to combat if Serbia were to become an independent state and Orthodoxy—as for example in czarist Russia—were to become the state religion. The connection of the Croats and the Slovenes with the Orthodox Serbs could mean a spread of Orthodoxy to the west to the disadvantage of the Roman Church. The papacy would not stand for that at all.

The role of the Vatican in the politics of Austro-Hungary assumed fateful characteristics especially at the beginning of the twentieth century when Austro-Hungary oriented itself imperialistically against the southeast

and forged plans for the conquering of a large part of the Balkan. This opened new perspectives for the Vatican too. The occupation of Bosnia ended with its annexation in 1908. Thus not only the monarchy was extended, but so was the dominion of the Catholic Church. The next victim was to be Serbia. With the subjugation of Serbia, a united Yugoslav state was to be prevented. In order to achieve this, the monarchy also had to suppress Croatia and Slovenia with a hard hand. According to the Pope's conviction, Catholicism was to push from Croatia deep into the eastern Balkan through the destruction of the independence of Serbia. For this reason the pope was among those who incited Austro-Hungary to wage war against Serbia.

The anti-Slav, pro-Austrian policy of the Vatican was expressed especially under the leadership of Pope Pius X, who was beatified in 1950. In the decree of beatification it says:

> Blessed with the holy sacraments, he commended to God a soul on 20 August 1914, at the beginning of the European war, which he tried to prevent with all his means, broken more through pain than through the years.

So he died from pain and sadness over the outbreak of the war! He did not succeed in preventing the war! And thus he was beatified and received the highest honors. The truth is somewhat different.

In the book *La Papauté contemporaine* (Paris 1946), Professor Henry Marc-Bonnet writes:

> In 1903 Cardinal Sarto was elected pope and thereafter was called Pius X. He was elected because, different from the second most important Cardinal Rampolla, the former secretary to Pope Leo XII, he sided with Austro-Hungry. . . . At the head of the Church was a man who igored the whole of the contemporary world and was inspired by high, authoritarian principles. . . . He created conflicts everywhere with his principles, not only with the clergy and the faithful but also with the states. . . . From the beginning he was seen not without reason as the pope of the Three Powers Pact [i.e. the federation between Austro-Hungary, Germany, and Italy, author's note]. . . . As a result of his Church policy, Pius X broke relationships with France. There were tensions with Russia because of Poland. He argued with England because of Ireland. There was also a fight with America: He did not receive the American president Theodore Roosevelt when the latter came to Rome in 1910, because the latter had visited a Methodist church. With the diversion from France, he subscribed completely to Austro-Hungary, which was becoming the most important Catholic power, which is documented also by the great Eucharistic Congress in Vienna in 1912. Austro-Hungry was a conservative Catholic state in which, quite in the taste of the pope, hierarchy and discipline reigned.

The French author emphasizes: *"In the final analysis, Austro-Hungarian expansion was in agreement with papal policy at the cost of the Orthodox Slavs."*

Indeed, Pius X hated the Slavs whether they were Orthodox or not. He favored Vienna's policy against the Slavs in every way, so that in his time the Slovenian as well as the Croatian bishops became pretences not only of the Roman but also of the Viennese anti-Slav attitude, and the Church thus thwarted the liberation efforts and the just national demands of the Croats and the Slovenes. Even if Croatian and Slovenian bishops and priests pretended to act in the interest of their land, in actuality they were pursuing a policy of loyalty and subjugation to Austro-Hungary. This was in compliance with the wishes of the pope, who saw Austro-Hungary as a firm bulwark against the "dangerous east."

[. . .]*

The Austro-Hungarian emperor and King Franz Josef I in 1914 declared war on the Serbs only after the approval, indeed the direct order, of the pope, as whose most loyal son he signed himself. In the official publication of the "Commission for modern Austrian History" there is a telegram that the then Austro-Hungarian ambassador to the Vatican, Count Moritz Pálffy directed to the Viennese foreign ministry on 29 July 1914:

> In times of the greatest political tension as we are experiencing them today, human fantasy works with doubled efforts and unwittingly exceeds the limits of reasonable judgment. Thus in recent days, among other things, news has appeared in the public that the Pope has intervened in the conflict with Serbia and has turned to His Imperial-Royal Apostolic Highness with the request to spare the Christian peoples the horrors of war. . . . Contrary to the statements in the press, it is not uninteresting what the curia actually thinks. When I visited the State Secretary (Cardinal Merry del Val) two days ago, he immediately directed the conversation to the great questions and problems occupying Europe today. It was impossible to detect any special mildness or reconciliation in the remarks of His Eminence. He depicted the method of handling Serbia very severely, but he approved them without reservation and at the same time gave direct expression to his hope that the monarchy pursue the matter to a successful resolution. The Cardinal felt it was of course regrettable that Serbia "had not been reduced" even

*Indicates a section in the original Yugoslavian version of the book by Vladimir Dedijer that has been omitted in the German and English translations. These omissions were approved by Vladimir Dedijer. See p. 25.

> earlier, because this could have taken place with far less danger then that now. This pronouncement is also in agreement with the pope's opinion. In the course of recent years, His Holiness has expressed His regret about the fact that Austro-Hungary has missed the opportunity to punish its dangerous Danube neighbor. The question could arise, why the Catholic Church, in a time in which it is ruled by a pope who is a real saint and completely filled with true apostolic ideas, appears to be so belligerent. The answer is quite simple. The pope and the curia see in Serbia a gnawing disease that is slowly destroying the marrow of the monarchy and in time will cause its dissolution. Along with all other efforts that the curia has undertaken in recent decades, Austro-Hungary, as a thoroughly Catholic state, is and remains the strongest bulwark remaining to the Church in this century. The destruction of this bulwark would mean for the Church the loss of a strong support in its fight against Orthodoxy and this also the loss of its strongest champion. As it is for these reasons absolutely necessary for pure self-preservation for Austria to liberate its organism from the evil that threatens it—and if it must be, with violence—it is necessary for the Catholic Church to undertake all measures and to sanction all measures that can serve to achieve this goal. From this viewpoint, one can very easily see a connection between the perceptions and the belligerent attitude of the pope.

This document says everything and reveals the "holy" pope thoroughly as the most inveterate war monger, who for imperialistic and self-serving reasons promoted the shedding of blood. We will cite yet another document, a telegram from Baron Ritter, the Bavarian ambassador to the Vatican, which is dated 16 July 1914—i.e., before the telegram from Pálffy.

> The pope sanctions the sharp procedures against Serbia. He does not value the Russian and French armies very highly in case of a war against Germany. The Cardinal-State Secretary hopes that Austria this time will persevere and that with its army it will suppress the foreign agitation that led to the murder of the successor to the throne and under the present conditions ultimately seriously perils the existence of Austria. All this confirms how very much the curia fears pan-Slavism.

These documents of curial cold-bloodedness were embarrassing to the Vatican. It tried thus to prove their inauthenticity, but not only the official archives in Vienna and Munich (who published these documents), but also first-rank scientists and respected historians have proven that they are authentic. That they are embarrassing to the Vatican is understandable, and their significance increases even more when one notes that they originate from an Austrian and a Bavarian diplomat, i.e., from very pious people who enjoyed the greatest trust in the Vatican and who themselves shared the pope's opinion and—as Pálffy says—were happy about the "*belligerent*

attitude" of the canonized Pius X.

Count Carlo Sforza, the former Italian foreign minister and after the end of fascism the right hand of the Christian Democrat de Gasperi, quotes in his book *Founders of Contemporary Europe* this telegram from Pálffy in order to prove that Pius was a war monger. Sforza wrote this book in exile at the time of fascism. In it he characterizes the popes Pius X, Pius XI, and Benedict XV very cogently. It is interesting what Sforza says about the decree on the beatification of Pius X, concerning the notion that the latter died of pain over the outbreak of the war:

> The legend portrays Pius X as he is praying to God and struggling against the war because he is horrified by just the thought that the Christian world could be divided into two hostile camps and thus he dies of pain because of Germany's attack on Belgium and because of the whole horror of war. . . .

Sforza says that it is time to destroy this legend:

> This regent (the most Catholic of all regents, Franz Josef) declared that he was starting the war to punish the Serbs. Millions of outraged people were hoping that the pope would intervene to prevent the catastrophe. From this hope arose the legend that Pius X, when he had learned of the ultimatum to Serbia, was said to have ordered his Viennese nuncio to chastise the old emperor and king in the name of the Almighty. This drama received its last act: When the pope died unexpectedly on 20 August 1914, his attendants announced that the good Pius died of pain when he saw that he could no longer prevent the great bloodshed. I would say it is time to establish the truth.
>
> [. . . .]

Benedict XV continued the line from Pius X after the latter's death. His politics differed only in nuances from that of Pius X; they were basically just as reactionary and devoid of scruples. He too supported the war but the situation was now more complicated since Italy in 1915 also entered the war and joined the side of the entente, i.e., against the papal allies Austro-Hungary and Germany. Benedict XV was a diplomat and careerist. He was elected to pope by cardinals who for the most part stood on the side of Austro-Hungary and Germany. They were convinced that this side would carry off the victory and therefore one needed a pope who would stand one hundred percent on the victorious side and would be in a position to exploit this victory. Thus the cardinals intended to pressure the Italian regime to join the side of Austro-Hungary and Germany. They let themselves

be guided by the idea that in this case the "Roman question" would at last be solved and Italy at the end of the war would get a conservative Catholic government.

[. . . .]

It is interesting that Benedict XV still wished for the preservation of Austro-Hungary and Germany at a point when Italy was already in the war with Austro-Hungary and Germany, while Russia, because of the revolution, was no longer a factor on the side of the entente. He did not want Austro-Hungary to dissolve under the blows of the superior entente and have Slavic states arise on its territory, who then would withdraw from the Catholic influence of Vienna. Czechoslovakia with its hussitic tradition seemed to him too insecure for Catholicism. He was not sympathetic to the idea of a Yugoslav state, because Serbia as an Orthodox land and center of the new state would represent a power factor even without the czarist Orthodoxy and thus would burden Rome's influence. Poland's fate also gave him concern. Above all else arose the possibility that without the striking power of the militant official Catholicism, progressive ideas could gain influence in the divided eastern and central Europe and in the territory of the old monarchy of Austro-Hungary.

Nevertheless, Benedict XV toward the end of the First World War had to see that—independent from his wishes—the defeat of Austro-Hungary and Germany was unavoidable. So he hurried to save himself from his vile plans, whatever was to be saved, and fell upon the idea of the "*Peace without victors.*" He slipped into the role of the go-between between Austro-Hungary and the entente, which he intended to reconcile. In July 1917 the Austro-Hungarian monarch, Karl, addressed the pope with the "*Letter from a Son.*" He informed him that he would leave it to the "*high authority*" to do something for peace. The pope through his nuncio in Munich, Pacelli (the later Pius XII), came to an agreement with the German chancellor about the bases of a peace, the so-called White Peace. He suggested the construction of a Catholic Polish state that should offer its crown to the Austrian emperor. Furthermore, he wished for the elimination of Orthodox influence in the Balkan. The territorial concessions of Austria to Italy were to be reduced. Germany and Austro-Hungary were to remain as monarchies in their old borders. All the suggestions complied with the traditional papal interests and opposed the democratic goals with which some peoples had gone into the war. Especially they contradicted the peaceful efforts of the Slavic peoples in Austro-Hungary, primarily those of the southern Slavs, who were hated by the pope. The

intervention of the pope, however, proved without success, for the entente had no interest in saving Germany and Austro-Hungary.

[. . . .]

Contrary to the wishes and visions of the pope, Austro-Hungary collapsed and neither the tripartite program—i.e., the aggressive plans of Austro-Hungary, Germany, and Italy—nor Benedict's "*White Peace*" could save it. Yugoslavia came into being.

From the beginning, the pope was hostile to the young Yugoslav state which he had not been able to prevent. He could not warm up to the idea that millions of Catholics were to live in a state that was not 100 percent Catholic. It seemed downright unimaginable that Yugoslavia could become a state in which there were confessions other than Catholicism.

For that reason, the Vatican set great hopes on nationalistic groupings that were to fight against Yugoslavia and bring about its fall. In April 1919, the state secretary of the Vatican, Cardinal Gasparri, the next authority after the pope, toward the "Petit Parisien" pronounced himself in favor of the establishment of an independent Slovene and Croatian republic. The Italian historian Luigi Salvatorelli in his book *La Politica della Santa Sede* (Milan 1937, p. 77) also writes of this. According to the records of the French journalist Maurice Pax, Cardinal Gasparri emphasized his regret that Austro-Hungary had collapsed because it had always represented a barrier against the encroachment of Orthodoxy from the east. The efforts of the Vatican thus were directed at separating the Croats and the Slovenes from the Orthodox Serbs in their own separate and autonomous state and establishing them spiritually in a central European Catholic block in whose center was to stand the new Austria.

For this reason, the Vatican also hesitated to recognize the new Yugoslav state. It did this for the first time on 6 November 1919, one year after the founding of the new state.

However, the Vatican was further hostilely opposed to Yugoslavia and passed up no opportunity to do it harm. This attitude came to light especially in the difficult peace talks upon the occasion of the Italian-Yugoslav quarrels concerning the Julijska Krajina [the border land of the Julian Alps, translator's note]. In Paris in 1919 when a heavy diplomatic struggle over Istria and Rijeka was underway, the *Osservatore Romano*, the official organ of the Vatican, encouraged the Italian imperialists Orlando and Sonnino and called on Wilson, the president of the United States, to put pressure on Yugoslavia. When Italian delegates left Paris as a sign of protest over not getting Dalmatia promised to them, the organ of the Vatican wrote: "The Italian delegates were fully justified in citing the London Pact. They

will return when they are guaranteed that the rights recognized by the London Pact are observed literally or actually." (We here quote the Vatican organ according to *Les Temps* of Paris, 10 May 1919.) The Holy See asserted its influence in Paris and London during this time to the benefit of the Italian imperialists. In *Osservatore Romano* (Nr. 166) in 1920, the Vatican stirred up the president of the Italian government, Giolitti, against the Yugoslavs, who had just protested the Italian intervention against the Slavs in the Julijska Krajina. It expressed its admiration for Giolitti's "energetic" handling of Yugoslavia: ". . . it had been demonstrated that he is prepared to control invading enemies with a merry hand. " The *Osservatore Romano* had taken over the well known slogan of the extremist Italian nationalists, whereby Italy in the First World War saved Serbia, which was now allegedly being ungrateful by demanding Istria and Dalmatia. It published on 3 August 1921 (after the borders had long been established!), in follow-up to a discussion in the Italian senate on the relationship to Yugoslavia, an article by its director, the Count della Torre. Della Torre, who thoroughly ascribed to the views of the pope, maintained that Dalmatia was Italian territory and that "Italy should never have given it up." He regretted that Rijeka had been granted to Yugoslavia. By the way, the Italian "People's Party," drawn into all Yugoslav matters by the pope, also took an extremely nationalistic standpoint especially regarding the Adriatic quarrels.

In April 1921, the Ljubljanian bishop Jeglic, under pressure of public opinion, intervened with the Vatican state secretary Gasparri in favor of some Slovene priests in Julijska Krajina, who were being persecuted by the Italian police. According to Jeglic's description (who otherwise was a subservient servant to Gasparri), the state secretary of the Vatican rejected him with the words: "You are asking that we protect irredentism against our homeland. You are asking that we protect traitors."

In all of the following twenty-five years, especially in the era of fascism, the Vatican worked against the interests of the Slavs by supporting an anti-national policy in the Julijska Krajina. It supported fascism unconditionally with its policy of destabilizing Yugoslavia. Through Bishop Santini from Rijeka, Pope Pius XI rudely informed the Croatian priests of Istria, who were fighting the abolishment of the Croatian language in the Church, that their position was sinful and that he in their place would not want to stand before Christ, who would judge them. In the Lateran Pact with fascism in 1929, the pope gave Mussolini new possibilities of banning the Croatian and Slovene languages decisively from the churches of Julijska Krajina.

The relationships of the Vatican to old Yugoslavia during the whole time of its coming into being were tense and hostile. The question of religious

instruction in the schools, of agrarian reform, of the naming of bishops, etc. were all arguments around which the anti-Yugoslav fight revolved. The Vatican could not get used to the idea that in one state millions of Catholics, Croats, and Slovenes had to share life, laws, and duties with millions of Orthodox Serbs and that it was not the highest authority in this state as is usually the case in other states.

In spite of the Vatican's basic rejection of old Yugoslavia, clerical political parties from Slavonia and Croatia cooperated in the Belgrade government. Especially the priest Korosec, the leader of the Slovene clerics, became involved as the minister of education and of the interior. The reason for this was the fact that the Vatican hoped thus to be able to achieve some of its goals and regain lost positions.

Indeed the constant line from the Vatican was characterized by the effort to destroy Yugoslavia. Therefore, even when it was for all appearances supporting the Yugoslav government, the Vatican was actively working together with the high clergy of Yugoslavia to radicalize separatist nationalistic movements. The Vatican founded in Croatia the Clerical Nationalistic Front, which quickly developed into an outright clero-fascist organization. The so-called Frankian Nationalistic Movement [after the right-wing radical party founded in the nineteenth century by Josip Frank, translator's note] got an ever stronger clerical character. The Ustashadom, the organizational nucleus of the fascist movement, was a conglomerate of Frankian and clerical ideas and individuals. The representatives of the bourgeoisie, primarily lawyers and priests, were the cornerstones of the Ustashe. The priesthood very early became the pillars and leading cadre of Ustashadom. The Catholic press was characterized by the spirit of the Ustashe, although for demagogic reasons it pretended to be separated from the Ustasha and on the surface represented Church and religious interests.

The Ustasha movement carried out illegal actions, took up terror, and organized insurrections. The leader of the movement, Ante Pavelić, lived in emigration. From there he directed the action. He was supported and financed by Italian fascism. In Italy and in Hungary there were bases for the paramilitary terroristic formations of the Ustashe who had been channeled into the country. Mussolini was in touch with Pavelić and his organization. The assault on King Alexander of Yugoslavia in Marseille was carried out by the fascist leadership in Italy and by the Ustashe. Sentenced by a French court, Pavelić found safe refuge under Mussolini's protection in Italy.

But there were also close ties between Pavelić and the Vatican. He was a guest in Vatican quarters and later publicly praised the work of Vatican prelates for the Ustasha movement. The ties were all the closer

the more the Vatican collaborated with Mussolini's regime. The Lateran pact of 1929 verifies the correspondence of interest between the Vatican and Italian fascism. Mussolini's plan for the destruction of Yugoslavia agreed basically with the intentions and efforts of the Vatican. On this basis they were in agreement with the Nazis, and the roles in this plot were distributed quite precisely.

In 1937 Pavelić also explained in his book *The Deadly Sins* the goals of his movement with regard to the difficult situation of Catholicism in Yugoslavia. Repeatedly he emphasizes that the Croats cannot stay in a state that is determined "to alter the thoousand-year orientation of Croatian Catholics and to break the existing relations of the Croats to the Holy See." He attacks the state in which "Christ's representatives are scorned" and in which "bitter enemies of Catholicism and of papal spiritual power" live. The Vatican and even the pope himself repeatedly let their followers, the Ustashe, know that their goal is ultimately the destruction of Yugoslavia and that they gave their blessing to all those efforts and sacrifices demanded by the realization of this goal. In 1943 Petar Grgec noted in the magazine *Croatia Sacra* (Nr. 20–21) that Pius XI in 1925 blessed the pilgrims from Croatia, and he interpreted this as a blessing on the destruction of Yugoslavia:

> The Croats continued their lives with this blessing. With it they were revived and with it they will preserve their highest ideals: their belief in the Almighty—and in their Independent Free State of Croatia.

In 1939 a group of pilgrims close to the Ustashe presented to the pope a letter from the "People's Representative," in which the desire for the destruction of Yugoslavia was expressed, which was later presented in the brochure *La formazione cattolica della Croazia* (Rome 1943) by Dr. Ivo Guberina, that priest and Ustasha officer who in exile for many years preserved the relationship between Pavelić and the Vatican. The text runs as follows:

> The history of the eternal struggle of the Croatian people shows a fight for independence. This fight has been carried out simultaneously with the effort to maintain the relationship with the Holy See and is yet today the surest proof of the loyalty of the Croatian people to the holy Roman Catholic Church. Nothing can change this attitude of the Croats.

Thus-blessed Ustashadom, i.e., clerofascism, attacked Yugoslavia ever more sharply. In order to achieve its goal faster, hate between the Serbian and Croatian part of the population was stirred up.

[. . . .]

Primarily action was against the Serbs, who had the major part of the government in Belgrade, indeed against all the Serb people, whereby especially the difference between the religions was emphasized. The religious motif was basic and fundamental.

In the Zagreb *Hrvatska Smotra* (1943, Nr. 7–10) the Ustasha priest Dr. Ivo Guberina writing under the title "Ustashadom and Catholicism" told of the themes that united the Catholic Church and even the pope himself with the Croatian separatist movement and Ustashadom in the destruction of Yugoslavia:

> In 1918 the Croats got into a state and political constellation against which they had fought for centuries. Croats fell into an eastern-oriental pot in which, according to those in power, the Croatian nation was to disappear. Croats were to be annihilated as a bulwark of the Christian west. Many Catholics were misled and even formed movements that saw Yugoslavia as a necessary way to come to ecclesiastical unity between the eastern and the western Church, Catholicism and Orthodoxy. When this Yugoslavia became reality, Byzantium was not remotely thinking of Church unity in the sense of the Catholic movement, but rather pursued in this greater Serbian state the goal of Byzantinizing the whole Croatian people culturally and Serbinizing them politically—making them Serbs. . . .

Here Guberina reveals the old intention of Catholicizing the Serbs! He continues:

> Yugoslavia has experienced what the Vatican never saw in its two-thousand-year history. Here Byzantium through its exponent Serbia has simply spit into the face of Catholicism and its representative, the papacy. The persecution that it has conducted against the concordat maintains the soul, the position, and the efforts of Serbia, of Serbdom, and its power in Yugoslavia. Although the official government was for the concordat, it had to kneel before Serbdom and its spiritual leadership, the Serbian Orthodox Church. Precisely in the state that according to the wish of Catholic circles was to serve as a bridgehead of the Vatican in the Balkan, Catholicism had been forced into constant defense and in the question of the concordat experienced such a collapse that now it must be clear even to a blind man how little the Yugoslav state could serve as a means to Church unity.

Again Guberina makes clear the Vatican's efforts to Catholicize Serbia, but also expresses the idea that there could be no more hope of such a

thing. Especially because of this, the Vatican would have no more interest in the further existence of Yugoslavia:

> All reasons therefore require the separation of Croatia from Serbia and the division of Yugoslavia, this miscreation of a state. Primarily the historical significance of Croatia demands this, then the role that Pope Leo XIII had so ceremoniously expressed when he called us the "Bulwark of Christianity." In order to achieve this goal, we had to enter the open, bloody war with that people and that system that has enslaved Croatia in the last 22 years, namely the Serbian people and its state. One has to be aware that this war is not in contradiction to Christian principles. Until 1929 the struggle was conducted on a parliamentary level; later the Croats changed their methods and took up arms. The Serbs understood only this language: the exploding of bombs in the unliberated homeland, the insurrection in Lika, the murder in Marseille, and finally the rebellion of 6 April 1941.

This is the view of the Catholics and of the Ustashe about the relationships of the Catholic Church and the papacy with Yugoslavia. Therewith the development of the Croatian Catholic movement into terroristic clero-fascism becomes clearer. It is also clearer why the Vatican policy after the enumerated failures to assure Vatican influence in Yugoslavia moved into an openly separatist line and why, after the failed intent to realize a subtle dominance on the part of the Vatican, Croatian clericalism became radicalized and fascist. The Vatican, so it seems, was striving from the beginning to absorb the Serbian-Orthodox Church via their bridgehead and to Catholicize all of Yugoslavia. But when the "unification" of the Church ran into resistance and finally became illusionary, the Vatican broke the staff over Yugoslavia, identified its further goals with those of Croatian clero-fascism and strove to destroy Yugoslavia. It informed its handymen there that "this war is not in contradiction to Christian principles" (Guberina), not even when the methods were changed. Thus we went from the terrain of parliamentary struggle to a bloody battle. That was precisely what was demanded by the role that Leo XIII had determined for Croatia when he called it the "bulwark of Christianity"!

With the reference to the role of Ustashadom and Catholicism in the destruction of Yugoslavia, the Catholic priest Dr. Ivo Guberina praised bomb terror, assaults, murders, and finally occupation by Italy and the usurpation of power by Ustashadom; all this was in agreement with the principles of the Holy Church! He said:

> With these means, the Independent state of Croatia was contstructed. Byzantian-Orthodox pressure on Croatia was eliminated and thereby the possibility was created to make Croatia the bulwark of Europe. The Inde-

> pendent state of Croatia is the only significant Catholic state in the Balkan, the only gateway of Catholicism to the Balkan. And not only that, the Independent State of Croatia is today the strongest bulwark of central Europe. . . . The Croatian people are not pan-Slavistic and will not become so. We have experienced such phenomena in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. That led to a Yugoslav Utopia that almost cost us our head. All these bloody experiences have brought a new state-supportive element to the surface of our organism and has made a leading spot for it, in opposition to the Slavic one. . . . That state-supportive element in the Croatian organism, which in the form of the Ustasha movement got its organizational form, created the Independent Croatian state. Croatian Catholicism is obliged to the Ustasha movement in many points. This all the more so since it has never collided with Catholic principles neither through its work nor through its principles. Its revolutionary work is in complete harmony with Catholic morality.

This Catholic Ustasha ideologue then goes on into an interpretation typical for him and his sort:

> All in all, Croats and Serbs are two worlds—north and south pole—that will never meet, unless by God's miracle. The schism [i.e., Orthodoxy, author's note] is the greatest curse of Europe, almost greater than Protestantism. There is no morality there, no principles, no truth, no justice, no honor.
>
> (Vol. IV, p. 176)

In addition to this obstinate hate, it is also clear which side the Catholic Church in Croatia, under the direct influence and direction of the Vatican, represents with its high clergy.*

[. . . .]

*From *Secret Documents on the relationship between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH* [*Independent State of Croatia, translator's note*], Bibliothek des Journalistenverbandes [Library of the Union of Journalists], Zagreb, 1952, pp. 7-24.

2

Initial Contacts Between Pius XII and Pavelić

Already at the time of Pavelić's emigration, i.e., already before the German and Italian attack and the founding of the so-called Independent State of Croatia, there were relationships between Ustashadom and the Vatican. But here we are only interested in how the relationship between this new puppet figure, the *poglavnik* [i.e., "leader," translator's note] Ante Pavelić, and the Vatican was established. We would like to illuminate this fact on the basis of undeniable documents.

As already mentioned, there was a diary of the Zagreb archbishop Dr. Aloijzije Stepinac, in which he regularly, in his own hand (or by dictating to his ceremonial assistant) entered all events of significance, especially those in which he was active. In volume IV of this diary, he noted on pages 205 to 207, with the date of 27 April 1941, the following:

> In the first days after the return of the poglavnik, the archbishop had the first meeting with him in the former courtyard of the Banus palace. . . . The archbishop wished him God's blessing on his work. . . . When the archbishop had finished, the poglavnik said that he would be of assistance in everything concerning the Catholic Church. He said that he would eliminate the old-Catholic sect, which was nothing more than a society promoting marital divorce. He added that he would not be tolerant of the Serbian-Orthodox Church, because it for him was no church but rather a political organization. From all of that, the archbishop got the impression that the poglavnik was an upright Catholic and that the Church would have free-

> dom in its actions although the archbishop did not succumb to the illusion that everything would happen without difficulty.

So that was the first meeting, the first contact of an official nature. At this first encounter, the Zagreb archbishop spontaneously wishes "God's blessing on the work" of a criminal (and a murderer sentenced by the court)! Here the archbishop hears extremely brutal utterances of Pavelić about other churches, especially the very significant phrase "that he would not be tolerant of the Serbian-Orthodox Church, because it for him was no church but rather a political organization." Neither in front of Pavelić nor in his diary does Stepinac disapprove of or criticize this attitude. Quite to the contrary: In direct connection to this revelation of persecuting the Serbs ruthlessly, Stepinac describes how he got the impression *that the poglavnik was an upright Catholic.* He seems to be glad that he would promote his own church on the ruins of the Serbian Orthodox Church with Pavelić's help.

On the basis of this impression, which never changed in Stepinac— not even when blood flowed in the rivers of Croatia— he rushed to help Pavelić and to establish diplomatic relationships with the Vatican, i.e., with Pope Pius XII himself. This was done by the chief representative of the Church in Croatia without the slightest hesitation or reservations, as one can see in the quoted diary.

Under this same date (27 April 1941) and in regard to the meeting with Pavelić, Stepinac writes:

> On his trip to Rome, the auditor of the nunciature of Belgrade came to Zagreb. He visited the archbishop, who upon this occasion explained to him the situation and asked him to go to the Holy Father and explain everything to him orally, since the mail was not possible. The archbishop recommended heartily that there may be an establishment of relations or of de-facto recognition of the state of Croatia by the Holy See. . . . After the conversation with the auditor of the nunciature, the archbishop went to the poglavnik and informed him that he had taken steps to assure the first contact between the Holy See and the independent State of Croatia. The poglavnik listened attentively. (The notation was made by the Ceremonial Assistant Cvetan.)

The matter is thus quite clear. The auditor of the nunciature mentioned here was the diplomatic functionary of the Vatican in Belgrade [Marcone, translator's note]. The Vatican still had diplomatic relations with the Yugoslav state, which even later were never formally interrupted. But precisely the member of the nunciature in Belgrade who traveled via Zagreb to Rome

upon the initiative of archbishop Stepinac was to steer matters so that Pavelić or the Ustasha-NDH "as quickly as possible" would receive support of the Vatican. Stepinac asked the Vatican to recognize the NDH de facto, because it was clear to him that the recognition de jure was not possible. Stepinac did this not unwillingly, for it is noted that he "heartily recommended." After the conversation, Stepinac rushed immediately to Pavelić to inform him of the fact that he had spoken in his favor. Here the wording: ". . . that he took steps to assure the first contact ..." After two weeks the pope's answer came. In volume IV of the diary of Stepinac on page 216 is the entry:

> The auditor of the nunciature in Belgrade returned from Rome and visited the archbishop to summarize the conversation with the Holy Father. He reported that the Holy Father listened attentively and then requested the auditor to inform the archbishop that he as soon as possible was to send a written report to Rome. Upon this occasion, the Holy Father said that the initiative for the establishment of diplomatic relations was to come from the government and that the Holy See as of now has not received anything.

Stepinac's intervention thus was successful. Pope Pius XII saw no barriers and made no objections regarding the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations and recognizing the Ustasha puppet state, although he knew precisely that in Croatia the slaughter of Orthodox Serbs had begun. He recommended namely to Stepinac that he see to it that the Serbs would not be "persecuted too severely," but he did not condemn the Ustasha practice in principle. Neither did he mention that this persecution could determine whether the relationship with Pavelić would be established or not. (At this time the horrible massacre in the Orthodox Church in Glina had taken place in which hundreds of people were slaughtered. . . .)

The pope thus asked Pavelić to take care of the formalities, i.e., to announce to the Vatican the founding of his state and to express his wishes. The archbishop informed Pavelić of this suggestion from the pope.

The poglavnik Ante Pavelić directed to Pope Pius XII a letter in Latin in which it was stated that an "official paper" had already been sent to the Holy See, which contained the announcement of the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia. This letter had a special purpose: Pavelić emphasized in it his deep Catholic feelings and his absolute submission to the pope; he saw—in the fact that the "Independent State" came into being in the jubilee year—a sign from God that meant that even the pope had served himself well in the realization of the "Independent State of Croatia." Pavelić wrote in this letter literally:

> We are certainly not far from the mark when we award this favor of the powerful defense of the apostolic head, to which the Croatians were always loyal.

Pavelić asked the pope to recognize his state. He wrote:

> Holy Father! Since divine providence has made it possible that I take over the helm of my people and my homeland, I am firmly determined and wish fervently that the Croatian people, faithful to their laudable past, also in the future remain loyal to the holy apostle Peter and his followers and that our homeland, filled with the law of the New Testament, become Christ's kingdom. In this truly great work, I fervently ask the aid of Your Holiness. As such aid I first see that Your Holiness with Your highest apostolic authority recognize our state, then that You deign as quickly as possible to send Your representative, who will help me with Your fatherly advice, and finally that he impart to me and my people the apostolic blessing. Kneeling at the feet of Your Holiness, I kiss your sacred right hand as the obedient son of Your Holiness. . ."

Undoubtedly the pope was gladdened by this letter, in which a purported state sovereign address him in a style uncommonly reminiscent of the medieval papal vassals. In all likelihood, no head of any state has recently ever addressed such a humble letter to the pope, especially in the twentieth century.

The criminal Pavelić revealed in his letter what he was most concerned about: the aid of the pope. He "asks fervently" for this aid, because he was aware that he could thus carry out his plan more easily.

[. . . .]

A few days after the above-mentioned letter, Pavelić traveled to Rome accompanied by his ministers, generals, and honor bearers. This undertaking had a double purpose: The Ustasha-NDH, according to Mussolini's plan, was to become a kingdom. He saw a member of the house of Savoy as king, namely the Duke of Spoleto, who was to be called Tomislav II in order thus to emphasize the continuity between the old Croatian kingdom of the Middle Ages and fascist Croatia. In Rome the Croatian crown was to be awarded to the Savoy prince in a ceremony. The second purpose of Pavelić's pilgrimage was a conversation with the pope.

The awarding of the Croatian crown to the savoy prince took place on 18 May 1941 in the presence of the Italian king Viktor Emanuel III

and Mussolini. The Duke of Spoleto assumed the offer and agreed to be called Tomislav II.[1]

On this occasion the following took place with the cooperation of the pope:

One day before the ceremony, the pope received in a special audience the Duke of Spoleto. This could not have been a coincidence; to the contrary, the audience took place precisely because the pope was giving his approval to the designated king of Croatia to receive the Croatian crown. This undertaking, too, among the Croatian Catholics and before the public, was to rest on the authority of the pope. The papal intervention is all the more significant when one considers that the Vatican at this time still maintained diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia and that in the Vatican there was a Yugoslav embassy. We will see that this dual policy also continued. The Vatican allegedly did not want to prejudice the outcome of the war. The Vatican was "neutral." For these reasons, it recognized the NDH de facto but not de jure. But its purportedly "reserved" attitude did not prevent the pope in reality from supporting the fragmentation of Yugoslavia and moving the Duke of Spoleto to receive "the Croatian crown." It is clear that the pope was wishing for a solution that allowed him to have a monarchy in the Balkan under his influence, and it especially suited him as an Italian (Pius XII was known as a "good Italian") that a Savoy monarchy with splendid Catholic traditions was under consideration. The role of the Savoy princes in the liquidation of the heresy in Italy is historically proven. This dynasty even had saints. [. . .] Of course Pius XII, in addition to the commendation to receive the crown, also gave the Duke of Spoleto advice on how he in his function could be useful to the Vatican's interests in Croatia. When the Duke of Spoleto received the Croatian crown one day later, he thus also had papal approval and the papal blessing.

There were no details about this visit in the media, but in the official Vatican organ *Osservatore Romano,* one could read that the visit coincided with the awarding of the Croatian crown and specifically one day before the ceremony.

After the festive awarding of the Croatian crown, the pope also received Pavelić on the same day. According to official reports in the Ustasha press in Zagreb, Pavelić accompanied by his adjutant Colonel Sabljak and two Italian officers arrived at the Vatican shortly before six o'clock. In one of the halls of the Vatican, a troop of papal Swiss guards had been placed to honor the poglavnik. The Cardinal State Secretary Maglione had approached Pavelić and conversed with him until six o'clock. At precisely six o'clock, Cardinal Maglione led Pavelić into the library of Pius XII. Pavelić's conversation with the pope lasted a half hour. Afterwards he introduced Pius to his adjutants. The pope conversed with the two of

them for approximately another ten minutes, during which time he showed an interest in the religious conditions in Croatia. Finally he expressed the desire to see the entire Croatian delegation. At 7:30, he received Pavelić's whole retinue, among which was also the Zagreb bishop Salis Seevis. In the reports it says that the pope conversed with many of those present. After he subsequently imparted his blessing, he took leave of Bishop Salis Seevis in a particularly cordial fashion—"with the best wishes for the progress and happiness of the Croatian people."[2]

Katolicki list, the organ of the Zagreb archbishop, published in the issue of 21–22 May 1941 the following:

> We first note the audience of the poglavnik with the Holy Father upon the occasion of his first visit in Rome. This gesture shows us that the poglavnik esteems the successor to Peter very highly and conducts his first trip to him in order to join the thousand-year relations that unite the Croats with the Holy See. We feel we are correct when we ascribe to this audience a greater significance than simply that of a superficial act of respect to a sovereign staying over in Vatican City. On the other hand, the warm reception of the poglavnik and the Croatian state delegation by the Holy Father Pius XII shows what an international significance the Church attributes to the representatives of our national state when it receives them so soon and so respectfully.

The Ustasha's main organ *Hrvatski narod* presents in its report from Rome:

> People knowledgeable of the customs of the Vatican stress that it has never happened that the holy Father has ever received anyone in a major audience on a Sunday and especially in the late evening. This gesture from His Holiness Pope Pius XII is interpreted as an act of special attention regarding the Croatian people.

On the same occasion *Katolicki tjednik*, the organ of the archbishopric of Sarajevo writes: ". . . that the Vatican is aware of the great significance of the revival of the NDH . . . and therefore it is understandable that this event in the Vatican has evoked a vivid satisfaction." The paper adds: "It is also important to the Vatican that the Croatian state become as strong as possible." The organ of the Zagreb archbishopric, *Katolicki list*, writes that with this visit in Rome, through which Croatia became Italy's vassal, "a dam has stemmed the tide of Orthodoxy."

In the report that the pope sent to Stepinac through the auditor of the nunciature in Belgrade (which we already learned from Stepinac's diary), the pope asked that Stepinac report to him how one could make contact

with Pavelić. The bishop Salis-Seevis took this report to Rome. In Stepinac's diary (volume IV, p. 223) we can read:

> Today (17 May 1941) a delegation traveled to Rome with the poglavnik at its head. His Eminence has sent a thorough report to the Holy Father through Bishop Salis.

Bishop Salis-Seevis immediately after his arrival delivered this "thorough report." It was so worded that the pope without hesitation agreed to an audience, for which Pavelić had asked and which Stepinac recommended to the pope. Bishop Salis-Seevis arranged all the formalities regarding the audience for Pavelić.

Although the Ustasha-NDH was recognized neither de jure nor de facto, Pius XII received Pavelić in a manner that was not usual for average people. Pavelić's audience with the pope was "a private one" according to *Osservatore Romano*. Indeed Pavelić was received like a head of state, and the conversation with the pope was recorded at his expressed wish by a stenographer. Are these "private" audiences that are recorded by a stenographer for the historical record not strange? And besides—what did the pope have to discuss with Pavelić in "private"?!

With this conversation, the basis of that cooperation was laid that was to continue and remain very close. The pope had blessed the poglavnik for the first time. Later he accumulated many such blessings.

After this special audience for Pavelić, the pope received his whole retinue. He imparted to the ministers and generals, these criminals, his blessing in cordial words as if he were dealing with a group of pious and humble followers who on their knees before the vicar of Christ on earth were experiencing the highest joy.[3]

Notes

1. The special delegate of the Ustasha for the Vatican, Dr. Nikola Rusinovic, wrote to the Ustasha Foreign Minister Mladen Lorkovic on 26 February 1942 on the subject of the reasons that the king never came to Croatia: "He was very happy being King of Croatia, but circumstances arose that made him decline to come to Croatia." The second special delegate, Prince Erwin Lobkowicz, wrote to Lorkovic on 15 April 1943:

> Princess Windischgrätz told me of an encounter with the Duke of Aosta [this was the title of the king after the death of his brother, the Duke of Aosta, author's note], who was foreseen as king. The princess asked him whether he would soon go to Croatia; whereupon the latter replied: "How could I even think of it, since the Italian government with its impossible behavior and its constant errors is sabotaging friendly relations with the Croats? How could I face the Croats?"

2. On the subject of the visit of the Duke of Spoleto and Pavelić with Pope Pius XII, Gaetano Salvemini and Giorgio La Piana wrote in the book *La sorte dell' Italia* (Rome, 1945, pp. 169–70):

> The attitude of the Vatican regarding the new kingdom of Croatia is of the greatest significance. The crown was offered to Victor Emmanuel, who already possessed a great number of related crowns and gave this one to his cousin, the Duke of Spoleto. Then a delegation came to Rome, at whose head was that Ante Pavelić who five years earlier was condemned to die by a French court *in contumatiam* as the perpetrator of the murder of King Alexander of Serbia and who now became the quisling of Croatia. A coronation ceremony was prepared there on 18 May 1941 for the new ruler. The plan to tear Catholic Croatia away from Orthodox Serbia was not unwelcome to the Vatican, and if one considers the prejudice that the pope showed toward the Savoy ruling house, then the choice of the Duke of Spoleto to be the Croatian king had to have met the approval of the pope. If however, this new puppet state, a creation of the axis powers, had been fully officially recognized, then the enemies of Germany and Italy would have been justified in considering this a blow to the neutrality of the Vatican. The Vatican solved the problem with the help of one of its compromises, in which diplomatic hypocrisy, scholastic casuistry, and subtle reserve go hand in hand. The pope received the Duke of Spoleto exactly one day before the ceremony (i.e., before he was officially the King of Croatia). Ante Pavelić, his first minister, and the whole Croatian delegation were received as a group of "Catholic individuals" on the same day on which the ceremony of the declaration of the kingdom of Croatia was completed. The *Osservatore Romano,* however, explained a few lines earlier that Pavelić, who was received as a humble "Catholic individual," had not come alone to the pope, but was in the company of a stenographer who surely recorded the conversation. Thereafter, Pavelić introduced the whole Croatian delegation to the pontifex as befits the ceremony for official audiences.

3. Excerpt from *Secret Documents on the Relationships between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH,* pp. 31–35.

3

The Participation of Roman Catholic Priests in the Fascist Attacks on the Yugoslav Army

On 6 April 1941, fascist Germany insidiously attacked Yugoslavia. The German army quickly advanced and entered Zagreb on 10 April. The Yugoslav people were informed over the radio that they should immediately get in touch with the local offices, where they would get instructions on what to do.

Pavelić was still in Italy. Germany demanded that a government be named immediately. The Yugoslav army still represented a danger to the occupiers, because the soldiers were armed. The Ustashe were to carry out the disarming of the Yugoslav army according to the instructions they had already received in the respective locations. Among the Ustashe who disarmed the Yugoslav soldiers were also a large number of priests, who organized and directed this action.

Hrvatski narod in Nr. 1091 of 25 July 1944 published under the title "The pastor from Neretva" an article on Don Ilija Thomas, which the priest Eugen Beluhan had written:

> . . . therefore the Ustasha idea inflamed him with a joyful heart and already in 1937 we see him as an enlisted Ustasha with his whole heart in the work and in the battle. . . . He worked with his neighbor from the other side of the Neretva, with the pastor from Studenac Don Juro Vrdoljak-Biscevic. . . . Apparently it is not known to many that already on 8 April 1941 the Independent State of Croatia was proclaimed. . . . They disarmed

> parts of the army that came past Caitina, even took away cannons. In doing so they were supported by Croatian soldiers. Separated from the world and surrounded by the Serbian army, they held out in constant danger and in constant battles until 20 April. Only then did the Germans come to their aid. . . . Not long thereafter Don Ilija was named Ustasha commissar for the whole area.

Hrvatski narod (Nr. 1051) published in June 1944 an article on the chaplain Ivan Miletic under the title "The Pastor from Drina." Again the priest Eugen Beluhan was the author:

> As a priest he was first a spiritual aid in Derventa, afterwards a military chaplain in the army, where he with his work supported the destruction of the Yugoslav army during the overthrow. After the founding of the Independent State of Croatia, he was entrusted with one of the largest and most difficult districts,[1] the district of Visegrad, which extended to four bishoprics.
>
> He worked in cooperation with the Ustasha camp director[2] Ivan Kritic. When one is stuck, the other comes to his aid, and thus they understand and support each other in everything.

In *Nedjelia*, the weekly magazine for Catholic work, one finds the article "Yugoslavia's last twitches on the island Pag" on 22 June 1941. Therein is described the disarming of the Yugoslav army on Pag, in which the local pastor played the most important role. In this article we read:

> I left the church and some young first lieutenant saluted me with certain feelings of sympathy. A short time later we met. It was Mr. Orsanic, and the surname was enough to make us very cordial friends immediately (I had first thought that he was the son of the professor and minister Ivan Orsanic, but we was only remotely related to him). From then on our visits in my house lasted until late in the night. . . .
>
> Ustasha officers were the following men: Orsanic, Rukavina, Pavicic, Grandovec, and Jergovic. One of them had a secret radio transmitter in a valise so he could receive orders from the poglavnik and from Ustashe from abroad. Tina Kustic, an enthusiastic follower of our movement, sat ready all day at this apparatus and reported all news to me that I otherwise would often hear personally. I avoided police and Serbian officers, because I was suspicious to them. Late in the night young Ustasha Croats would meet at my house and would thus pursue the development of events. The right reverend Sipanov from Vlasic on the island of Pag also listened to the radio news and then on his bicycle informed officers and the army. Any news of new events was received enthusiastically by all of us. The connection with Senj was established and the Ustasha commando named Mr. Jergovic

> as the commandant of Pag. . . . At midnight, First Lieutenant Orsanic came to me and asked me as the oldest Croat officer to take the carbine and to pick out eight young men to then capture Serbian officers, police, and toll officials.

The Ustasha newspaper *Za Dom* (Nr. 1), April 1941, reported the following:

> Another priest who had joined with two toll officials took two generals and 40 officers prisoner. A Franciscan with the help of some young men disarmed a whole Serbian troop.

All this was early Ustasha news on the heroic deeds of their followers and this still at the time of the Yugoslav state.

In a petition to the ministry of agriculture on 7 May 1942 (Document Nr. 637), the Frater Dr. Petar Berkovic quoted above, district leader for the county of Knin, who simultaneously bragged that his parsonage was also an Ustasha residence, wrote about his service for the Ustasha movement as follows:

> Before the overthrow, I was an Ustasha security officer and state security officer. I assumed civilian as well as military power and along with the Ustashe disarmed the whole division. . .
>
> (*Documents of the Commission on the Establishment of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers,* Nr. F. 4502–1).

The fact that Frater Dr. Petar Berkovic participated in the takeover of the military and civil authority and took part in the disarming of the Yugoslav army can be seen in the following document:

> Voucher
>
> Drnis, 25 July 1941
>
> The local Ustasha camp hereby confirms that Frater Petar Berkovic, chief pastor in Drnis, is a good and honorable Croat, has done no wrong against the interests and the Honor of the Croatian people, but rather for 14 years fought in the Ustasha movement. . . . Until 10 April 1941, he was the Ustasha security officer for the Drnis area. On ll April 1941, he became the district leader for the whole county of Knin; in this function, he assumed civilian and military authority and along with the Ustashe disarmed a whole division of Serb soldiers. Serving the homeland!.
>
> Camp Director

[. . .]

From an excerpt of the protocol of Frater Velimir Simic, priest from Bukovica, county of Duvno, it can be seen that he participated in the disarming of Yugoslav soldiers and that he thus relieved three soldiers of their weapons. In his testimony, Frater Simic declared:

> Yes! in 1941, when the Yugoslav army was being dissolved, I relieved three soldiers of their rifles. When I fled from the partisans for the first time, I gave two of the rifles to farmers, the third I used myself or at least carried it on my person. In addition, I also had a pistol and two hunting rifles, which I took with me to Sirok Brijeg in a package. All that stayed in Sirok Brijeg.

The Catholic priest Ante Klaric-Tepeluk from the village Tramosnica, county of Gradacac, was the Ustasha camp director and participated in the disarming of the Yugoslav army. The following witnesses testified about him: Pero Dujkovic from the village [. . .], Ante Lucic from Domaljevac, Marijan Ivkic from the village Turic, Cedomir Maric from Gornja Tramosnica, Mirko Cavarovic from Gornja Tramosnica, Jelena Durkovic from Domaljevac, Ivo Zolic from Domaljevac, and Pavao Durkovic from Domaljevac.

Frater Karlo Grabovac, priest from the County of Duvno, worked during the collapse of Yugoslavia with the Ustasha emigrants Mato Kapulic and Mato Boskovic on the organization of troops, which the Yugoslav soldiers disarmed. After the founding of the NDH, he was installed in the office of pastor as an Ustasha security official.

Frater Emanuel Rajic, priest from Gornje Vakuf, took part also in the disarming of Yugoslav officers and soldiers and organized the Ustasha power grab in Gornji Vakuf. He exercised the function of camp director and established the first Ustasha unit there.

Just these few examples illuminate sufficiently the role of a part of the clergy in the disarming of the Yugoslav army, although they still give no complete impression of the great number of priests who took part. Before the Ustashe took over the government in Croatia, the fascist countries of Italy and Germany insisted that preparations be made as soon as possible. Among the earliest Ustasha functionaries were a great number of priests, who were installed as chief field-camp directors, general camp directors, and as county and state district leaders. They all distinguished themselves already in the time of Yugoslavia by their activity for the Ustashe, especially by disarming the Yugoslav army during the collapse of Yugoslavia. It was logical that these people then took over the political and civil authority.

From the protocol of Dr. Branko Stefanovic that is found in the archives

of the Commissariat for Refugees in Belgrad (V, XXXXIII, Nr. 4326), we read the following:

> In the critical days of the month of April 1941, Dragutin Marjanovic conducted police investigations in the municipal police station from the desk of the police chief. Everyone had the impression that the whole Ustasha authority was concentrated in Chaplain Marjanovic. Dr. Stefanovic was present in the police station when a deputation came from Stup Slatnic under the leadership of Martinovic and informed the head of the HSS (Croatian Farmers Party) and the chaplain that 20 Serbs had been killed in his village. When they informed him of this, the chaplain interrupted them: "What, only 20!" Thereupon the messenger replied. "Don't worry, there will surely be more!" Later the police chief Katacevic represented the chaplain in this function.

The newspaper *Hrvatski Narod* (1941) published an interview conducted by their correspondent with the above-mentioned pastor Branimir Zupancic from Bosanska Gradiska. In the article they emphasized among other things the services of the pastor for Ustashadom and for the power grab by the Ustashe in Bosanska Gradiska:

> Bosanska Gradiska also played an important role in the formation of the Independent State of Croatia. A handful of Croatians quickly united ready to take power in such a way that there were neither little quarrels nor great fights. The local pastor, Mr. Zupancic, rendered special services in the maintaining of the high consciousness of our Croatian and Moslem people. Bosanska Gradiska, this little Croatian village, thanks to the efforts of the pastor, assembles in the Croatian home. There one planned and discussed what was to be done.

Ivan Mikan, pastor and canon in Ogulin, organizer of the power grab of the Ustashe in this area, on the day of the proclamation of the NDH, on 10 April 1941, prepared a gathering at which he praised the founding of the NDH and spoke of the arrival of the Ustashe and the German occupiers connected with them. On 13 April 1941, Pavelić stopped by in Ogulin on the way to Zagreb. Mikan organized a festive gathering, at which he held a speech. Among other things, he announced that "there will now be some cleansing," and he closed with the words: "Get out of here, you dogs, beyond the Drina." Afterwards Pavelić spoke.

The newspaper *Nova Hrvatska* on 1 July 1941 published an article on pastor Ivan Mikan under the title: "The death of the iron Croat Canon, Ivan Mikan." The article says:

> . . . He hardly arrives in Ogulin when Mikan continues his national-political work in the spirit of the Ustasha. He holds meetings, councils, and discussions and administers oaths to the Ustashe. Together with Minister Dr. Lovro Susic and Juraj Markovic, the District Leader, he prepares the mood for the establishment of an independent Croatia.

Dragan Petranovic, chaplain from Ogulin, worked with Ivan Mikan, the district leader. Because of his services for the Ustasha movement, he was named adjutant of the camp.

The newspaper *Novi list*, Nr. 34 of 1 July 1941, published the arrangement of the Ustasha main command that allowed Frater Didak Coric to be named field camp director of the Ustasha field camp in Jaska. The Ustasha Ante Duric, pastor from the village Divusa was named camp director of the county Dvor on the Una, and Dragan Petranovic, catachist in Ogulin was named adjutant of the Ustasha camp for the county of Ogulin. The same newspaper (Nr. 44 on 12 July 1941) said that pastor Stjepan Lukic had been installed as adjutant of the camp Zepce.

Martin Gecina, pastor from Recica, county of Karlovac, became Ustasha field camp director of the community Recica upon the founding of the NDH.

The pastor Milivoj Cekada was the most important organizer of the Ustasha power grab in Gornja Zenica and was therefore named district leader. Together with the Ustashe from Zenica, he directed all the dismissals in the state offices. Dr. Dragutin Kamber, pastor from Doboj, for his services for the Ustasha terrorists was promoted to Ustasha county district leader for the county of Doboj. He held the whole political and civil power in his hands, ordered the police to make searches, and appointed officials. In the name of the Ustasha command in Doboj, he named himself chief of the Ustasha warehouse, which previously had been in the possession of Jewish merchants, the family Pesah.

A letter from Dr. Kamber to the poglavnik:

> Our dear poglavnik!
>
> I marvel at the result of your policy in the first days of reborn Croatia so much that I cannot express it properly. I respect the choice of your methods as especially wise and farsighted: the strong measures in Bosnia and the naming of an Italian prince as Croatian king. The latter, in addition to wisdom and concern for our borders, also shows to the best friends of our state your special moral magnitude, because you decline any decoration to adorn your person. This you did because it was for the greater benefit of the state. I thank you for that. There are many among us who see that and understand it. May I be so bold as to make a small suggestion: Bosnia was the last

> realization of the independent Croatian state. Its queen Katharina died in Rome and left behind as a symbolic inheritance, but still living aspiration, the Bosnian kingdom and the crown. In this holy jubilee year, it would be good to persuade the Holy Father that he by an official act transfer this crown again to someone and thereby connect up with the era of King Zvonimir. Jajce was the royal city, and its romanticism, its similarity to Tivoli, its proximity to the future center in Banja Luka would make of it even today an ideal royal residence. . . .
>
> Dr. Kamber

At the time of the collapse of Yugoslavia, Catholic organizations and societies played an important role. A great many of the members of these organizations were for a long time closely connected with the Ustasha organizations, and at the time of the occupation they cooperated hand in hand in the disarming of the Yugoslav army and in the founding of the Ustasha state. Catholic organizations enthusiastically welcomed the founding of the NDH and promised Pavelić their cooperation.

The newspaper *Nedjelia* on 27 April 1941 (Nr. 15, p. 2) published an article with the title "Crusaders welcome the state of Croatia and the poglavnik." In the article we find among other things:

> The Great Crusader Fraternity, through the Ustasha military priest Dr. Ivo Guberina, Reverend Cvitanovic and Reverend Vitezic, directed the following greeting to the poglavnik: "It is for us an indescribable joy and happiness that we are able to greet the poglavnik before the Great Crusader Fraternity and the whole Crusader organization, our liberator of the Croatian people, the founder and the head of the independent State of Croatia. Our members, guided by the watchword 'Sacrifice, Eucharist and Apostolic,' have shied from no difficulties; in the confessional they sought celestial comfort, and among the folk they were apostles of our national shrines, to which they feel the closest connection. Reared in the spirit of Catholic radicalism, which knows no compromises in its principles, they also have known no yielding in the program of Croatian nationalism. Oh poglavnik! The pilgrims welcome you and express to you their great love and submission! . . ." God lives! Prepared for the homeland!
>
> Primary cleric: Dr. Milan Beluhan.

The newspaper *Nedjelia* on 18 May 1941 (Nr. 19, p. 1) published a note of thanks from the poglavnik for the welcome from the Great Crusader Fraternity:

> To the members of the Great Crusader Fraternity
>
> Your attention and the cordial greetings on the occasion of the

> establishment of the Independent State of Croatia make the poglavnik very happy, and he is grateful from the bottom of his heart. May the Almighty bless the great deed and hear your wishes and this for the welfare of the people and the state. . .

Other Catholic organizations also did not take a back seat to the Great Crusader Fraternity; witness the telegrams and greetings sent to the poglavnik by the HKAD "Domagoj". On this subject *Hrvatski Narod* writes (1941, Nr. 67, p. 11):

> Proud of the fact that many honorable and enthusiastic strugglers for the realization of your independent state come from the ranks of this movement, of which many were active in the historical moments in your work of liberation and renewal, we express boundless submission and loyalty to the state of Croatia.

Shortly after the telegram expressing greetings, which the representatives of the Great Crusader Fraternity and the corresponding women's organization had sent to the poglavnik, they visited the leader in order to express to him their loyalty in person and to put themselves at his disposal. On that subject *Nedjelia*, the "Weekly Newspaper for Catholic Work," wrote on 29 June 1941:

> On Thursday the 29th of June at 2:30 p.m., the members of the directorship of the Crusader organization of the sovereign independent State of Croatia visited the poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić. The deputation was headed by the chief cleric of the Pilgrim organization, Monsignore Dr. Milan Beluhan. In his accompaniment were several Crusader clerics.
>
> O Poglavnik!
>
> Our chairman, Dr. Felix Niedzielski, has been in Bosnia for some time as district leader. Allow me to greet you as second chairman of the WKB in the name of the Crusaders. We wish to tell you, oh poglavnik, that thousands upon thousands of hands were folded and knees bent before the face of God in prayers for the success of your struggle and the victory of Croatia and for your imminent arrival—and finally you have come! We are happy and proud that immediately after the first step, upon the victorious return, in the village of Vrbovski, one of our sisters from the Crusader ladies auxiliary was permitted to serve you. Oh Poglavnik! Croatian Crusaders, men and women, have told you of their wishes and ambitions. They have told you how thankful they are to you, thankful until death, and that they have no choice but to prove their gratitude with deed and work. Allow us to greet you with our Crusader salute: "God lives!" (all attenders shout: "God lives!"). Allow us to say that we all at every moment, upon every opportunity, and

under all circumstances are prepared: for the homeland (all attenders salute with a raised right hand and shout in full voice: "Prepared!").

Afterwards the sister Ivka Spes presented to the poglavnik an inscription, which the poglavnik received with great satisfaction. Then he spoke and held a meaningful speech.

(Excerpt from: *Documents on the Antinational Work and the Crimes of a Part of the Catholic Clergy*, edited and published by Joze Horvat and Zdenko Stambuk, Zagreb 1946, pp. 41–53).

Notes

1. Translator's note: The territory of the NDH was divided into 22 *gaus*, 142 counties, and 1,002 communities.

2. Translator's note: In the *gaus*, the Ustashe established, as a military-political organization, staffs for the land (field camps) and for the cities (camps). Their directors were called field-camp leaders and camp leaders.

4

Roman Catholic Dignitaries Welcome the Destruction of Yugoslavia and the Creation of the NDH

The announcement of the founding of the NDH* on 10 April 1941 by "divine providence and the will of our allies" . . . :

> Oh Croatian people!
>
> Divine providence and the will of our allies and also the tortuous, centuries-long struggle of the Croatian people, the sacrifice of our poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić and the Ustasha movement in the land and abroad have made it possible that today, one day before the resurrection of God's son, our Independent State of Croatia is also resurrected. I call upon all Croats, no matter where they are, and especially officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers of the militia and of the security forces to hold to the strictest discipline and to report their correct location to the commando of the militia in Zagreb. I wish that the entire militia promptly swear allegiance to the Independent State of Croatia and its poglavnik. Under the authority of the poglavnik, I have today taken over the total authority and command of the militia.
>
> God and Croatians! Prepared for the homeland!
>
> Zagreb,
> 10 April 1941

*"Independent State of Croatia," editor's note.

The representative of the poglavnik
Commander of the entire militia:
Slavko Kvaternik

Excerpt from *Narodne Novine,* official newspaper
of the NDH, Nr. 1, 11 April 1941

Reports from the Ustasha press of April 1941:

The Croatian archbishop sees the Ustasha Authority for Inner Security, Dr. Milovan Zanic:

> Zagreb, 12 April—Yesterday evening the Croatian archbishop, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, visited the Authority for Inner Security of the Croatian state, Dr. Milovan Zanic; he had a cordial conversation with him during an extended stay.

The archbishop's best wishes for the poglavnik's deputy:

> Zagreb, 12 April—The Zagreb archbishop and Croatian metropolitan, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, visited the deputy of the poglavnik, Mr. Slavko Kvaternik, upon which occasion he held a long an cordial conversation, during the course of which he congratulated him on the founding of the Independent State of Croatia.

The Croatian archbishop visits General Slavko Kvaternik:

> Zagreb, 13 April—On the eleventh of this month at 12:30, the sublime gentleman, the archbishop and Croatian archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, visited the deputy and commander of the entire militia, General Slavko Kvaternik. The sublime one came accompanied by the director of the chancellory of the archbishopric, Monsignore Dr. Antun Slamic and his secretary, Dr. Fanij Seper. The Croatian archbishop brought the deputy of the poglavnik his best wishes for the happiness, welfare, and progress of the Croatian people in the state of Croatia. He also expressed his most cordial sympathy regarding the tragic death of his brother. The deputy of the poglavnik assured the Croatian archbishop that in Croatia the traditional Croatian propriety and work will reign and that the Catholic Church will have its complete support in its efforts. The archbishop conducted a lengthy, cordial conversation with the deputy of the poglavnik.
>
> On the twelfth of this month at 10:30 a.m., the deputy of the poglavnik, General Slavko Kvaternik, accompanied by Colonel Sabljak and Dr. Mladen Lorkovic, a member of the state administration, visited the Croatian archbishop and held a lengthy, cordial conversation with him.

Archbishop A. Stepinac visits the poglavnik Pavelić:

> . . . On 10 April 1941, when in the presence of motorized German troops, Kvaternik proclaimed the NDH in Zagreb, Ante Pavelić was in fascist Italy, in Pistoja, at the head of a group of 240 Ushtashe.

On 15 April 1941 Pavelić and the Ustashe were brought to Zagreb and on the next day, 16 April, the archbishop Stepinac visited him. The village pastor Ivan Mikan and Chaplain Dragan Petranovic organized a festive reception and a convocation. Pastor Mikan welcomed Pavelić and the Ustashe, fascist Italy, and the Third Reich with enthusiasm. At the same time he announced his purges, i.e., a sharp course regarding the Serbs: "Begone with you dogs on the other side of the Drina!"

In one of his first speeches in Zagreb that talked about the proclamation of the NDH, Pavelić triumphantly announced among other things: "The teachings of Anto Starcevic were stronger than Serbia, stronger than Versailles, than England, and America, because they ultimately won out."

From the Ustashe, the following information was published:

> The archbishop Dr. Stepinac at the audience.
>
> Zagreb, 16 April—The Zagreb archbishop and chair of the conference of bishops, the sublime Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, Zagreb archbishop, visited the poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić. The poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić entertained the sublime archbishop approximately 1/2 hour in cordial conversation. (DNU)

Katolicki list Nr. 16 on 21 April 1941, p. 195, says:

> The sublime archbishop at the audience with the poglavnik of the state of Croatia:
>
> On Wednesday the sixteenth of this month, the poglavnik of the state of Croatia, Dr. Ante Pavelić, in a special audience received the Zagreb archbishop and chief shepherd of the Croatian Church, the sublime Dr. Alojzije Stepinac.

In addition to these contributions on the political effectiveness of Archbishop Stepinac in the early days of the NDH, another contribution from Catholic sources is of interest. The Zagreb newspaper Nedjelia reported as follows:

> The archbishop Alojzijus Stepinac visits the poglavnik and General Kvaternik.
>
> The head of the Catholic Church in Croatia, Sublime Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, Croatian chief shepherd and Zagreb archbishop, visited General Slavko Kvaternik, the deputy of the poglavnik. As was reported, the archbishop

conducted a lengthy conversation with the poglavnik and his deputy, and—as Radio Zagreb reported—very cordial relations were established between the Catholic Church and the state of Croatia.

The pastoral letter from archbishop Stepinac on 28 April 1941.

Honorable brothers!

There is no one among you who in recent times has not been witness to the important events in the life of the Croatian people, in which we as messengers of Christ's gospel have been active. Those are events that have brought the people closer to the long dreamed and desired ideal. Those are moments in which the tongue no longer speaks but rather the blood in its clandestine unity with the earth in which we have seen the light of God and with the people from which we have come. Is it necessary to mention that the blood flows faster in our veins, that the heart beats faster in our breast? No one who is wise can judge it, no one who is honest can contest it, because the love for one's own people is written in the human being with the finger of God and is a command from God.! And who can chastise us when we as spiritual leaders contribute our part to the joy and the enthusiasm of the people, when we full of deep emotion and warm gratitude turn to the divine majesty. For as confused as today's fateful events may be, as varying as the factors may be that have influence on the course of events, one can nevertheless see the working of the divine hand. "A domino factum est istud et est mirabile in oculis nostris."—God has done that and our eyes are full of wonder (Psalm 117, Verse 2,3).

As I speak to you today in the shadow of this ancient temple, this silent witness to our Croatian past, I speak not only as the son of the Croatian people but more as a leader of that divine institution that was born from the lap of eternity and which will find its end in eternity—in the quite special meaning of the word. As representative of that church that is a "firmamentum et columna veritas"—the pillar and fortress of truth (1st Timothy 3, Verse 15) and which is not afraid even through my mouth to speak the truth where it was necessary, although its voice has often been a voice of "one crying in the wilderness" (John I, Verse 23).

As I speak to you as the leader of the Church and shepherd of souls, I ask and admonish you that you exert all effort and work for the goal of making our Croatia a land of God, because only thus will it be able to fulfill two essential tasks that it as a state must fulfill for the benefit of its members. In loyalty to God and to the church of Christ, our Croatia will fulfill that lofty mission that the earthly homeland must fulfill through the furthering of supernatural goodness of everyone. In loyalty to God and to the Church it will show that it believes that the ultimate goal of all human struggle is the beyond, where our home is. By protecting religious and moral values, Croatia will show its belief in the fact that the earthly home is a true mother only when it teaches us to fold our hands and "give to God

what is God's" and that it is a proper care-giver in our lives only when it directs our steps on pathways that lead upward and when it shelters our souls from errors, which God actually created.

But loyal to God and the Church, our Croatia will fulfill not only its duty in the furthering of the supernatural goodness of the Croatian people, but thus it will lay the most solid foundation for a healthy development of earthly national values and this for state freedom and solidarity. The Church, which for two thousand years has been observing the seething in world history, has for centuries been witness to how the "Regnun de gente in gentem transfetur propter injustitas et injurias et contumelias et diversos dolos'—how kingdoms transfer from one people to another because of injustice and unfairness and because of infamy and various afflictions (Chron. 10, Verse 8). Therefore we must see it as our greatest duty to inspire the Croatian people in these fateful moments of history by a deep look into the eternity of our whole national being. We must everywhere draw attention to and teach the fact that the holy enthusiasm and the noble inspiration in the construction of the foundation of this young state of Croatia must be inspired by a fear of God and a love for the law of God and his commandments, because only upon the law of God and not on the mendacious principles of this world can the Croatian state be built with a solid foundation.

Therefore, follow willingly any call to participate in the exalted work for the preservation and furthering of the Independent State of Croatia. Since we know the men who today have the fate of the Croatian people in their hand, we are firmly convinced that our work will find full understanding and support. We believe and expect that the Church in the newly established state of Croatia will be able to announce in full freedom the incontestable principles of eternal truth. It will keep to the Biblical word: "Verbum Dei non est alligatum"—the word of God is not fettered (II Timothy 2, Verse 9). The Church, too, will see it as its holy duty, "opportune, importune, arguere, increpare, obsecrare in omni patientia et doctrina et cum omni apostolica libertate"—in season and out of season to convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching (II Timothy 4, Verse 2). Thus it will work and that will be seen as an invaluable aid in the difficult work of the construction of our dear homeland and of the state of Croatia. May the dear Lord grant that it be so. And so that it will be so, I admonish you, honorable priests, to not stop to inspire your faithful to pray, but even more, to yourselves at the altar of God raise your hands to the "Father of the stars, from whom comes all good gifts and every perfect gift" (James I, Verse 17), so that the poglavnik of the NDH will be filled with the spirit of truth in order to be able to exercise the exalted and so responsible service in praise of God and to the people for their salvation in truth and justice: so that the Croatian people might be a people of God, submissive to Christ and his Church, which is built on the rock Peter! When, as may happen, prayer appears superfluous in the eyes of the world, may we perceive it as the most important thing in life, for when

the Lord "fails to protect the city, then he who protects it, watches in vain" (Psalm 12 Verse 1.)

The church of God has never lost itself in phrases and has never failed in that continuous work with which the foundations of a happy future for the individual, the people, and the state are laid. Show this, worthy brothers, even now and fulfill the duty to the young and independent state of Croatia!

In this regard, I resolve that on Sunday, 4 May of this year, in all the parish churches a holy Te Deum will be held, to which the parish, local authorities, and the faithful people shall be invited. I hope that the above-mentioned festivities can be held at this time. Should the brevity of time not allow it, then the next holiday will be reserved for it. As far as the Zagreb cathedral is concerned, I will determine the day in consultation with the state authorities.

Zagreb, 28 April 1941

Archbishop Alojzije

Archbishop Saric revealed all his Ustasha sentiments in the song that he dedicated to Pavelić on Christmas 1941. This song was published by almost all the Ustasha newspapers in Zagreb and in Sarajevo, and it was instituted as a special propaganda tool among the population of Zagreb and also in the various activities in schools. Thus with his literary ebullience this ecclesiastical dignitary achieved a wider range of effectiveness for the Ustasha than would have been possible with a political speech, and this among the priesthood as well as among the faithful. In the Zagreb paper *Hrvatski Narod* this ode by Saric was published on the title page along with a picture of the poglavnik and his "Thoughts at Christmas Time." Both the works of the poglavnik and the poem by Saric form an inseparable and concurring unit in the sense of the Ustasha thought pool. Even Pavelić referred to divine providence that directed his work in exile up to the founding of the NDH, and in the same sense his Upper Bosnian Ustasha archbishop writes:

Dedicated to the Poglavnik

The Leader. "For the homeland!"
All Croatians. "Prepared!"

The poet saw you in the holy city
in Saint Peter's basilica.
His presence was as dear to him
as is our homeland.

God himself, the almighty, be with you,
so that you accomplish the sublime deed;

May Ante Starcevic illumine you,
may he be your model!

You are both the idol of the Croatians,
you defend the ancient sacred rights.
The sun beams with you, our noble ones.
Eternal fame to you!

You are totally dedicated to the homeland,
you live from the faith, you hero, bold warrior.
You stand up for freedom of the homeland,
divine Ustasha.

Our good spirit, our deep myth,
the wolves cry in vain from all around,
Your call, Prophet, resounds through mountain and Valley:
"God be with the Croats!"

"God the Lord, our only God,
our protector, our resurrection."
With these words you went into
the Easter morning dawn.

He has heart, this man, and honor,
he who does not reign, but works without thought to himself,
and never bends, he who
is a guiding star to us.

Every day is a sacrifice and noble work,
Your pure light guides us, our star!
Your strength vanquishes all the dwarfs,
You new Zrinjski.

Truth and justice are elevated by your speeches,
more dear than even your mother is freedom to you;
you stand up for them against all the thieves,
like a giant.

Against the greedy Jews with all their money,
who wanted to sell our souls,
betray our names,
those miserable ones.

You are the rock on which rests
homeland and freedom in one.
Protect our lives from hell,
from Marxism and Bolshevism.

You call us Croats for our homeland:
"Be like the rock,

be prepared!"
The flame of fame will light our way,
holy Croatian homeland!

Like the sun, you warm us,
you lead Zagreb to the heart of the Croatian king,
you love Bosnia, you call it the jewel
of the crown of Croatia.

Day and night tirelessly for the people,
a true Croat is so dear to you,
your heart warms him like the sun,
oh hero of the Ustashe!

A cry from the heart flies to heaven:
"Protect our homeland, the beautiful one, oh Lord!"
It is the only concern for you forever,
for it alone you pray.

Thus you call us all united to the dance
of work, of progress, of honor.
In this dance it is alive,
our beloved Croatia.

Tolerating the worst travails for the movement,
surrounded by soul-robbing thieves,
you strode like David into foreign lands,
protected by God.

The Lord sent you solace abroad;
adorned your faith with laurel,
never will it wither,
happy hero!

Today our banner waves under the sky,
our eyes cry tears of joy,
Your cheerful brow
adorns the city and the land like a kiss.

Who could move our hearts until today!
Raise our hearts to the heaven of the Lord,
oh leader, the Croatian people need you
like bread.

For the homeland we will always be prepared,
For it we will work, strive for it, always prepared;
for the homeland ever with burning zeal, with God,
for the beloved homeland!

Dr. Ante Pavelić. Dear name.
Croatia has in him
a treasure in heaven.
May the heavenly king accompany you forever,
our beloved leader!

So according to Saric, Pavelić performed a holy deed, and God was his companion so that he was able to carry out this holy deed, or as the case may be, this the greatest betrayal since the origin of the Croatian people. For him Pavelić is a "divine Ustasha," "our guiding star," "the Zriniski" [medieval Croatian ruler, translator's note], "for, the freedom of Croatia, Pavelić has stood up against the thieves," i.e., against the Serbs and against the Jews, who accused the Croatian people of betrayal, i.e., against Yugoslavia. Ante Pavelić protects the life of the Croats from "hell, from Marxism, from Bolshevism." This Ustasha propagandist elevated himself in this poem over all other Ustasha poets who likewise glorified Pavelić for his holy deed, to which they surely added all assaults, all victims who had challenged his bombs in the assaults on the Yugoslav railway in the years 1933 to 1937, and surely also those victims who met their death at the hands of the Ustasha in the disarming of the Yugoslav army during its collapse in April 1941. For these reasons, Ante Pavelić was for Saric also the "beloved leader," who was as necessary to the Croatian people as "bread."

VRHBOSNA

KATOLIČKOJ AKCIJI

GODINA LV. SARAJEVO, TRAVANJ—SVIBANJ 1941. BROJ 4.—5.

Kad sunce sja...

Posvećeno Poglovniku Dr. Anti Paveliću

Ji ne znam zašto mi duša
Žedna i radosna sva,
Kao da slavuji sluša,
Kad sunce sja.

Ja ne znam, zašto me volio
Otvorila pet rukeg zla,
Jako mi i gvozd bolu,
Kad sunce sja.

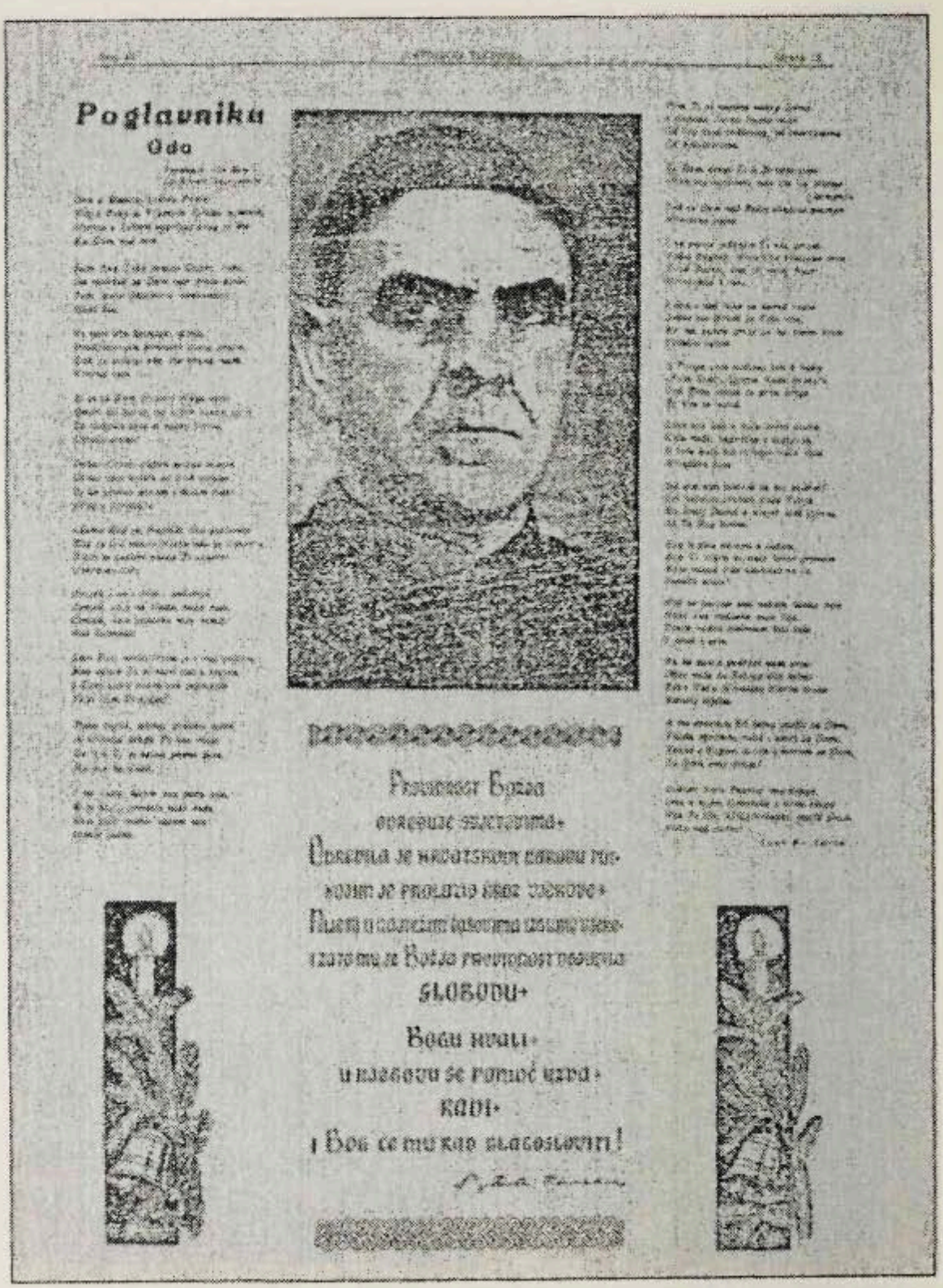
I zašto miš'o mi često
K nebu se vinuti zna,
Ko da joj Kod Boga mjesto,
Kad sunce sja.

U meni nešto se budi
Ko snuci iz vjetnog sna,
I pjesmom dršće mi grudi,
Kad sunce sja.

Zemlja tad ne dike jadom,
Već sva mirše mi sva
Ljubavlju, vjerom i nadom,
Kad sunce sja.

Iv. Ev. Šarić.

Facsimile of the ode of Archbishop Saric to Pavelić, published in *Katolicki tjednik*.



Poglavniku

Oda

Провидност Божја
одредише властитима+
Одредила је многоблагом благодаћу
којим је пробудио овај народ
Пуном и одлучном одлуком
управо му је Божја провидност
ГЛОБОДУ+
Богу хвала+
и нашему се поносу
КОДИ+
и Бог ће му као благословити!

5

Decorations for Roman Catholic Priests for Meritorious Service to the Ustasha State

Innumerable ritual masses were held in honor of Pavelić, his state, and the Ustasha army. Flags of individual Ustasha units were blessed, who went to battle against the People's Liberation Army or to the eastern front. Newly opened Ustasha field camps and posts were consecrated. The priests took part in the burials of even the greatest Ustasha murderers, while they at the same time declined to be at the burials of those who had fallen in the name of freedom.

Hundreds of priests especially distinguished themselves in their criminal service to the Ustasha and to the occupiers and were decorated with high Ustasha medals for it:

Aksamovic, Dr. Antun, Bishop from Dakova
Distinguished Service Medal, highest order with star
Andrasec, Alfons, Franciscan abbot of the cloister Varazdin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Andelovic, Frater Anddel, Pastor from Kralj, Sutjeska
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Arbulic, Miho, Pastor from Mandaljen
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Astalos, Josip, Pastor from Osijek
Decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Ja

Poglavnik

Nezavisne Države Hrvatske

[illegible] predstavljenih

[illegible]

[illegible] KRALJA [illegible]ITRA III STUPNJA [illegible]

[illegible] Crnoj sestri [illegible] Sv.Vinka [illegible]

/tek.br.942-Zv-42/

[illegible] držanje prigodom napada odmetnika [illegible] Livno [illegible] izgubila život mnogih [illegible]

Dom junaku!

[illegible] 21.studenoga 1942.-

Poglavnik

Nezavisne Države Hrvatske

Ante Pavelić

Facsimile of the document with which Pavelić honored the nun Separovic for her "brave and unflinching position" regarding the partisans.

Bajic, O. Leonard, Franciscan priest from Makarsk
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Baltic, Frater Viktor, Pastor from Ljubuncic
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir 3rd class
Bandic, Drago, Pastor from Prnjavor
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Barbaric, Dr. Mladen, Religion instructor at the high school in Mostar
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir
Barbir, Frater Franjo, Franciscan instructor at the Franziscan high school in Dubrovnik
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Baverlin, Stjepan, Religion instructor from Dakovo
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Beluhan, Dr. Milan, Pastor of the St. Mary's Church in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Blazevic, Grga, Pastor from Bosanski Novi
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Bonefacic, Dr. Kvirin, Bishop from Makarska and Split
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star
Borosa, Vladimir, Pastor from Lobor
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Brisevac, Frater Dane, Pastor from Stratinska
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Buckovic, Stjepan, Pastor from Gornji Bogicevci
Order of the Crown of King Avonimir
Buric, Dr. Viktor, Bishop from Senj
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star
Butorac, Ivan, Canon from Mrkopolje
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Butorac, Pavle, Bishop of the county bishopric Dubrovnik
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star
Buzuk, Frater Miroslav, Pastor from Lasin
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Calusic, Frater Marko, Pastor from the village Sivsa, County Tesanj
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir 3rd class
Cipcic, Milan, Pastor from Davor
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Coric, Frater Dominik, Pastor from Tomislavgrad
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir 3rd class
Cuckovic, Ivo, Pastor from Slan
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Cule, Dr. Petar, Bishop from Mostar
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star.
Culina, Cvitan, Priest from Usd
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Cvekon, O. Paskal, Religion instructor in Varazdin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Debeljak, Msgr. Ignacije, House prelate of the Holy Father in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Delic, Don Niko, Prebendary and dean from Makarska
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Depolo, Bozo, Religion instructor from Korcula
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Despalj, Don Jure, Priest and pastor from Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Dobuk, Mato, Pastor from Dubrovnik
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Dockal, Dr. Kamilo, Prebendary and prelate of the Holy Father in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Draganovic, Dr. Krunoslav, Priest on the religion faculty in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Fajdetic, Joisip, Religion instructor from Kompolje
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Felicanovic, Don Jozo, Prebendary from Pag
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Garic, Jozo, Bishop from Banja Luka
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star
Glavas, Pero, Chaplain from Ludbreg
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Glazar, Mato, Prebendary from Senj
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Gospodnetic, Juraj, Pastor from Bosansko Grahovo
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir
Grebenarevic, Frater Bona, Pastor from Podhum
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Guncevic, Dr. Josip, Priest and Director in the high school in Brod on the Sava
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir 3rd class
Hajdukovic, Filip, Beneficiary and honorary prebendary from Bjelovar
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class.

Hrvat, Frater Ante, Cloister administrator and pastor at the Franciscan cloister
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Ilovaca, V. Mile, Franciscan professor, custodian of the museum in Banja Luka
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Ivan, Pater Ignaije, Priest of the order in the Franciscan cloister on the island of Trsat
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class

Jelicic, Dr. Frater Vitomir, Full professor and dean on the Roman Catholic religion faculty in Sarajevo
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class

Juric, Frater Ante, Pastor in Sokolina
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Juricic, Ivo, Pastor from Klisevo
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class

Kalajdzic, Josip, Religion instructor from Varazdin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Kapurso, Karl, Secretary of the bishop chancellery
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Klaric, Mate, Priest from Sarajevo, Secretary at the Croatian State Museum
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class

Kovacic, Petar, Pastor of the Parish of the Holy Family
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Krcmar, Ferdo, Pastor and dean in Lepoglava
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class

Krecak, Gjuro, Pastor from Dubrovnik
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Kresir, Martin, Pastor of the parish Rotimlje
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Krist, O. Jakov, Priest in Osijek
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Kukina, O. Eugen, Cloister administrator in Trsten
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Lepes, Danijel, Prebendary from Trsten
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Loncaric, Dr. Ante, Pastor of the Church of St. Petar in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class with star

Loncaric, Dr. Josip, Pastor of the Parish of St. Peter in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class

Majic, Andrija, Pastor and consultant to the bishop of Mostar
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Majic, Mijo, Pastor in Mostar
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Maretic, Ferdo, Pastor in Stara Gradiska
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Markovic, Dr. Tomo, Priest in Sarajevo
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Maslac, Duro, Pastor in Ravna
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Masic, Nikola, Priest and director at the state Education Facility in Gospic
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Matosic, Franjo, Pastor and honorary canon in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Micevic, Stjepan, Priest from Nova Gradiska
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Mihelcic, Msgr. Ivan, Pastor from Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Mileta, Dr. Jerolim, Bishop in Sibenik
Distinguished Service Medal, highest medal with star
Miletic, Ivan, Pastor
Order of the Crown of the King 1st class
Misilo, Krunoslav, Franciscan instructor, Father Superior of the Bosna Srebena
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Mitrovic, Aco, Pastor from Petrijevac
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Nakic, O. Dr. Vjenceslav, Cloister administrator of the Cloister of St. Ante in Knin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Nestor, Maks Valdemar, Pastor in Drvar
Medal of the Crown of King Zvonimir with swords.
Novak, O. Alojzije, Capucine abbot in Varazdin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Petkovic, Ivo, Pastor from Sar (Island of Korcula)
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Petrovic, Dr. Leon, Franciscan and Father Superior of the Franciscans from Hercegovina
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Polic, Mato, Pastor and prebendary in Bakar
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class

Prepunic, Marijan, Religion instructor from Osijek
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Prezigalo, Josip, Pastor from Mihovljana
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Prgomet, Stjepan, Pastor in Travnik
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Prostenik, Msgr. Matija, Apostolic protonotary
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Purk, Msgr. Gerhard, Dean and pastor in Windhorst
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class with star
Pusic, Danijel, Priest from Sarajevo
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Pusic, Miho, Croatian bishop
Highest order for meritorious service with star
Racki, Dr. Franjo, Pastor and field camp director in Hrvatska-Mitrovica
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Radonic, Dr. Frater Bona, Instructor at the priests' seminar
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Rogosic, Dr. Frater Roko, Pastor from Banjevci
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Silov, Krano, Pastor from Lopud
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Slibar, O. Augustin, Cloister administrator of the Cloister in Nasice
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Soldo, Frater Tugomir, Chaplain from Kocerin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Srebrncic, Dr. Josip, Bishop from Krck on the island Krk
Highest order with star
Stankovic, Ivan, Pastor from Vrbovac near Ozalj
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Starcevic, Grga, honorary prebendary, dean and Pastor from Otocac
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Saric, Dr. Ivan, Archbishop from Sarajevo
Distinguished Service Medal, highest order with star
Seb, Jakov, Priest and director of the state high school in Osijek
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Sebvic, Don Kerubin, Pastor from Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Seremet, Frater Ante, Priest from Sanski Most
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Simovic, Frater Pavao, Pastor
Bronze medal for bravery

Simrak, Dr. Janko, Greek Catholic bishop
Distinguished Service Medal, highest order with star
Skrinjar, Pater Salezije, Priest of the order in the Franciscan cloister on the island Trsat
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Sojat, Josip, Religion instructor at the state high school in Ogulin
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class.
Solc, O. Sidonije, Religion instructor in Virovitica
Order of the Crown of the King 1st class
Sporer, Ladislav, former pastor in Delnice
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Sveder, Rudolf, Prebendary from Dakovo
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Taljeran, Miro, Religion instructor in Dubrovnik
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Tkalcec, O. Kalasancije, Cloister administrator from Varadin
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Tomasev, Stipe, Pastor from Oslje
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Topic, O. Petar, Franciscan and instructor at the high school of Knin
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class.
Trbuha, Peter, Pastor of the parish of St. John in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Valic, Rikard, Pastor in Ogulin
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Varnaca, Bruno, Pastor from the former brigade of Kosinj
Bronze medal for bravery
Vlahov, O. Ambrozije, Priest of the order in Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 1st class
Vukina, Ivan, Pastor from Vinagora
Distinguished Service Medal 3rd class
Weiss, Rikard, Chaplain in Modrici
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir with swords 2nd class
Zimmerman, Dr. Stjepan, full professor on the Roman Catholic theological faculty in Zagreb
Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir 1st class with star
Zirdum, Ivan, Pastor from Boca, County Brcko
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Zlatolas, Josip, Religion instructor from Zagreb
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class
Zovko, Marko, Pastor of the parish in Stolac
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

Zubic, O. Silvestar, Religion instructor
Distinguished Service Medal 2nd class

(*Documents on the Antinational Work and Crimes of a Portion of the Catholic Clergy,* pp. 181–185, 190, 194–199.)

[. . .]

6

Pope Pius XII's Special Attention to Pavelić and the Ustasha State

From the first days of the Ustasha NDH to the end of the war, i.e., for four years, the Vatican and especially the pope showed their great prejudice for the Ustasha state.

The following interesting detail shows how Pope Pius XII felt personally in regard to the Ustasha state, which he purportedly never recognized: The *Osservatore Romano* reported that on 22 July 1941, i.e., three months after the occupation and the establishment of the NDH, a hundred Croatian security police were received by the pope. This is comparable to being an indirect recognition of the Ustasha puppet state by the official Vatican organ and the pope. This news was also distributed by the fascist news agencies Stefani and DNB. The report by the DNB says:

> Today, Wednesday (22 July 1941) his Holiness the Pope received along with newlyweds, Italian war victims, and Italian wounded, also one hundred Croatian security police, who were in Rome as guests of the Carabinieri.

These hundred Croatian security police were not innocent street-corner police, traffic cops, or any such thing. They are the elite of the Ustasha butchers. These are the hundred chosen criminals who under the personal direction of Eugen Kvaternik-Dido, the blood-stained chief of the Ustasha police, were in Italy for training. Among them was also the infamous Pecnikar. Kvaternik and Pecnikar, at the head of their criminal delegation, received the papal blessing. Just shortly before this they had carried out

STRANA 2. »HRVATSKI NAROD«

HRVATSKU ORUŽNIKI PRED SV. OTCA

PAPA PIJO XII. PRIMIO JE U AUDIJENCIJI HRVATSKE ORUŽNIKE, KOJI SU BILI NA IZOBRAZBI U ITALIJI

(Od našeg redovitog dopisnika).

RIM, 4. rujna. U četvrtak poslije podne primio je Sv. Otac Pio XII. u posebnoj audijenciji skupinu od 110 hrvatskih oružnika koji su bili na oružničkoj izobrazbi u Italiji. Njih je predveli mons. Madirec, rektor zavoda sv. Jeronima u Rimu i čelnik hrvatska časnika. Sv. Otac se zadržao s hrvatskim oružnicima u razgovoru, odlučivši svakoj pojedinca, zanimajući se za njegov rad i boravak u Italiji. Izjavio je, kako pozna Poglavnika dra Antu Pavelića. Na kraju je Sv. Otac podijelio svima oružnicima prigodne darove te apostolski blagoslov.

Umro njemački admiral Luchmann

BERLIN, 4. rujna. Prije je nedavno navršio 85 godina života umro je u Kielu admiral Luchmann. Luchmann se rodio 15 srpnja 1860 u Koninu u Mariensburgu, a 21. travnja 1887. stupio je u mornaricu. Kao mlad časnik sudjelovao je 1884. u kartaonu prilikom iskrcavanja u Kameruna. Vrlo poslije kasnije bio je u demonstrativnoj glavar stožera jednog sastava krstarica. Poslije je bio premaknut u čin kapetana bojnog broda, zapovjednika bojnim brodom »Hansa«. Poslije toga bio je glavar središnjeg ureda Mornaričkog ureda Reicha i konačno zapovjednik izviđačkih brodova. U svjetskom ratu bio je Luchmann najprije glavar Mornaričkog stožera a zatim do ruina 1918.

Commendatore Giovanni Gobbi dolazi opet u Zagreb

(Od našeg redovitog rimskog dopisnika)

RIM, 4. rujna. U Zagreb je premješten na svoje stalno mjesto generalnog konzula commendatore Giovanni Gobbi. Ova je vijest izazvala obrazloženje prijatelje generalnog konzula Gobbija, u Zagrebu gdje je kroz nekoliko godina svoga boravka ostavio dobar uspomenu kao prijatelj hrvatskoga naroda. Gobbi je nakon svoga premještaja iz Zagreba ostao u Rimu i nije kriomice u simpatija prema Hrvatsku.

Vaš je dopisnik imao prilike to i prije ustanoviti, a taj je svoj dojam utvrdio i ovih dana u razgovoru s g. Gobbijem. U njegovom salonu nalazi se veliko slika Kralja Hegedušića koja prikazuje izbore od 5 siječnja 1935. koju su generalnom konzulu Gobbiju bili darovali njegovi hrvatski prijatelji na odlasku iz Zagreba.

Generalni konzul Gobbi putuje u Zagreb skorih dana.

Gospodarske veze Argentine

BUENOS AIRES, 4. rujna. (Od našeg redovitog dopisnika)

Odjeci imenovanja u hrvatskoj državnoj vladi

UOČI SPRC

PRIPRAVE ZA ŽALOBNE SVEČANI U JUTRO. — SLUŽBU BOŽIJU V

SOFIJA, 4. rujna. Sad su već ustanovljene pojedinosti žalobnih svečanosti za cara Borisa, koje će se održati u nedjelju. Do subote u noći u jedan sat noćnu se biti pružena mogućnost mimohoda izred odra. Tada počinju pripreme za žalobnu svečanost u crkvi Aleksandra Nevskog. Od 6 sati u jutro čitat će se posmrtna misa. Velika služba Božja, kojoj će prisustvovati vlada inozemna odaslanstva i vojska počinje u 9.30 sati u stolnoj crkvi. Službu Božju vršit će 100 svećenika, medju kojima se nalazi 11 metropolita. Povorka sa smrtnim ostacima krenut će od stolne crkve Aleksandra Nevskog, preko glavne ulice Sofije do spomenika crkve Svete Nedjelje, a odatle na kolodvor. Pred dvorom izred crkve Svete Nedjelje i izred kolodvora povorka će se zaustaviti.

U međuvremenu je dovršena grobnica u Rilskom samostanu.

FILOV O CARU BORISU

SOFIJA, 4. rujna. — Stefani javlja: Za vrijeme izvanredne sjednice bugarskog Sabranja, koja je održana jučer prije po-

kojnom caru, ... ilju ostalim ...

»Još kao ... uvijek u ... borbi bugar... oslobodilačka ... sjedinjenje ... primjerom ... trovnosti, te ... zadrganost ... duše Bugara, ... u svoje ruke ... Njegova je ... simbolom ... koje je ... bugarski ... lovanje, na ... roda bilo je ... o njega ... iz vana ili iz ...

Car Boris ... nastojao, da ... skim narodom ... žavom u cilju ... i da je mog... stanja.

Tisućgodišn... viest ubilačal... vima sva ... on bili uvrši... predstavnike ... on ostvario ... narodnu slob... koljenja, te ... i čvrstu zajed... gorske države

Facsimile of the article in *Hrvatski narod* of 5 September 1943 about the reception of the Croatian police delegation with Pius XII.

massacres in Croatia with their gang. Once they were back in Croatia from their Carabinieri training and freshly blessed, they continued with their even more terrible "purges." This group of a hundred so-called security police was the nucleus of the Ustasha police, the "UNSA." They were the certified trainers of the butchers in the camps. In this case, too, Pope Pius XII had proven himself as unscrupulous in regard to his official neutral position. Later he once again blessed uniformed Ustashe, this time those Ustasha police on which he had already received horrifying information. But even as the pope was blessing Kvaternik-Dido, he was already in possession of several reports on this criminal, which were directed to him, the pope, and in which Kvaternik was mentioned by name. But Pius XII did not deny the bandit his "paternal blessing."

[. . .]

The nature of the Vatican's attitude toward the NDH becomes clear, among other things, from the fact that the pope named the Zagreb archbishop Stepinac as military vicar of the Pavelić-Ustasha army. For in doing so he expressed a de facto recognition of the NDH—he did not risk a de jure recognition at this time yet, in order to maintain an appearance of neutrality— and out of tactical considerations, simultaneously entertained diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia.

The above evidence shows that Pius XII had a special preference for Pavelić. This is also clear from a letter that Nikola Rusinovic, the "specially empowered" official of the Ustasha in the Vatican, wrote to the Ustasha foreign minister Mladen Lofkovic on 27 April 1942:

> I request that you inform the poglavnik that I have thanked the Holy Father through Maglione for the rosaries that he had sent to the poglavnik through Lobkowicz [Prince Erwin Lobkowicz, the successor to Rusinovic in Rome; author's note]. The cardinal was very happy about this and told me that he would gladly report it to the Holy Father.

Thus one sees that Pope Pius XII used every opportunity to show his "paternal affection" to the poglavnik, although he did not recognize the NDH "de jure." He let him know through "little signs" that he was thinking of him and he reinforced him through his support in the hope of one day receiving the de jure recognition.

In a letter of 4 February 1942, Rusinovic reported to Lorkovic on his visits with the Vatican secretaries Montini and Tardini. About Montini he wrote: "That is an important confidant of the Holy Father and the only member of the Roman Curia who reports to the Holy Father personally

twice a day, morning and evening. . . . At the Holy See, one says that Montini directs the Vatican." Montini explained to Rusinovic, "that the Holy Father loves the Croats [the Ustasha! Author's note] very much and is personally prepared to help us." Rusinovic writes further that Montini said upon leaving: "The Holy Father will help you. Be sure of that."

On 12 March 1942, the Ustasha-empowered Rusinovic, on the occasion of the anniversary of the crowning of Pope Pius XII, sent a telegram to the Vatican state secretary: "Upon the occasion of the third anniversary of the coronation, I ask His Excellency to give my cordial greetings to the Holy Father." In the answer we read: "The Holy Father thanks you for the greetings. He sends the apostolic blessing." Although the NDH was not yet recognized "de jure," telegrams were exchanged in accordance with diplomatic ceremony.

At the coronation festivities, Pavelić also congratulated the pope. Rusinovic informed Lorkovic of this in a letter of 20 March 1942 as follows:

> The *Osservatore Romano* brings the news that among the personages who congratulated the Holy Father was also Ante Pavelić, the Croatian head of state. That is, of course, only a little bit of news, but still of such importance that still on the same afternoon Nuncio Felici[1] sought me out and asked whether the news pleased me and how I interpreted it. He said that for anyone who knows Vatican politics, this was a kind of recognition of the NDH.

Later Pavelić and the pope frequently exchanged cordial telegrams. On New Year's Day 1943, Pavelić sent the pope a telegram, which the pope replied to with a blessing:

> Everything that you have expressed so warmly in your name and in the name of the Croatian Catholics we return gratefully and give you and the whole Croatian people our apostolic blessing.
>
> (*Katolicki list,* Nr. 3, 1943)

The telegrams from Pavelić to the pope were usually written in the same style as the message that he sent on 20 March 1944 on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the coronation of Pius:

> To His Holiness Pius XII., Vatican.—The Croatian people, who are again suffering a difficult struggle for the honor of the cross and for freedom while following the glorious example of their forefathers, in unity with their poglavnik, are honored to wish God's best for the fifth anniversary of Your blessed reign, Your Holiness and Father of all Christianity, to whose throne the peoples of the earth direct their eyes as to the heights from which salvation shall come for all, and wish for themselves the paternal blessing. Ante Pavelić.

The pope replied:

> The wishes that you and the Croatian people sent us at the conclusion of the fifth year of Our pontificate are very dear to Us. We will ask God's blessing for you.

The pope apparently had no fear of associating with the Ustasha regime. With this telegram he let Pavelić know that he, even if he could not recognize him "de jure," still asked God's blessing for him. He also wanted to impress the masses in Croatia. He was trying to commend them to Ustashadom as much as possible. By openly showing solidarity with Pavelić, he was intending to show the way to the Catholic faithful in Croatia.

The telegrams from Pavelić to the pope were in no way viewed in the Vatican as worthless and obtrusive. Cardinal Montini assured Lobkowicz explicitly that the pope was happy with them:

> In the end, he added that the Holy Father was delighted with the telegram from the poglavnik on the occasion of the anniversary of the coronation.
> (Letter to Lorkovic, 14 April 1943)

On 5 June 1943, the pope's name day, Pavelić sent him greetings and "expressed his devotion." The pope replied cordially by asking God's blessing "for the entire Croatian people."

All these telegrams were read from the pulpits and published in Church organs as well as elsewhere. Archbishop Stepinac commanded the priesthood to announce the papal blessing that he had received from the pope during his stay in Rome in May 1943. At that time, Stepinac had brought Pius a memorandum in which he asked him to intervene on the behalf of the Ustasha-NDH so that it would be able to continue after the war.

On another occasion, Pavelić sent a telegram to the pope in which he expressed his indignation that the American air force had bombed Rome.

In his answer, the pope wished him and the Ustasha God's favor and sent him his own blessing. The relationship between Pius XII and Pavelić's Ustasha regime is clear also in a very interesting passage in the correspondence between Lorkovic and Prince Erwin Lobkowicz, the successor to Rusinovic in the position of the authority in the Vatican. In a letter of 10 October 1942, Lobkowicz writes:

> The visit with the Holy Father: On 22 October I finally received an invitation to come to the Vatican in uniform. I was to be picked up by the Vatican vehicle so that I could exercise any assigned duty as chamberlain; then the audience was to follow. The Holy Father received me as usual with extra-

> ordinary good wishes and emphasized with an understanding smile that he was receiving me as his secret chamberlain. He said he hoped that this would soon change. I informed the Holy Father about the situation in Croatia, for which he showed a great, well intended interest and understanding.

The fact that Pavelić dropped Dr. Rusinovic and chose Prince Lobkowicz as go-between for the Vatican is of great significance. Lobkowicz was neither of Croatian nationality nor did he have a command of the Croatian language, and whenever he wrote a letter himself, it was only in German. His secretary formulated the Croatian reports. Pavelić had chosen him upon the expressed suggestion of the Vatican. Lobkowicz had already formerly been "Privy Chamberlain," had Vatican experience, and could move in those circles more easily than any other Ustasha without connections and Vatican grooming. The pope could receive him and converse with him without concern for diplomatic formalities, as with his "Privy Chamberlain."

The pope thus listened with "great, well intended interest and understanding" to whatever Lobkowicz told him about the Ustasha state. He did not criticize the Ustasha, but instead he "understood" them. He also had an "understanding" for Lobkowicz's special position. He received him as a chamberlain and indicated to him that he would soon receive him as a regular diplomatic representative of the Ustasha-NDH. In his letter of 20 December 1942 to Lorkovic, Lobkowicz again brought up the subject of the audience with Pope Pius XII. He wrote:

> (Cardinal) Montini asked me whether I was satisfied with my last audience with the Holy Father (which was the subject of the last report). From this question I could conclude that Montini himself had been the "arranger" of the above-mentioned audience. He was very happy when I told him that I was very satisfied as was also the poglavnik, to whom I had reported.

So everyone was satisfied—the pope, Cardinal Montini, Pavelić, and Lobkowicz. There was no reason for dissatisfaction; everything was completely in order, a regular idyll!

The pope's relationship to the Ustasha-NDH in general and specifically his position on Lobkowicz's mission is evident from the letter from Lobkowicz to Lorkovic on 14 April 1943, in which he writes about another audience:

> Official appearances. Because of my position as an "unrecognized" diplomatic representative, it is not possible for me to appear along with the other diplomats in the various festivities. In order to compensate for this somehow and to avoid the impression of isolation of the Croatian representative, I am invited

> to perform service as Privy Chamberlain at important festivities at which the diplomatic corps is present. I was thus present, for example, in papal accompaniment at the celebration of the anniversary of the coronation on 17 March at the procession of the Pope into the basilica of Saint Peter, and at the fast on Sunday, 11 April. When the Holy Father took leave from the attenders at the end of this festival, he approached me—contrary to all ceremonial custom—and said: "I am aware of this special significance of your presence here; have my special blessing." By this extraordinary kindness, the pope obviously wanted to impart a special honor to Croatia.

This text makes perfectly clear the tricks that the Vatican and even Pius XII himself had at their disposal in order to preserve the formal "neutrality" and at the same time to support the Ustasha state. The function of this chamberlain allowed Pavelić's ambassador to stay close to the pope, to whom he was thus closer than the other diplomats. Thus he was able to receive Pius's "special" blessing for the Ustasha state, which was so dear to him.

Pius XII, who—as we have already seen—by the granting of audiences and by the blessing of uniformed Ustasha troops and even of Ustasha camp police was clearly magnanimous, several times received various Ustasha formations. In a letter to Lorkovic, Lobkowicz writes on 20 December 1942:

> The audience of the female functionaries of the Ustasha youth with the Holy Father is likewise worth mentioning. It was the first audience that this office arranged. Up until now, that was the concern and duty—via facti—of the rector of the institute of Saint Hieronymus. The audience was set for a quite unusual time, when the Holy Father normally was not accustomed to receiving groups, but individuals who come in more or less utilitarian matters. The Ustasha functionaries were introduced by Monsignore Madjerac. The audience ran according to usual ceremony, and at the end the Holy Father cried out in the Croatian language: "Long live the Croats." At the end of February of this year, he did not do this at the audience of a group from the Croatian colony in Rome. If one notes that in the Vatican all actions and the most detailed words are thought out in advance, we can see in this a little progress. We can also call special attention to the fact that the "Osservatore Romano" registered this audience while heretofore it has not mentioned any Croatian audience.

Upon seeing a group of uniformed Ustasha lady functionaries, i.e., a military formation of one of the parties involved in war, Pius XII was so enthusiastic that he shouted in Croatian and broke with all past customs. The pope emphasized repeatedly that Pavelić's NDH was very dear to him and that it should "long live," i.e., it should continue. The pope received the Ustasha

lady functionaries at an unusual time, when usually only individuals were admitted who came in utilitarian matters. Lobkowicz maintained that even the *Osservatore Romano* had published the customary report and mentioned this audience in order to emphasize it. We, however, have seen that the Vatican organ had previously published similar events. Lobkowicz's remark is thus not completely correct.

Pius XII often proved his personal inclination toward Ustashadom and for the Ustasha military formations. In the report from Lobkowicz to Lorkovic of 9 February 1943, there is among other things the following interesting segment:

> The Serb dominion over the Croats could in no way be seen as a legal government, against which a rebellion would have been forbidden. The Yugoslav state itself is not a legal configuration. . . . It is clear that against such a dominion an armed rebellion is allowable. We have a classical proof of this in Franco's rebellion against the government of the People's Front. Although the Spanish government developed from proper elections and according to democratic sociologists was a legal government, the Catholic Church saw Franco's rebellion not only as allowed but in a certain regard saw it as her own concern. The offcial Spanish hierarchy with its well known letter directed to all bishops of the Catholic world was in complete solidarity with the rebellion, while the Vatican itself, the head of the Church, made it known in every way possible that it approved of Franco's rebellion and even publicly exposed that small number of Catholic faithful who sympathized with the Spanish People's Front. So when Franco's rebellion against a democratic, legal government was allowed according to Catholic principals, although it caused a sea of blood, why should the rebellion of the Catholic Ustasha movement against Belgrade not be allowed? All the more so since Belgrade in its program along with the destruction of the Croatian people planned the destruction of their historical mission, i.e., the destruction of Catholicism.

That is the most convincing presentation of the friendly relationships between the pope and Pavelić's movement and his support of this movement. It is the justification of the role that the Catholic Church played in Yugoslavia with the goal of encouraging all indecisive Catholic priests and all the faithful who were shy of the bloody Ustasha to enter into the Ustasha movement without fear and to follow their directives and to work for their criminal purposes. Especially significant are those arguments that justify the Ustasha's bloodletting and compare it to the blood baths that Franco caused in Spain. The Vatican sanctioned that and wished it. The Vatican betrayed those priests and faithful followers who were against bloodshed in Yugoslavia—logically.

The religious intolerance took on extreme forms. No wonder: after

all the head of the Croatian clergy was its promoter. The Zagreb archbishop Dr. Aloijzije Stepinac played an important role in this. It is worth illustrating precisely his position with documents, i.e., with his diary, which he kept during his time as bishop. It consists of five volumes.

In the first volume (pp. 2 and 3, 4 July 1934) Stepinac describes his stay in Belgrade on the occasion of the oath to King Alexander that he underwent upon being named archbishop coadjutor. On this occasion, he visited all the Catholic parishes in Belgrade and drew this conclusion: "If freedom were greater and there were sufficient workers [i.e., priests, editor's note], Serbia would be Catholic in 20 years." One sees that this high prelate was also dreaming of an expansion of papal dominion in the Balkan.

Stepinac's note on 12 October 1939 (volume III, p. 365) after a conversation with Macek is also significant:

> You can see everywhere that we still have a lot of work to do with Belgrade, and because of their (i.e., the Serbs') dishonesty, one need not be surprised if someday there is a final break between the Croats and the Serbs. It is sad, but everything points to the correctness of the proverb that says that you can trust the Wallachs no more than you can measure the sea.

On 27 March 1941, a putsch against the government of Cvetkovic-Macek was carried out in Belgrade, which had made the three-way pact with Hitler and Mussolini and had also committed Yugoslavia to the Nazi-fascist war plan. The people rose against it and the people's revolution began. The Catholic Church, however, which along with Nazi fascism had its own plans for the destruction of Yugoslavia in a "peaceful" manner, did not approve this! For this reason, Stepinac wrote in his diary on 27 March 1941 (volume IV, pp. 172 f.):

> But in all that (i.e., in the attack on the state) it is again clear that Serbia and Croatia are two different worlds who will never agree as long as both exist. The spirit of Byzantinism is so terrible that only the almighty and all-knowing God is in a position to fend off the intrigues and deceptions of these people. For us it is somewhat incomprehensible that contracts and obligations are broken without any sort of scruples.

This anti-Serbian hatred for religious reasons also appears in the abovementioned report from Lobkowicz to Lorkovic:

> . . . On Sunday, 31 January, I was received along with my family by the Holy Father in a special audience that lasted a half hour. The pope was decidedly friendly and expressed his joy over the letter sent to him by our

> poglavnik and which I had delivered according to the protocol of the cardinal, the state secretary, along with the Latin translation of the Ustasha principles. This indication of attentiveness pleased the Holy Father apparently very much. He was especially interested in the work of our Ustasha youth, about which my oldest daughter gave him various information. . . . In the later conversation, the Holy Father told me he regretted that it was not generally known who the most important, sole, and real enemy of Europe is and that there was no common crusade undertaken against Bolshevism. This utterance can make one marvel when one knows of the past reserve that the pope has shown in this matter.

Pius XII was happy about the letter that Pavelić sent him. He received the mentioned Ustasha principles in Latin, the program of the Ustasha slaughter movement which "apparently" also "pleased" him. Thereupon he spontaneously turned to Lobkowicz's daughter, showed interest in the work of the Ustasha youth, and probably heard some stimulating information that inspired him to critical decisions. And in the whole process there was no objection to Ustashadom, not one, not even the mildest criticism!

Pavelić wanted to and intended to visit the pope once more personally. Although there was in the Vatican the greatest inclination toward him, there were still for a while some scruples because of the "neutrality" thing. A renewed visit from Pavelić would have been a greater matter than a telegram or any other sort of indication of good relationships. Pavelić's visit with the pope in May 1941 had caused some very sharp criticism in a part of the confederate press. Pius did not want this to be repeated and did not want himself to be subject to a renewed criticism because of Pavelić. He therefore decided to send Marcone and Lobkowicz ahead and to avoid a personal encounter with Pavelić. Marcone and Lobkowicz, however, sought a compromise. They did not have the heart to reject Pavelić! In a letter from Lobkowicz to Lorkovic on 18 May 1943, there is the following interesting passage:

> In connection with the visit of the poglavnik, who is expected here, we discussed the question of his audience with the Holy Father. I let him know that the poglavanik—in case he were to come to Rome—would very much like to visit the Holy Father. Since he knows that such a visit could be associated with unpleasantness, he would like to hold the meeting with the Duce at a diffrent site if possible; in any case, this would depend exclusively on the Italian government. The cardinal [Maglione, author's note] said that he would speak to the Holy Father about it. He is convinced that there are basically no diffculties standing in the way of a visit from the poglavnik with the Holy Father. He said he could merely not be received as a head of state. The cardinal added that he regrets very much not being able to see the

> poglavnik himself on this occasion, because this could be interpreted as an abandonment of the carefully emphasized Vatican policy of unconditional reserve.

Although Pavelić's visit exposed the Vatican's "neutrality" (which otherwise had been exposed frequently anyway) and therefore was not a simple matter, although it would have been preferable to the Vatican if Pavelić had not even wanted to come, he was nevertheless to be received. So an audience for this notorious bandit caused no "basic difficulties" for the pope. But he would not be received as a head of state, but again as a "private individual." The matter was so disguised that Maglione could not see him formally, so that it would not look like Pavelić was being received by the state secretary as a head of state. It is very interesting that there were "no basic difficulties" when the perpetrator of countless crimes in Croatia was received. Perhaps because he came to the pope not as a "head of state" but as a "private individual"? But how was it that one forgot that precisely this "private individual" had been sentenced by a French court for the murder of the head of the Yugoslav state, with whom the Vatican entertained normal diplomatic relationships?

Ultimately there was no meeting between Pavelić and Pius XII, because Pavelić did not have an opportunity to come to Rome. He was waiting for an opportunity to combine the meeting with the pope with a visit with Mussolini. Mussolini had greater problems at that time. He more and more turned Croatia over to Hitler's influence, because the defeat of Italy in Africa was taking shape; soon the allies' invasion and the consequent collapse of the Italian empire and of fascism was to follow. Because of the above-mentioned reasons of consideration, Pavelić dropped the idea of visiting the pope alone.

In the spring of 1943, some months before the collapse of Italian fascism—i.e., at a time when the development of the war situation must have been clear to the Vatican—there were still noteworthy situations in which Pius XII made his real attitude toward Ustashadom known. One of these events was the audience of the Ustasha Werner, the mayor of the city of Zagreb, who called on the pope on 11 April 1943. In a letter of 14 April, Lobkowicz informed Lorkovic how this audience was arranged. Although the date had come about suddenly and surprisingly, although it was normally objectionable to the Vatican when audiences were requested at certain dates, and although the pope had just recovered from an illness shortly beforehand and was very busy, the audience for Werner was organized willingly. No doubt that this had to be seen as an indication of special preference for the Ustasha state and was also understood as such by the Ustashe. Lobkowicz mentioned all this and continued:

> During the procession through the halls, the guard granted him all respect. At the entrance to the Clementine Hall, the Swiss guard stepped into rank and file. Such honors are usual only in very rare cases. We had not expected them at all. Even less so had we expected that the pope would hold the audience in the "hall of the little throne" which is right next to his study. In this room he otherwise receives only heads of state. The pope appeared at precisely 11 o'clock, as was announced in the invitation. He greeted our group in the Croatian language with "Long may you live!" Then he shook hands with everyone and gave everyone a silver rosary. Thereupon he spoke to the mayor aside and in German blessed him and his family. The mayor, however, interrupted the Holy Father and asked him for a blessing for the city of Zagreb, whereupon the pope added. "In my blessing is included everything that you want to be included." Thereupon the pope withdrew without having entered upon any conversation, apparently from fear of getting involved in politics. Upon his departure, the mayor and his retinue were again given military honors from the royal guard, the Vatican gendarmes of the Palatina, and from the Swiss guard. . . . Apparently they wanted to compensate the brevity of the audience with honors that were otherwise not usual in order to show that they have nothing against us. Monsignore Montine, Pius's right hand, told me that the pope himself had surely arranged that the mayor be received. Our expectations were all the more exceeded when in the fall of 1941 the delegation of the Ustasha youth asked for an audience and got it, but afterwards did not appear. This made a very bad impression, especially since the pope had prepared to greet the delegation with a special speech.

This reveals the special respect that Pius XII showed Ustashadom, even when it was a matter of the little mayor Werner. He appeared in his Ustasha uniform with all the medals from Pavelić. That did not prevent the pope from granting him every honor and greeting him in Croatian with the cry "Long may you live!" Werner could include anything he wanted in the blessing, even the Ustasha slaughters. The pope had thus cleverly solved the problem by giving him a blank check, so to speak.

[. . .]

One of the most important Ustasha audiences with the pope is the one from David Simcic, the "general administrative head of the command of the 2nd armada," who bore the rank of an Ustasha minister. This audience took place on 9 July 1943 shortly before the collapse of fascism and Italy's capitulation. It took place, as Lobkowicz writes in a letter to Lorkovic on 13 July 1943, "upon his request, upon the request of the Italian circles from his retinue, and finally upon our request, because we viewed this

audience for various reasons as very appropriate and useful." In addition it says:

> it is of significance that the invitation was directed to him as minister with all the titles appropriate to him in his position. It was the first time that the Vatican acted thus; up until then, all Croatian personalities were received only as private individuals without any formal consideration for their position. Also on the invitation to the Zagreb mayor stood simply "sig. Ivan Werner."

Simcic described his audience with the pope in a manner as is described in the following letter from Lobkowicz to Lorkovic:

> I was received in the Sala della tronetta, directly next to the pope's study. Upon my arrival and upon passing through the Vatican halls, the guards and the courtiers granted one all honors, as for a minister of a recognized (!) state. The papal Maestro di camera, Monsignore Arborio Mella di San Elia, greeted me very cordially and led me into the room in which the audience was to take place. When the pope entered the room, I asked him for his blessing. After he had granted me that, the Holy Father entered upon a cordial and friendly conversation. He asked me how the Croatian people were bearing the difficulties of the war and whether they were obliged to suffer much. I replied that the Croats were certainly feeling the misery of war but that I would hope that humanity, after so many attacks on Christian principles, would nevertheless come to the just peace that would bring justice and happiness to all peoples and also to the Croatian people. I told him that the Croatian people unfortunately lived in an area in which the interests of great powers were colliding and that I, however, held the hope that these powers some day would show an understanding for justice and the interests of the Croatian people. The Holy Father asked me what my goal was in my work. I replied that my work was serving the struggle, to help the people, and to convince Italy of the necessity of fully understanding the interests of the Croatian people and of the Croatian state, because I was sure that the Italians as Catholics and as very sensitive people understood and comprehended our desires and needs better than anyone else. Therefore, I am a friend of Italy. I noted that this made the pope very happy, because he added. "It is true that the Italian people have a bigger heart (*di un piu ampio cuore*) than many others." In addition the Holy Father asked me whether the Croats felt the split of interests between Italy and Germany as much as did the Slovenes (one day before this, the bishop of Ljubljana, Dr Gregor Rozman, had been in an audience with the Holy Father). I replied that we felt the split but that the Germans as well as the Italians recognized Croatia's sovereignty. As the conversation continued, I described to the pope the work of the Catholic organization "Caritas," which in dire circumstances had aided the hungry and displaced Croats very much. The pope was very

> interested in this and praised the Zagreb archbishop in general. Toward the end of the conversation, the pope said that the Croats were a good Catholic people. To his great pleasure, he had had the opportunity to speak with the poglavnik, about whom he had heard to his great satisfaction from all sides that he was a practicing Catholic. I confirmed this and expressed my hope that the poglavnik would soon come to Italy. I said I was convinced that it was his desire to be permitted to ask the papal blessing upon this occasion. Thereupon the pope replied: "And I will gladly do that upon this occasion!" After he had again blessed me and my work, he asked that God grant a just peace to the whole world and to all small peoples as soon as possible.

Lobkowicz added:

> We considered the words of the Holy Father, with which he expressed his willingness to see the poglavnik, as extraordinarily significant, because they could be interpreted as a change in the attitude of the Vatican in this matter as presented in our reports. . . .

Monsignore Montini, however, explained in reply to Lobkowicz's question that the possible visit from Pavelić would still remain "private."

The description of the audience with David Simcic reveals once again the sympathy that Pius XII had for Pavelić and Ustashadom. He gladly noted that Pavelić was a "practicing Catholic." He remembered his first encounter with him and very much wanted to grant him his blessing again. . . . He made not one word of criticism to the Ustasha minister for the two bloody Ustasha years in Croatia, for the horrible massacres and the terrible crimes. To the pope it is a "consolation" that Pavelić is a "practicing Catholic." All else is completely unimportant! It is also of note that all of this took place at the time of the great turn in the war and directly before Italy's capitulation, when Pius XII could see the general international situation quite clearly and could really speak completely frankly with the Ustasha representatives. Nevertheless, he continued to reckon with the "dear Croats," who were playing a special role in the Balkan in the sense of the Vatican's ancient interests.

It is perfectly clear that Pius XII showed great predilection and great interest for Pavelić and the Ustashe and wanted to grant aid to the fascist regime in Croatia. From all of our arguments and from the documents, it is clear that the pope helped the Ustashe much more than even they had expected at first.

There was neither a formal nor a de-facto recognition of the NDH, but events accumulated that illustrate clearly that the Vatican did not hesitate when it came to showing sympathy for the Ustashe.

In August of 1941, there were finally direct relationships between Pavelić's Ustasha state and the Vatican, when the pope sent his legate Marcone to Zagreb. He confirmed hereby that the reports from Stepinac and the conversation with Pavelić had satisfied him, that the events in Croatia were not contradictory to his principles, and that now all barriers to recognizing the NDH at least de facto were eliminated. In the fourth volume of Stepinac's diary we find on page 323:

> On 3 August at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the papal legate came, his excellency Ramiro Marcone, with the secretary Giuseppe Massucci from Rome. At first he resided with the fathers of the convent of the Holy Spirit. The archbishop visited him as soon as he learned of his arrival and invited him to stay in the palace. On 6 August, they moved into the palace. His excellency, the legate, was quickly received in an audience with the poglavnik. Therewith the Holy See recognized the independent State of Croatia de facto; the de-jure recognition, however, has not yet happened.

We will speak later about the figure of the papal legate Marcone and the role that he played. It is precisely his activity that will illuminate the character of the relationships between the Vatican and the Ustashe in many respects.

(*Secret Documents on the Relationships between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH,* pp. 46–55, 36-37)

Note

1. Felici was nuncio in Belgrade and in this function maintained relationships with the Ustashe. He assured them that the Vatican would recognize them.

PART TWO

MASSACRES AMONG DISSENTERS IN THE "KINGDOM OF GOD"

7

"The Ustasha State, State of Catholicism"

Within the borders of the Ustasha NDH, there were approximately 5 million Catholic Croats, about 1.9 million Orthodox Serbs, and about 250,000 Moslems. Already in the first days of the enemy occupation and of the fascist Ustasha reign of terror, began a harrassment of the Orthodox inhabitants of the NDH. The Orthodox Serbs were declared illegal and enemies of the Ustasha NDH. Their gruesome liquidation was decided and prepared. It was intended to murder a part of the Orthodox Serbs, to send another part to Serbia, and to convert the rest to the Catholic faith in order to thus make Catholics and Croats of them. The position of the Ustasha NDH regarding the Orthodox Serbs is traceable back to the first Ustasha leaders, the ministers Budak, Zanic, and Puk, the main cohorts of Pavelić in the early days of the NDH.

On 6 June 1941 at an Ustasha meeting in Krizevci, Mile Budak spoke about the question of the liquidation of Orthodoxy. The meeting began with a mass, which gave Budak the opportunity to bring up the notion that the Ustasha state was "a state of Christianity." He said: ". . . we are a state of two religions, Catholicism and Islam." He ranted against the Orthodox Serbs, who were intruders in Croatia and enemies of the Croatian people. The Serbs would push the boundary post of Orthodoxy from east to west to the detriment of Catholicism:

> But if God wants, that boundary post will disappear from the Croatian state, because one cannot establish borders of foreign fields.

In a speech in Karlovac on 13 June 1941, Budak said:

> The whole work of the poglavnik is a chain of events, deeds, and sacrifices based on divine providence and necessarily leading to success, as was the case on 10 April when the NDH was proclaimed.

In Budak's depicting the poglavnik as the executor of divine will, he presented Ustashadom as a movement whose every action was in the interest of the Catholic Church. Ustashadom was to purify Croatia of Orthodoxy. Budak also said:

> We who have studied history know that the Almighty has placed a border along the Drina between two worlds.
>
> There arose the greatest church since the creation of the world, namely the Catholic Church. And there arose also the greatest empire that has ever been, namely the Roman Empire. The Drina is the border between east and west . . . , which is why we got the title *Ante Morale Christianitatis*. . . . All our work is based on our submission to the Church and to the Catholic faith. For history has taught us that we would have long since disappeared if we were not Catholics.

In Vukovar on 8 July 1941, Budak called the Serbs in Croatia "intruders" from the east, who had been brought along by the Turks as servants and carriers in their raids:

> They only belong to the Orthodox Church, and it has not worked for us to assimilate them. They should, however, know that our solution is: bow down or get out.

In Pakrac on 20 July 1941, Budak said: "With the Wallachs, eat only half the bowl. Before you eat the other half, slay him with the bowl or else he will slay you."

Some days later at a meeting in Gospic, Budak said:

> We will kill one part of the Serbs, the other part we will resettle, and the remaining ones we will convert to the Catholic faith and thus make Croats of them.

The minister of the Ustasha government, Milovan Zanic, spoke in Nova Gradiska (according to the Ustasha paper *Novi List* of 3 June 1941):

> This must be a country of Croats and of no one else, and there is no method that we as Ustashe will not use in order to make this country truly Croatian

> and to cleanse it of Serbs, who would threaten us at the first chance. We do not hide this fact. That is the policy of this state, and when we carry it out we will act only according to the principles of the Ustashe.

Zanic spoke on this occasion of the fact that the Ustasha state would settle the areas purged of Serbs with Croats from America. "They will occupy the home hearth that we will have cleansed." Ustasha justice minister Mirko Puk, in his speech in Krizevci on 6 June 1941, ranted against the Serbs most harshly: "Either you get out of our land voluntarily or we will force you out." The Ustasha bandits, whose highest representatives we have quoted, were convinced that their treatment of the Orthodox Serbs would please the Catholic Church. From the first day of their brutal and criminal liquidation of the Orthodox inhabitants of Croatia, they counted on the greatest possible support of the Catholic Church. The Ustasha interpretation of the cooperation of the Vatican with the Ustashe was iterated by Budak in Ivanac on 3 August 1941 with the following words:

> One should remember that the Catholic Church, which is neither a terrorist organization nor led by imbeciles, undertook six crusades for the liberation of Christ's grave. And it even went so far as children undertaking crusades. If this was the case in the 11th and 12th centuries, we are sure that the Church also understands the Ustasha struggle.

Budak said this shortly after Pavelić's visit with the pope, at which time he himself was in Pavelić's retinue. The fact that Ustashadom had found sympathy in the Vatican and also with the clergy in Croatia, is proven by the rich chronicle of cooperation from both sides during the occupation years. There is an abundance of proof-laden documentation on this subject, which testifies to it and cannot be denied.

This concept pervaded from top to bottom, right down to the simplest priests, and fired their fanaticism and Ustasha chauvinism. Many priests spoke like the pastor from Udbina, Mate Mogus:

> Until now we have worked for the Catholic faith with the prayer book and with the cross. Now the time has come to work with rifle and revolver.
>
> (*Novi List* of 24 July 1941)

The organ of the archbishopric of Sarajevo, *Katolicki tjednik,* of 15 June 1941 ranted against the Orthodox Serbs by bringing up "the Ustasha rebellion," i.e., the criminal activity against the Serbs as a phenomenon that was completely in harmony with the position of the Church:

> The rebellion of the poglavnik was doubtless a special object of divine providence, and through it, it was also planted in his heart and allowed him ultimately to accomplish such wonderful results. The rebellion of the poglavnik is so welcome precisely because it stands in the service of justice and is totally directed against evil. . . . For the Croatian people, the Serbs are the biggest enemies, to which, as in the rest of Europe, we can add the Jews, the Free Masons, and the communists. . . . Therefore: may we finally stop using the dumb claim, so unworthy of the followers of Christ, that one should fight against evil and against ruinous people in a polite and elegant manner. Hildebrandt, the simple Benedictine monk filled with holy rage, and also Pope Gregory VII purged the Church of many parasites, not with elegance but with a strong hand directing the holy revolution. The poglavnik is a courageous man, a great man, a man of God and of the people. May the dear Lord preserve our poglavnik for a long life! And may He preserve him always ready for action in the holy revolution against all evil!

Such was the way that the leadership of the Catholic Church in the NDH saw the persecution of the Orthodox Serbs, and this was the way they gave moral support to the barbarism and justified it as God's desire and beneficial to the Church.

8

The Participation of Vatican Clergy in the Mass Murders of Serbs

In January 1942, the Holy See appointed Archbishop Stepinac as military vicar for the army of the Ustasha.

Affdavit of the militia-ministerial work
Presidium of the Bishops Conferences
Nr. 22/BK-1942

To the Reverend Archbishop Ordinarius in Sarajevo

It is an honor for me to inform the worthy recipient that I have been appointed by the Holy See to the position of military vicar "sine titulo" for the Croatian army. As my representatives I have appointed the Reverend Stipe Vucetic, the minister of the chief staff in the ministry of the Croatian militia, and the Reverend Vilim Cecelj, the representative of the minister of the chief staff in the ministry of the Croatian militia. For this purpose, I have transferred to them the necessary affdavit with all authorizations that were given me by the Holy See.

I have also appointed militia-clergy and have given them the pastoral affdavits.

In order to avoid any misunderstandings in the jurisdiction between the ordinaria of the diocese and the military clergy, the Holy See has extended to me the decree concerning the jurisdiction of the military ordinarius for the Italian army (See the Congr. Consistr. of 13 April 1940, AAS, 1940, 280; the Croatian translation of the decree is enclosed). This pertains particularly to points 2, 3, 6, and 5 of this decree, in which is described the responsibilities of the military clergy and their relationship to the diocese

ordinaries and the relationship of the diocese ordinaries to the military clergy and the military ministerial caretakers.

You will later be informed by the chancellery of the military vicarage in the ministry of the Croatian militia concerning which military ministerial workers will be active in their territory.

Zagreb, 20 January 1942

Dr. Alojzije Stepinac
Chair of the Bishops Conference

(Vladimir Dedijer archives)

In the early days of the NDH government, a part of the Catholic clergy took over the organization and arming of the Ustasha militia in the individual cities and towns, from which military Ustasha formations were recruited. This part of the Ustasha priests voluntarily followed Pavelić's call and actively participated in the build-up and strengthening of the war spirit of the Ustasha units. As military clergy, they accompanied the units on their expeditions, encouraged them in all their marauding and murdering actions to commit bloody crimes, and they themselves served as examples.

In Yugoslavia and in the whole world, the gruesome crimes of the Ustashe and militia units are well known. Military clergy regularly accompanied their units in such criminal undertakings.

But there is known not one single public protest from the military priests and their highest curacies, with which they would have condemned the activities of the military units. It is also not known that the high ecclesiastical offices ever punished any military priest, in whose presence and with whose approval crimes were committed against our people. All military clergy were under the supervision of the military curacy that was founded in 1941 in the ministry of the army of the NDH. Pavelić established them upon the suggestion of Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, the archbishop and apostolic military vicar.

The armed Ustasha formations accepted as military clergy only priests who were trusted Ustasha volunteers. But also for the remaining units in the NDH, military priests were recruited from the ranks of the volunteers. From the files of the military clergy of the ministry of the armed forces for the NDH, it is clear that many more people reported for military service than was necessary.

For the fact that the Catholic clergy to a great extent was loyal to the occupational Ustasha regime and was ready to fight for this regime with weapon in hand and for this purpose ready to join the Ustasha formations voluntarily, the following original letter from the "Ustasha Staff Cetina-Split" gives the best proof:

Facsimile of the communication of the Ustasha staff Cetina-Split from which it is evident that 21 priests and monks volunteered for service in the Ustasha army

Ustasha-Croatian Liberation Movement
Ustasha Staff Cetina-Split
Nr. 1236/44
Split, 14 August 1941
Re: Affidavits for the members of the Frankonian Provincial Government.
To the Frankonian Provincial Government Dobri

Affdavits for acceptance into military priesthood have been filed for Prof. Dr. Jeronim Setko, Frater Vjeko Susnjara, Frater Bernardin Liberjak, Frater Ambroz Budimir, Frater Krsto Susnjara, Frater Ante Beslic, Frater Joakim Friganovic, Frater Mirko Covic, Frater Ivan Bilusic, Frater Franjo Nimac, Frater Gavro Nikolic, Frater Vjekoslav Vrcic, Frater Paulin Vukovic, Frater Augustin Babic, Frater Josip Jankovic, Frater Ivan Sarmardzija, Frater Ivan Nandac, Frater Ivan Abrus, Frater Franjo Bilokapic, Frater Bernard Medvedovic.

For the poglavnik and the homeland—prepared!

Adjutant for administration
Zdenko Dupin

Representing the Chief of Staff
Engineer Nikola Simetic

The priests in the army of the NDH who always accompanied the units had various functions, among which was the blessing of weapons.

Upon the occasion of the departure of the ship *Hrvatska Mornarica* to the Black Sea, where the Ustashe were intending to fight against the Red Army "shoulder to shoulder with the German associates," a celebration was held in Zagreb in which the high Catholic clergy took part with the Zagreb archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac at the head.

Along with the fulfilling of their military ministerial duties, Catholic priests also assumed various military tasks and sometimes had the rank of commanding officer in the Ustasha militia.

The leadership of the NDH valued the enormously great help that they got from these Catholic priests in their bloody work, and thus they were rewarded accordingly for their services. Many priests and especially military clergy asserted the authority of their priestly office and the Church in order to contribute as much as possible to the realization of the Ustasha's criminal plans. Military clergy held fervent propaganda speeches in order to entice the farmers into the Ustasha units. In the army they incited national and religious hate, at first against the Serbs and later against the people's liberation movement. Especially great were their efforts in the army units, where they incited the soldiers to fight unrelentingly against the people's liberation movement. Many military priests took part in the battles and the raids of the armed units of the NDH in order to give the soldiers an example. The military priests persisted up to the end and advocated unrelenting resistence right up to shortly before the defeat, and in doing so, they fought in the battles with rifle in hand. Some Franciscan cloisters became regular fortresses from which the units of the Yugoslav army were opposed doggedly. According to documents from Ustasha sources, Catholic priests were the pillars of the formation and the defense of the Ustasha NDH.

The clero-fascist newspaper *Hrvatska smotra* (Zagreb, Nr. 7-10/1943) published a treatise by Dr. Ivo Guberina, a priest and leader of the Catholic Action and also captain in Pavelić's bodyguard. He explained with scientific pretensions the necessity and practicality of eradicating or converting the Serbs and cites Catholic morality.

On the subject of the annihilation of the Serbs, Guberina expounds:

> Certain elements in Croatia, who in the days of Yugoslavia had the task of devouring the state and national organism of Croatia and to make it unfit for life and especially to make it unfit for the role for which providence has destined it (being the outpost of Catholicism against the east), have also remained in the Croatian organism even after the fall of Yugoslavia without having changed even one iota of their anti-Croatian stance. It is the natural right of the Croatian state and of the Croatian people to cure its organism

> of this poison. The Ustasha movement has assumed this task. It uses methods that any doctor would use to cure the organism: where it is required, he performs the necessary operations.
>
> The Ustasha movement would most prefer these heterogenous and now hostile elements to be quietly but voluntarily assimilated or to remove the entire poison from the organism (i.e., to resettle them into their mother land). But when such elements cannot be assimilated but choose to stay in the organism in order to destroy it with their "Fifth Column," or, even worse, to carry on an armed battle, then they are opponents to all principles of Catholic morality, and the state of Croatia has the right to annihilate these opponents even with the sword.

This means that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church approved the elimination of the Serbs only because of their reluctance to be assimilated, i.e., to be converted and become Catholic. According to Guberina, these "elements" would deserve being annihilated just because they chose to cling to their faith and their nationality. It is, of course, even worse that they would pursue armed battle, but even if they would not do this, they would have to be eliminated.

The criminal interpretation of the Catholic concept of morality is expressed fully in the following sentence:

> Against such opponents, defense with the sword is allowed, and if it must be, a preventive defense without waiting for the moment of attack.

What does this mean if not the demand to slaughter a perfectly peaceful populace for "preventive reasons"! In time they could arrive at the idea of fighting; the children could grow up and then also be dangerous, which is why the slaughter of the children is appropriate for "preventive reasons." All Serbs should be killed "without waiting for the moment of attack." All this is called "defense." The emphasis is, however, on the "sword," with which the peaceful Serb populace is to be killed for "preventive" reasons! All this is justified by the Catholic concept of morality.

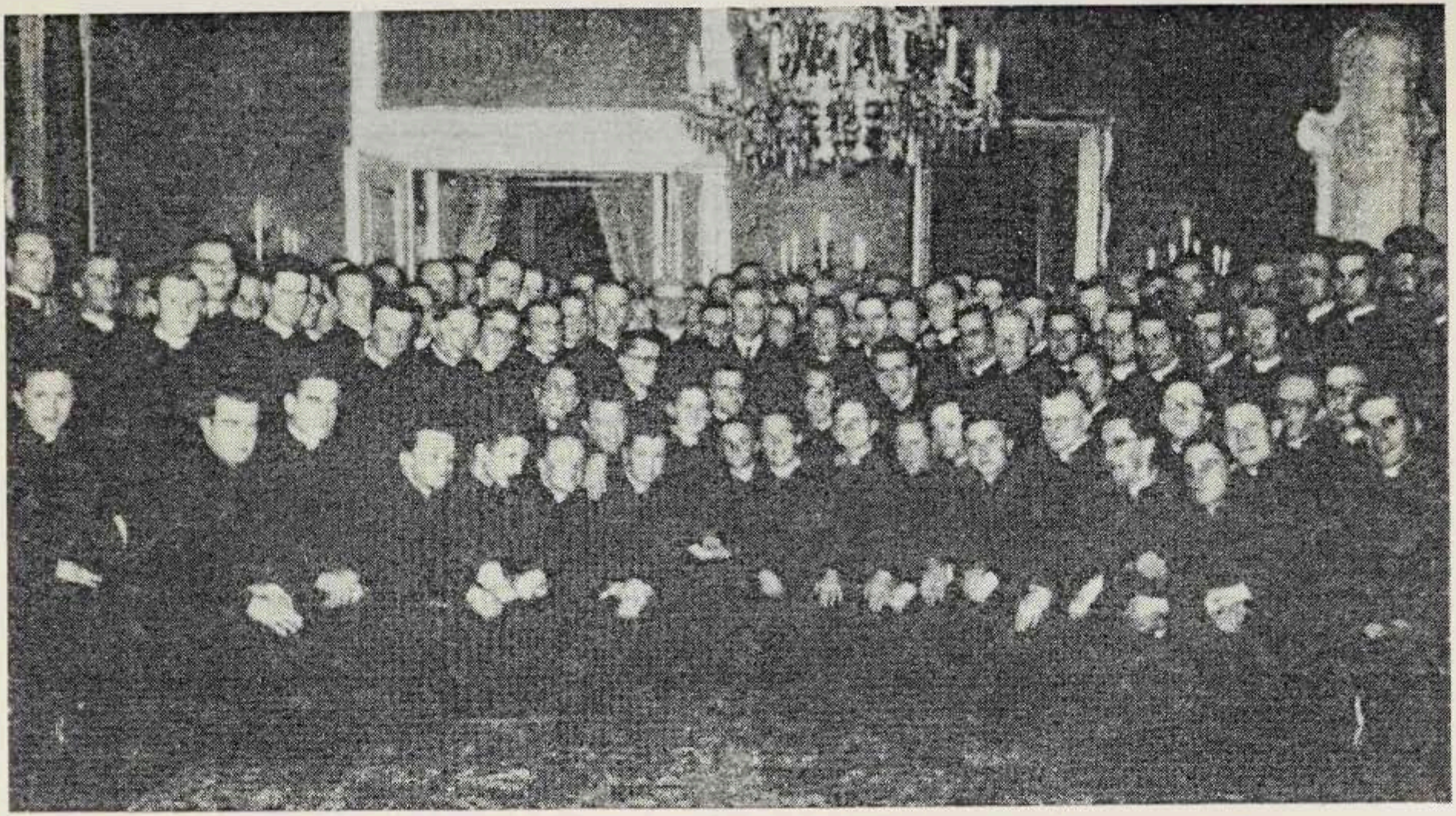
According to Guberina's opinion, those Catholics are in error who condemn the Ustasha movement because of their criminal methods, which he calls "decisive operations":

> These are principles on which even natural law depends, and therefore every Catholic is duty bound by his conscience to carry them out and to see to it that they are converted into action as the Ustashe have undertaken under present circumstances, to look after their execution in Croatia. Anyone who chooses to stand in the way is not aware of his Catholic calling. . . . Under these circumstances, it is a sin against the creator to stand by inactively in

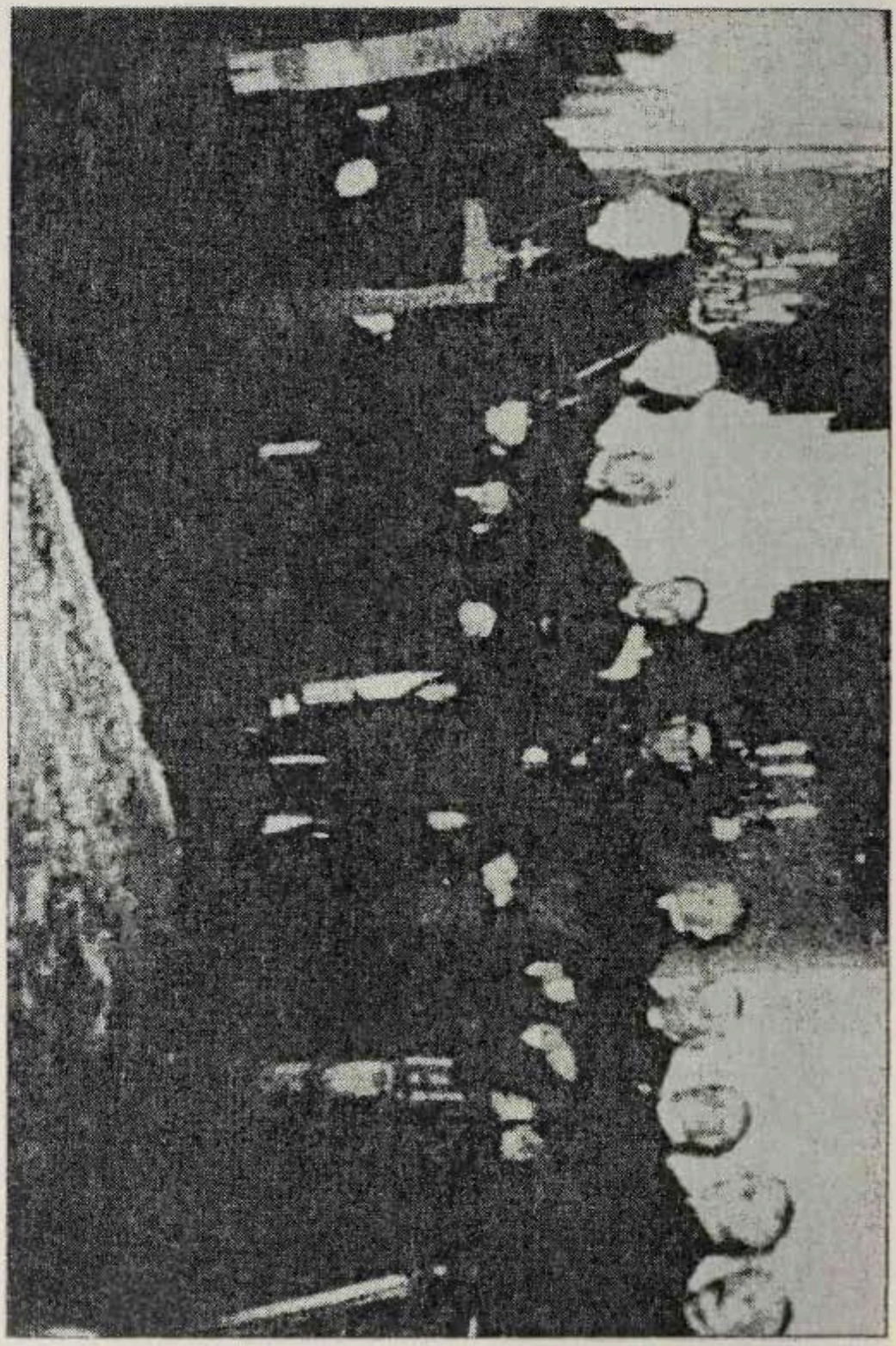
> the fateful battle. It would be a regular betrayal of God's affairs to fight on the side of the opponents. . . . The opportunity has come to the Croatian Catholics to show what great defenders of God they are. A Catholic is not a professional critic nor an intellectual dwarf, but a man who uses every opportunity in the brave struggle to carry the matter to victory. It is the duty of every Catholic to do anything to further the essence and the goodness in the Ustasha movement. . . . It is a religious obligation to support the Ustasha movement. . . . The Church is pleased when the follower fights consciously in the ranks of the Ustasha movement, which according to its tradition and leadership, but especially in its program strives for that social and political condition in which the Church can exercise its mission freely.

There were numerous priests who personally murdered, slaughtered, tortured, and personally committed the most horrifying bestialities. Guberina was not only bloodthirsty, but also a maniac in his writing, and thus did he leave us the above document, which not only characterizes his criminal personality precisely, but also characterizes the ranks from which he came and to which he belonged. As a Doctor of Theology, he was one of the ideologues of the clero-fascism, a head of this band, with the intention of sometime becoming bishop.—Did none of his Church superiors do anything against this priest's defending in black and white the bestial slaughter of innocent men, women, and children? Did no one take him to task when he read this paper, in which murder is justified with the Catholic position on morality and the Vatican line of higher Church interests? Guberina formulated his criminal views with too much assuredness, with too much openness and determination to assume that he did not do it with the knowledge and approval of higher offices.

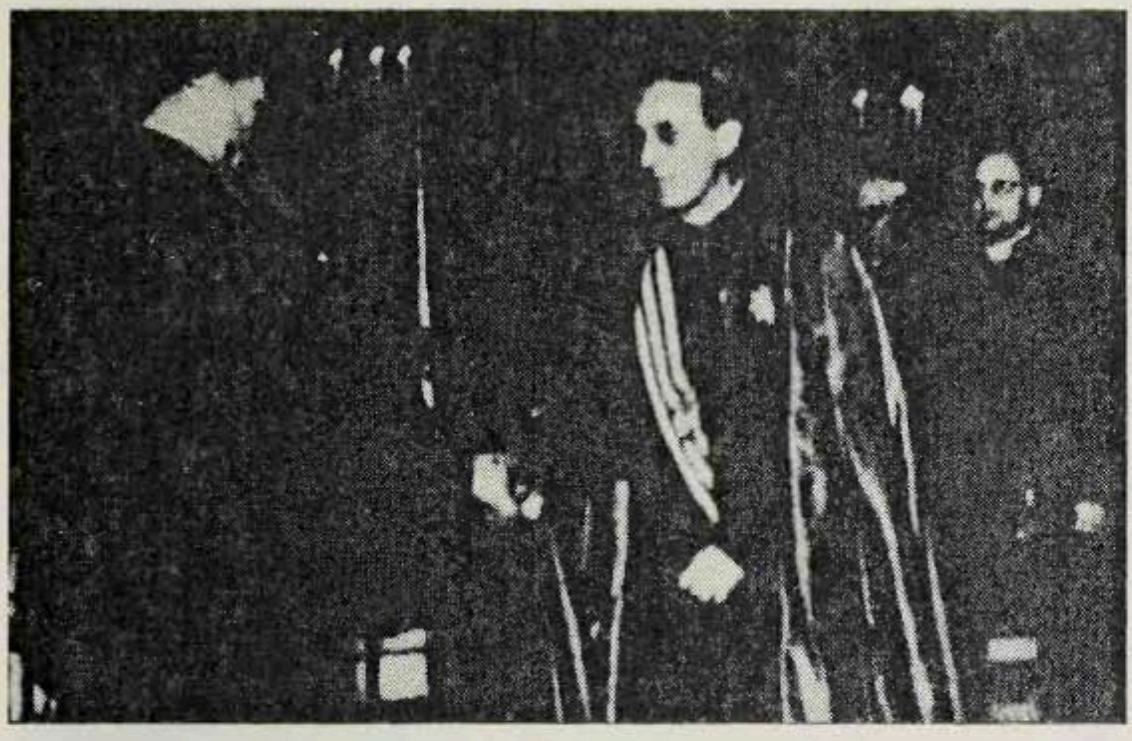
(*Secret Documents on the Relationship of the Vatican and the Ustasha NDH,* pp. 86–90)



Ante Pavelić surrounded by Croatian Catholic clergy in April 1942.



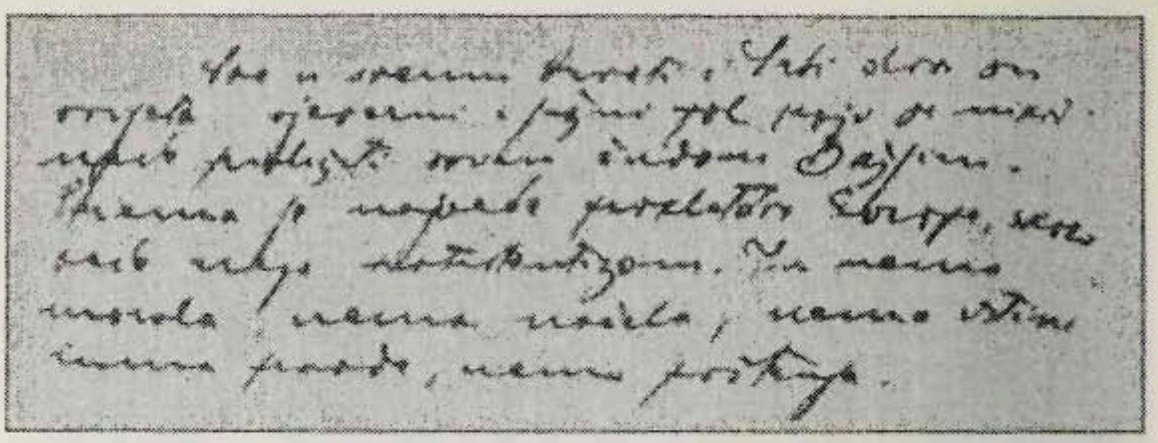
Ante Pavelić with the episcopate of the Catholic Church at the reception on the occasion of his birthday—*Hrvatski slikopisni ijednik*—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.



Archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, here with his personnel wearing the medals of the Ustasha and conveying New Year's greetings to Ante Pavelić.

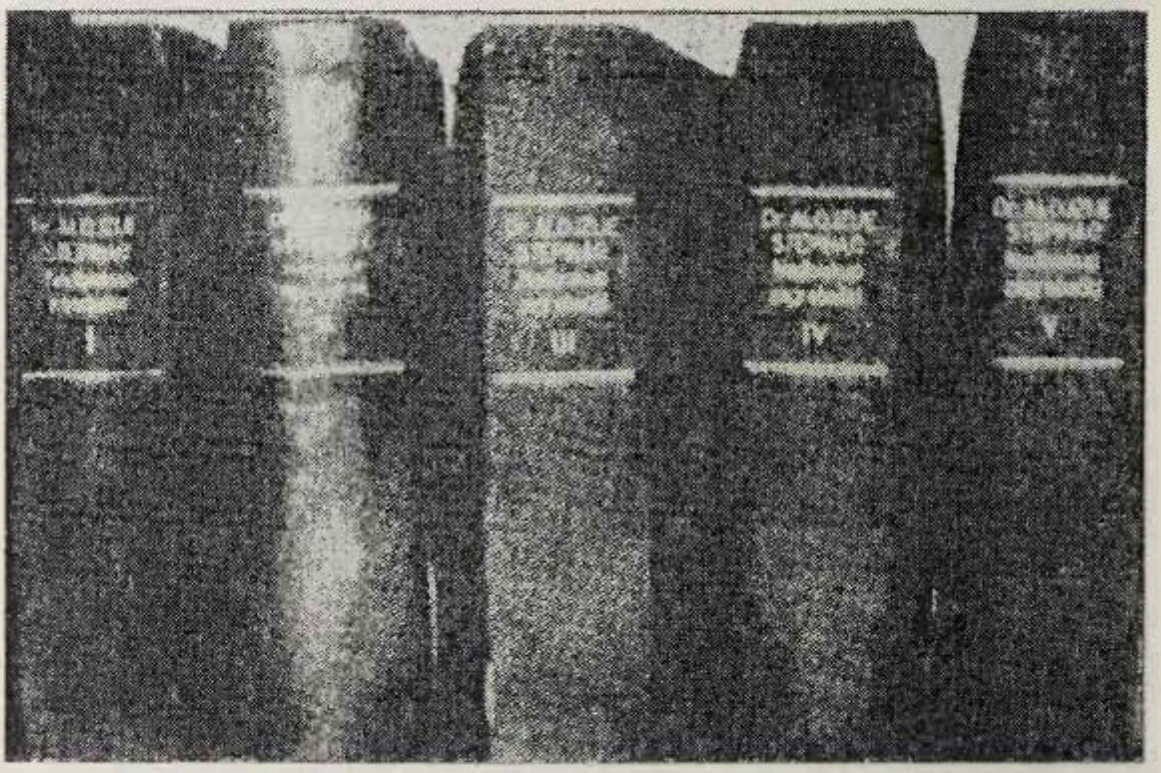
The pious Catholic, Dr. Mile Budak, Minister of Education and Culture said on 22 July 1941:

"The basis for the Ustashe movement is religion. For minorities such as Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies, we have three million bullets. We will kill a part of the Serbs. Others we will deport, and the rest we will force to accept the Roman Catholic religion. Thus the new Croatia will be rid of all Serbs in its midst in order to be 100 percent Catholic within 10 years."

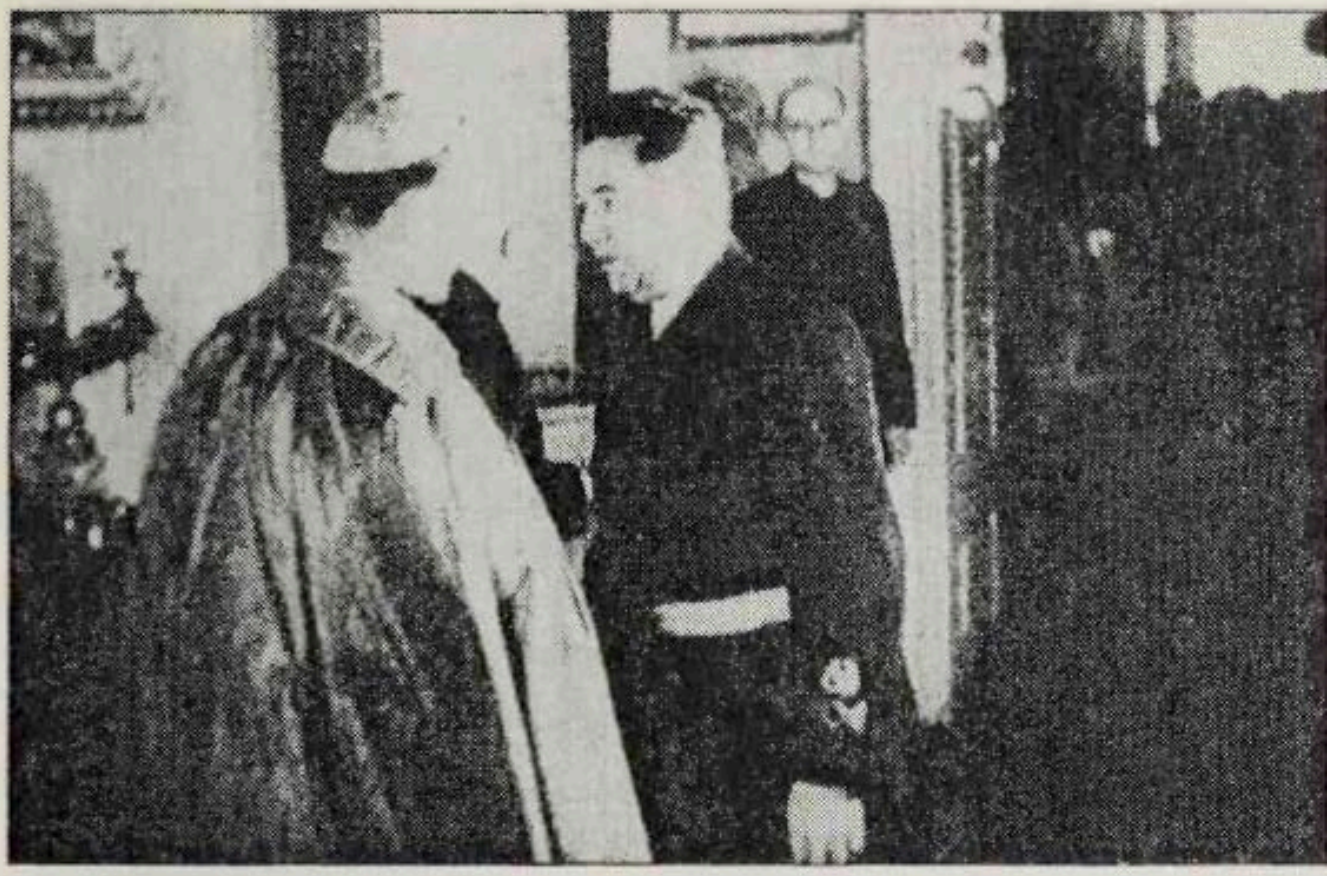


On 28 March 1941, Archbishop Stepinac, showing the same attitude, noted the following about the Serbs and about the coup d'état of 27 March:

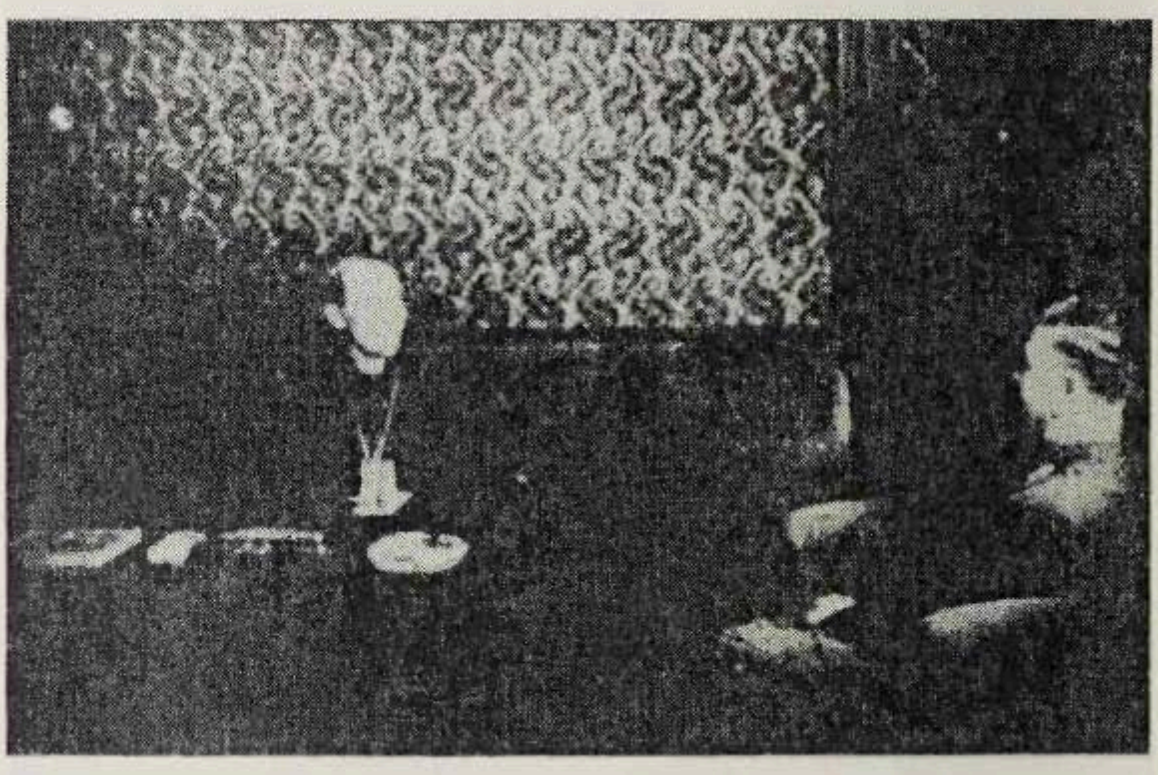
"All in all, Croats and Serbs are of two worlds, northpole and southpole; never will they be able to get together unless by a miracle of God. The schism [Eastern Orthodoxy] is the greatest curse in Europe, almost greater than Protestantism. Here there is no moral, no principles, no truth, no justice, no honesty." (Photograph above).



A photograph of five diaries of Archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, which yield proof of the connections between the Vatican and the "Independent State of Croatia" created by the Ustashe.

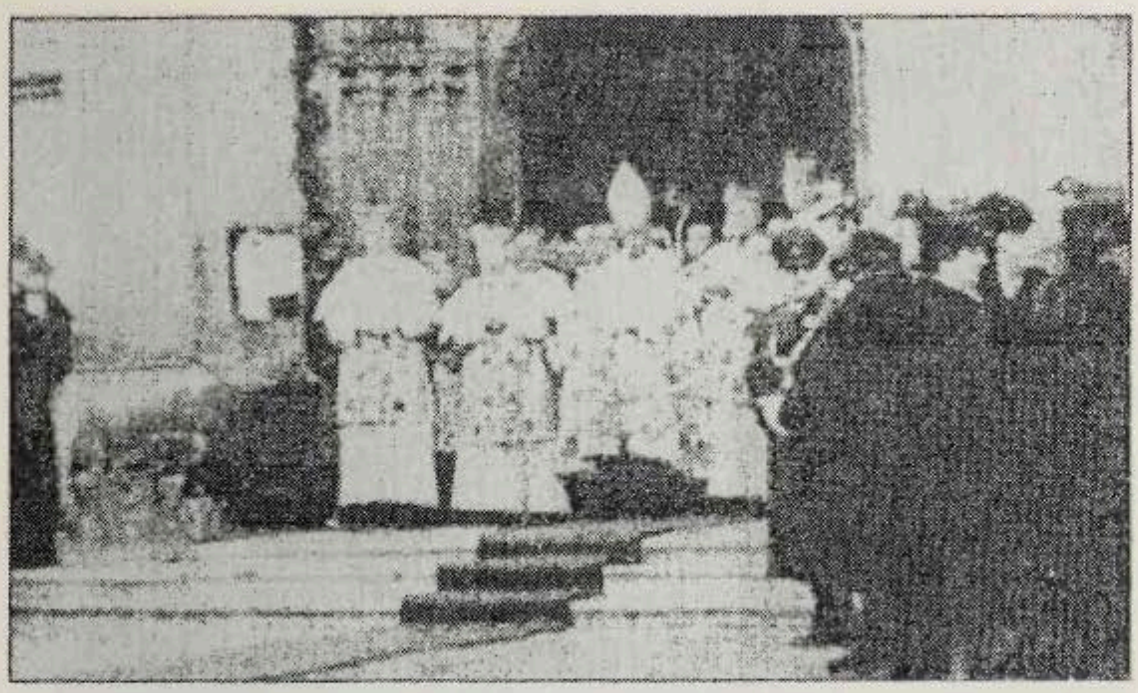


Archbishop Stepinac (left) and Andrije Artukovic, Interior Minister of the NDH (right) at a reception—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.



Above, Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac has prepared a festive lunch for a group of Ustasha emigrants after they returned from the special camps in Hungary and Italy—from a private collection.

Below, Archbishop Stepinac and Pavelić in a friendly conversation.

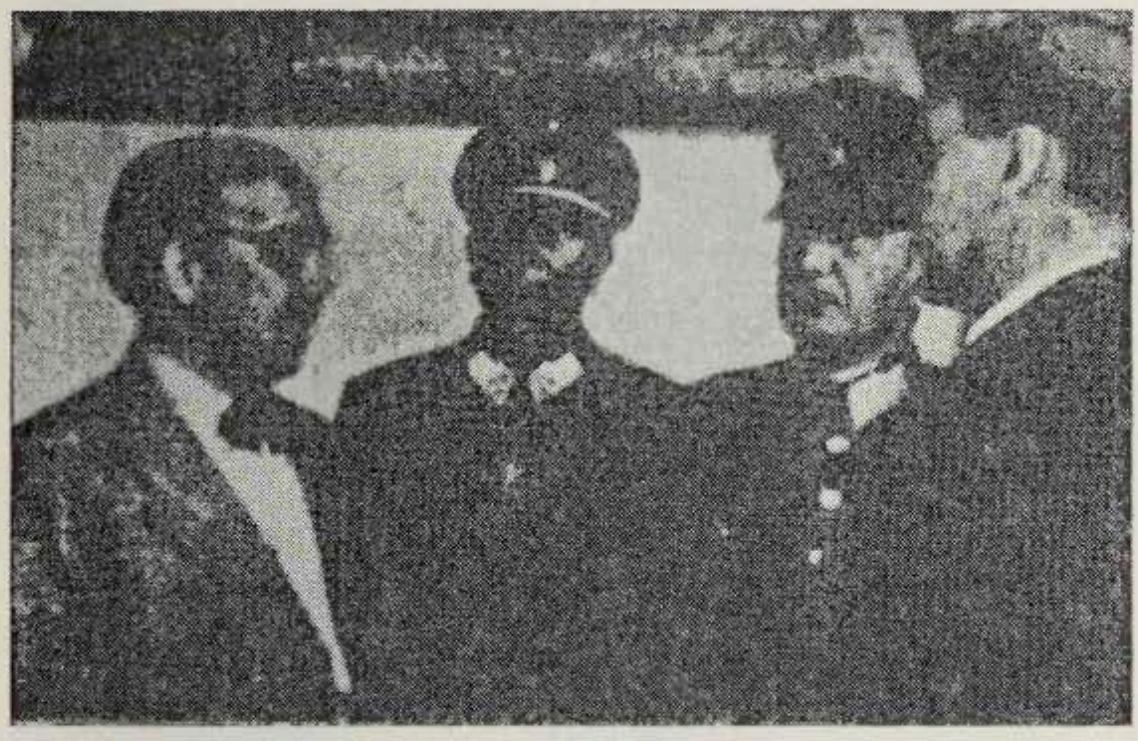


Above, Archbishop Stepinac with other Church honor bearers in front of the Cathedral of Saint Mark in Zagreb waiting for Ante Pavelić, his government, and the delegates of the Croatian parliament, who are to come to the ritual mass, on the occasion of the opening of parliament in 1942—*Hvratski slikopisni tjednik* Nr. 14, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. Z 1125.

Below, Pavelić comes to the Zagreb cathedral on the day of the opening of the Croatian parliament; he is being received by Archbishop Stepinac—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

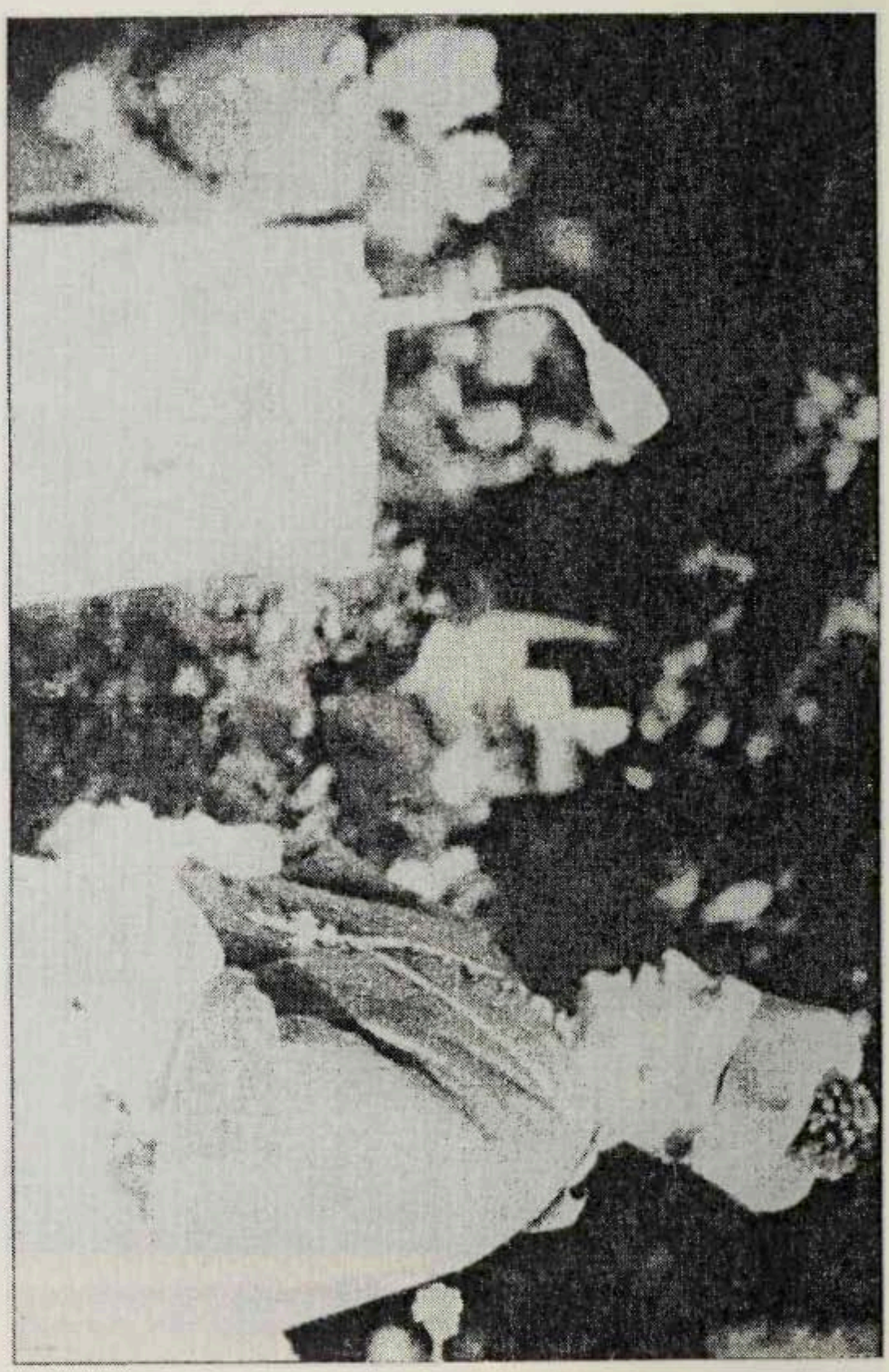
Above, Ante Pavelić and Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac in the Zagreb cathedral just before the ritual mass on the occasion of the opening of parliament—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. Z 5047.

Below, Archbishop Stepinac personally takes part in the interment of the Ustasha criminal Marko Dosen—Yugoslav Cinemathek.

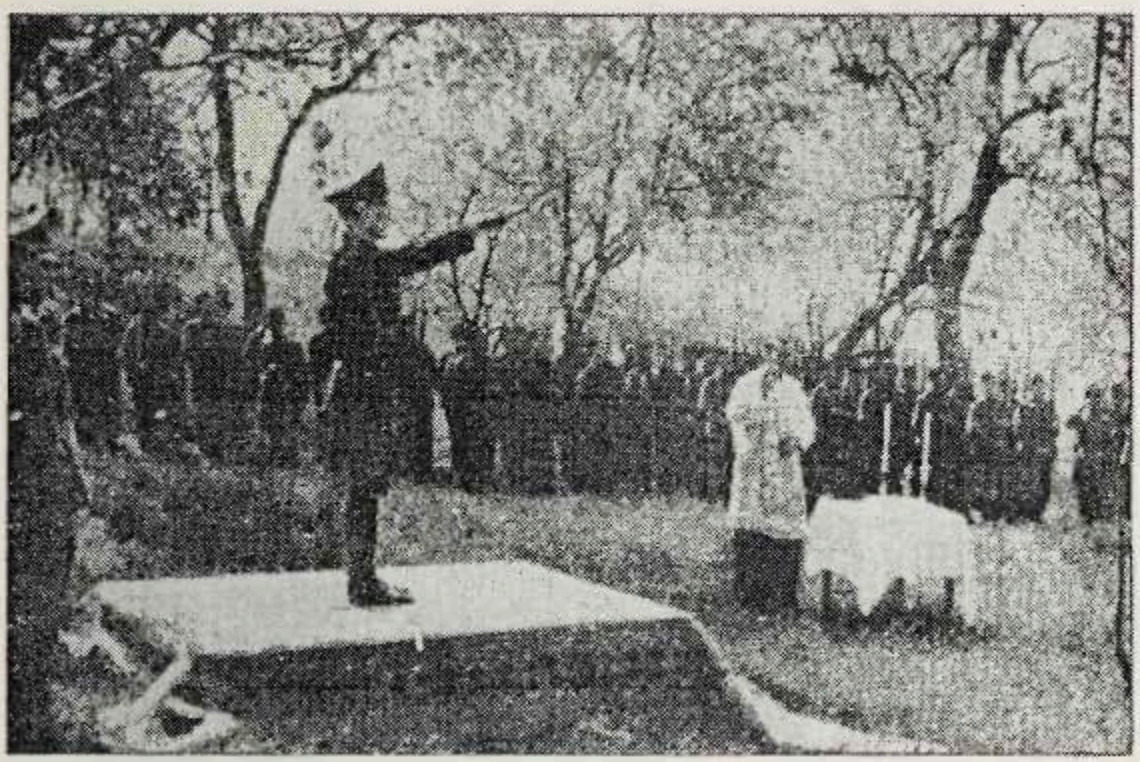


Above, Dr. A. Stepinac, archbishop of Zagreb, in a conversation with the Ustasha generals Stancer and Sertic.

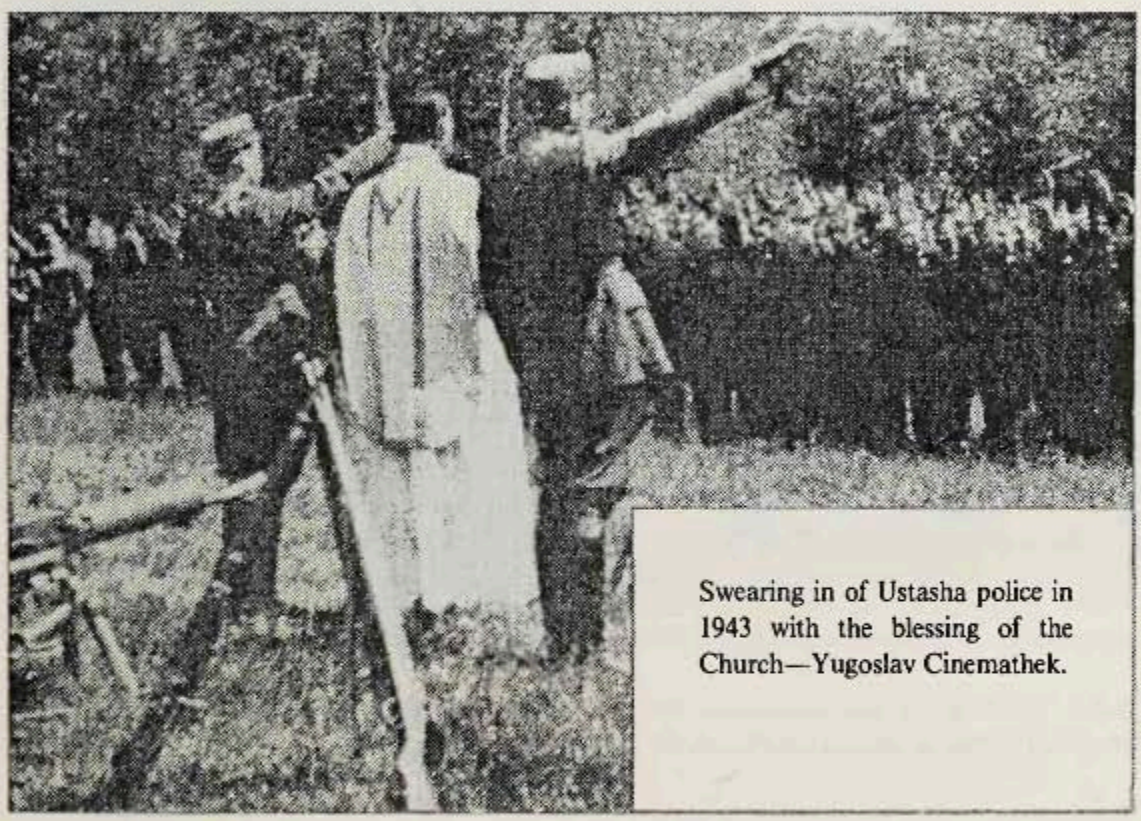
Below, Archbishop Stepinac (front row, middle) during a session of the Ustasha parliament in which he and ten other clerics were regular members.



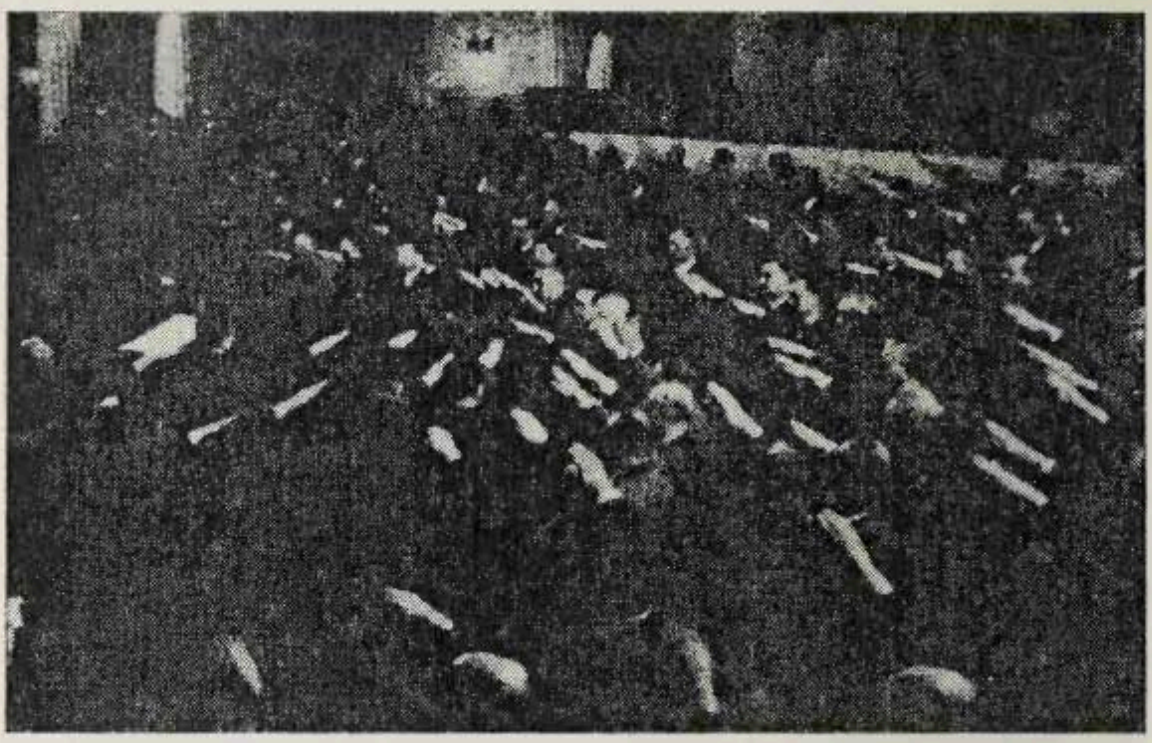
The military vicar Archbishop Stepinac.



Members of Pavelić's bodyguard swear allegiance unto death to the Croatian leader and receive the church's blessing—Yugoslav Cinemathek.

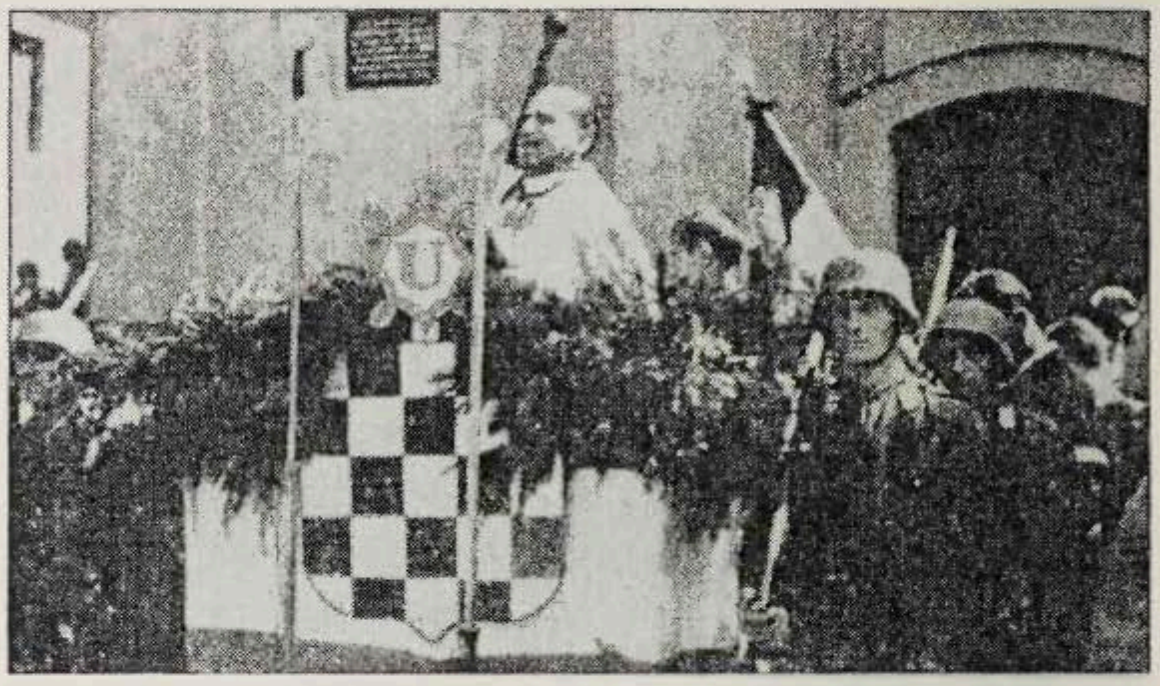


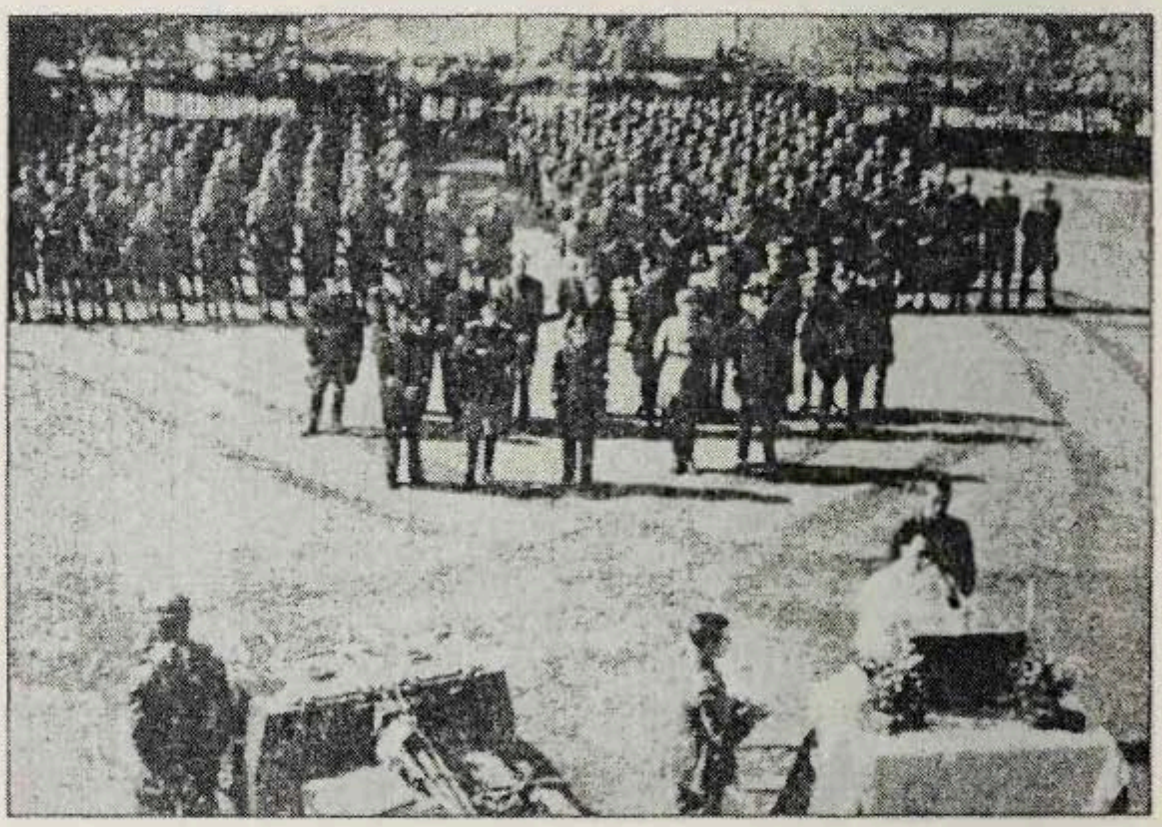
Swearing in of Ustasha police in 1943 with the blessing of the Church—Yugoslav Cinemathek.



Above, A session of the Ustasha parliament. In the loge of diplomats (right), one can see the papal nuncio Marcone (in a white robe), to his left his secretary Marcucci.

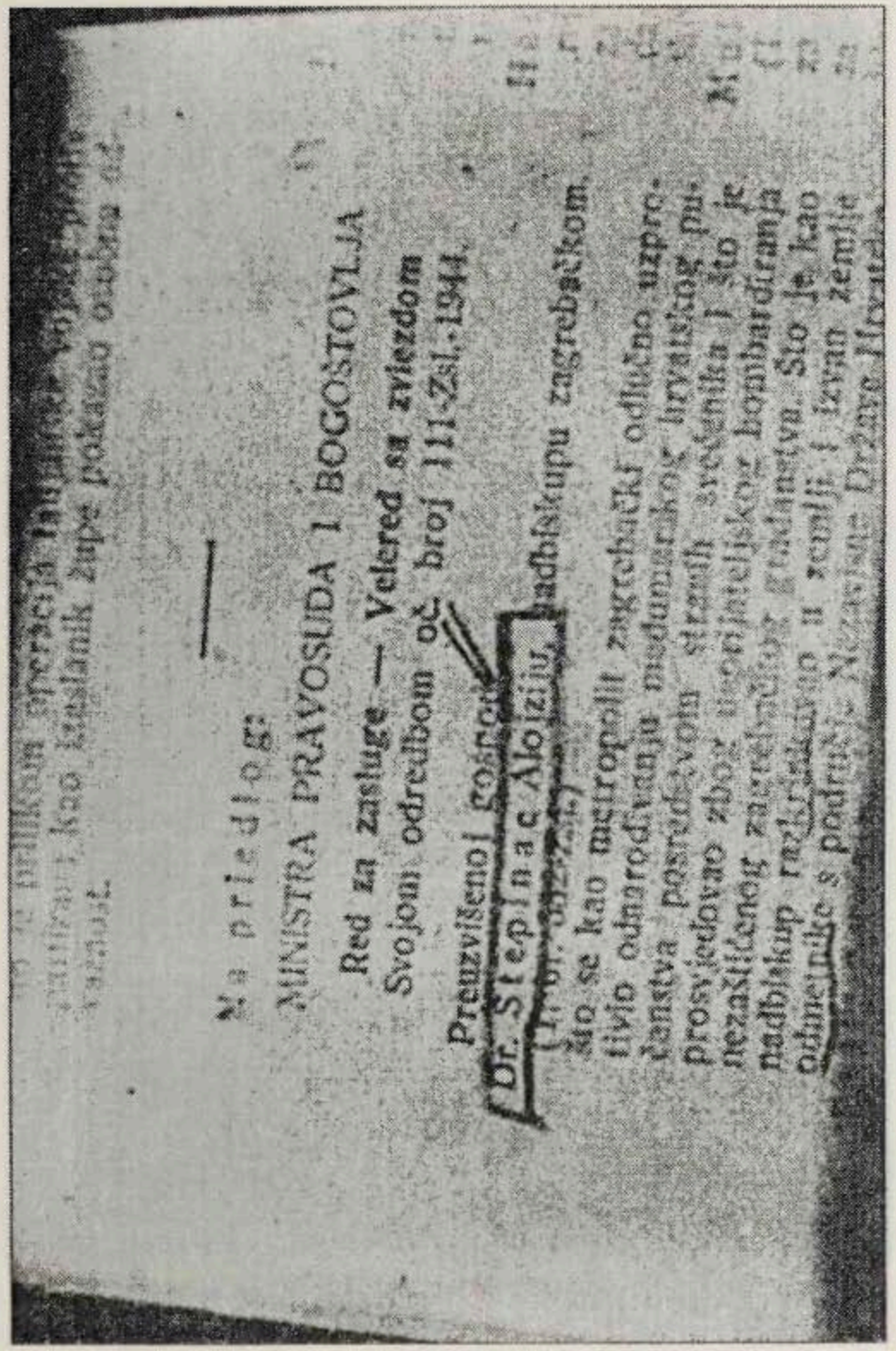
Below, The local Ustasha commander, Plese, during a speech from the altar of the church. Altars frequently served as speaker's platforms for the Ustashe's propaganda speeches.





Above, Priest Bralo in Zemum 12 June 1942. The emblem "U" stands for "Ustasha"—Yugoslav Cinemathek.

Below, Zagreb 1943. Church blessing during the celebration of the national holiday of fascist Italy—Yugoslav Cinemathek.



Na prijedlog
MINISTRA PRAVOSUĐA I BOGOŠTOVLJA
Red za zasluge — Veleredu sa zvijezdom
Svojom odredbom od broj III-Zsl.-1944.
Preuzvišenoj gospodi
Dr. Stepinac Alojziju
nadbiskupu zagrebačkom.
Kao se kao mistropolit zagrebački odlučno uzpro-
tivio odnarodivanju nedunarskog hrvatskog pu-
čanstva posredovom strah sveštenika i što je
prosvjedovao zbog uništenjskog bombardiranja
nezaštićenog zagrebačkog gradanstva. Sto je kao
nadbiskup radio za zemlju i izvan zemlje
odnesenike s područ[illegible]

Document concerning the awarding of the highest medal with a star to Archbishop Stepinac—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

Awarding of medal to a Franciscan pater.

9

The Massacre in the Karitska Jama Gorge

In May and June of 1941, the Ustashe tossed a great number of Serbs into the gorges of Hercegovina These execution sites have not been investigated yet today. The merchant Milija Bjelica escaped alive from the Koritska Jama gorge. He reports the following about the massacre:

> At the end of May 1941, a truck carrying 30 to 40 armed people stopped one day in front of the elementary school in the village of Korita. One could see right away that this was no regular unit of the army of the newly founded NDH, about which there were terrible reports in the air. They wore very colorful paramilitary suits, but wore a Fez as a symbol of the membership in Islam. Soon we were sure that these were mainly our neighbors—Moslems from Kula Fazlagic, Gracanica, and Gacko, who called themselves gendarmes.
>
> At first they chased the children out of the school so they could have the place for themselves; then some of them went to the house of my father, Mihajlo Bjelica; back then we had a shop and a café on the street that led from Bileca to Gacko. I worked in the shop, my brother Adam (Golub) worked in the café.
>
> The unwelcome guests entered the two shops in a gruff manner and posted on the door an order that we were not to sell alcoholic drinks to anyone but them and threatened that any contrary behavior would be punished on the spot with death. The order was signed by their commander Muharem Glavinic (so they called him), the Hodza from the neighboring village Kljuc.
>
> The next two or three days were spent in anxious expectation. We lived the first of June of this terrible year of war in uncertainty. It was Sunday, a beautiful sunny spring day, which I will never forget. On this day, the Ustasha horde of the Hodza Muharem Glavinic arrested two young men,

Boro and Andrija Svorcan above the village Korita in Pitoma Gradina near the border of Montenegro. They bound them with their hands at their backs and drove them to Gacko as they mercilessly hit them with their fists and the rifle butts and kicked them with their feet. On the morning of the 2nd of June, on the next day, the Ustashe got some back-up from Gacko with the Gauleiter Kreso Herman Tonagal at their head. In addition to the above-mentioned young men that they had driven to Gacko on the previous day, they were carrying more people arrested along the way. Shortly thereafter Ustasha patrols appeared throughout the whole village and demanded that all men between 16 and 60 come to the Sokolski Dom [=community house, translator's note] to a meeting at which the chief of the Ustasha government in Zagreb would explain who would be permitted to cross the border into Montenegro and whose permission would have to be obtained, and would tell them other regulations of the new government. They especially emphasized that hidden weapons and military equipment had to be brought along and threatened with death anyone who declined to do so. Since our pasture lands and tillable land lay scattered between the estates of the neighboring Montenegro villages, the people thought this assembly to be reasonable and normal for the given circumstances and obeyed without argument. Anyone who grumbled and hesitated got yelled at in a stern voice by the Ustasha patrols: "What are you waiting for? You heard the order!" and were forcefully brought to the Sokolski Dom.

Around 4:00 p.m. on this fateful day, a larger group of Ustashe came into our cafe with Kreso Herman Tonogal heading them. My brother Golub and I served them drinks, of course without getting paid. As soon as they had warmed themselves a bit, the Gauleiter Tonogal called: "Enough! Take them away!" Some of the Ustashe pointed their guns at us and shouted: "Hands up!" After a thorough search, they asked us where the money, our storage area, and the keys for the shop and the cash register were. We showed them everything without argument and asked the Gauleiter for permission to say goodbye to our father, who was lying upstairs on his sick bed. We hoped that they would allow this and planned to escape. But as he must have read our thoughts, the Ustasha shouted gruffy: "No way!" With great effort, I suppressed my anger, turned calmly to him, and said:

"Sir, it is sad that they are arresting us with no reason whatsoever. We have been earning our living here honestly and with great effort. Everyone who has been in here we have treated fairly and hospitably with no concern for their religion; for the duration of the former state, neither I, my father, nor my brother have ever hurt a fly, not to mention committing any harm to a human being. Your armed people know that, too; just ask them."

"I know who you are and how you are, but I can't help you; I can't help the fact that you are Serbs, that you belong to the people among whom the new laws of the state make no distinction. You are all guilty for what happened during the time of the former Yugoslavia, and you will pay for it, everyone of you, down to the last." This was his answer, and then he

called: "Forward!"

At this command, the henchmen shoved us crudely with their rifle butts and drove us into the great hall of the Sokolski Dom, which was stuffed with arrested people, our neighbors. At the doors, two guards were posted and at the window a machine gun. One Ustasha came in with us and informed the arrested people that the meeting would be held only when everyone was there, right down to the last man, and when the head of the Ustasha government was there from Gacko.

We sat in the humid and clammy room on the bare floor. In the worried faces of the people, one could see a terrible fear, like people who are condemned to death. All night long we did not sleep and spoke in whispers about what would happen to us. Most of them found consolation in the hope that they would be hauled off to do compulsory labor or put into some sort of a camp, the way the Austro-Hungarian government did in the First World War. When day came, we asked a guard why the meeting was not being held and when they would release us. He answered that the Gauleiter was not there and that no one would be released without him.

In the course of the 3rd of June, women came with bags and blankets, but they were not allowed to have contact with us; the guards brought the things in and gave them to those for whom they were meant. I will never forget the moment when Gojko Bjelica cut into a piece of smoked lamb and cried: "No one from my family will get out of this alive; I don't have a brother anymore; only one of us will survive—severely wounded." Although I was never superstitious, Gojko's talk this time seemed uncanny.

In fear and confusion, we spent one more sleepless night from the 3rd to the 4th of June. On Wednesday the 4th of June, suddenly the Gauleiter Tonogal came in the morning and informed us in a threatening voice that all those who would surrender their hidden weapons—"We know that you have some," he shouted angrily—could go home right away, while those who refused would have to go into forced labor. After he left, I looked through a hole in the side door and saw what was happening outside. I saw how the Ustashe were getting into formation; there were enough there. Their oldest ones stood in front of the ranks; one of them said something. During the whole time of his speech, the others were holding their left hand on their breast. Later I learned that the Moslems, according to their religious customs, did this when they took oaths to kill nonbelievers, since this was an act pleasing to God.

After administering the oath, the Gauleiter with a pistol shot gave the sign to begin the massacre. Here I must mention that there is no truth in the talk that some Ustasha guards gave us a clue in any way as to what awaited us and this allegedly gave us the possibility to escape. Quite the contrary. Their behavior toward us was inhuman—like that of a henchman. It is true that not all of them hit us and tormented us in the same manner (some apparently avoided it), but none of them defended us. Since all leading Ustasha personalities at this time publicly called for the slaughter of the

Serbs and for their expulsion from the land, it is hardly believable that those who came to Korito did not know why. It is much more likely that they all had appeared voluntarily for this pogrom, firmly convinced that now the Serbian people in the NDH and of course in Hercegovina would be grubbed out like weeds. That's why they hastened to beat the others out in grabbing their possessions.

When the sign was given to begin the slaughter, some Ustashe pushed their way in to us and commanded: "Sit down!" After each of us sat down right where we were standing, they led one after the other into the cloak room, where five chosen henchmen, probably volunteers, were waiting. One of them (Becir Music) cut a wash line (not wire, as some people maintain) into pieces and gave these to Alid Krvavac from Gacko, who with two helpers whose names I do not know, bound the victims' hands behind their backs; at first singly and then in threes—back to back. With a pistol in his hand and in a new airforce uniform, Serif Zvizdic from Gacko observed their work.

When it was my turn, my brother Golub was already bound. Once they had searched me thoroughly, they tied my hands behind my back and then they tied me and Golub together back to back. Then they brought Gavrilo Glusac in, searched and bound him the same way as me and finally tied him sideways to us. Since we were standing with our backs to each other, we could not move, so they simply pushed us into the adjoining room, or better said, the torture chamber, which was already full of bound people. There they beat us and abused us terribly and searched us for weapons, equipment, money, and gold jewelry. While doing it, they constantly emphasized that those who confess and would do what was demanded of them would be released immediately. Only Vidak Glusac fell for this trap. He yielded after gruesome torture and confessed that he had a gun.

They immediately untied him, acted as if they would let him go to fetch the gun and said: "Go and get the gun. Don't worry. We will bring you home right away, while all the others will go into forced labor."

Vidak Nosovic, who was crying like a child, turned to a young and beautifully dressed Ustasha and asked him to loosen the bonds of his hands just a little which were pulled so damned tight that the rope around his swollen hands couldn't be seen anymore. But the Ustasha replied cold bloodedly: "You deserve that. I don't feel sorry for you." Then he turned to me and said "I feel sorry only for these two brothers, because they will die innocent." He lit a cigarette and put it in my mouth. Vidak begged him in the name of Allah and in the faith of the prophet to give him a cigarette, too, but the Ustasha didn't listen to him, just as if this was some wild animal in front of him instead of a human being. When he had left our presence, I spit the burning cigarette over to Vidak, who somehow picked it up from the floor with his bleeding mouth.

Filip Svorcan, when they were tying him up, asked the Hodza Muharem Glavinic to look through his papers carefully. He would be able to see quite clearly that he (Filip) served 15 years with honors as the commander of

the police station, which could easily be proven. The Hodza grabbed his pistol and screamed in rage: "Fuck your 101 Serbian crosses. Just wait an hour, and I'll read you the whole book of Serbian regulations." (This was told to me later by Jakov Milovic, who was in the same group with Filip and who managed to flee from the outer edge of the Koritska Jama.)

During that whole fateful June night, the quietness of the spring was again and again shredded by the tormented human screams coming from the Sokolski Dom mingled with the roar of Mumo Hasanbegovic's truck from Avtovac, with which the henchmen took groups of 25 to 30 people one after the other up to the Kobilja-Kopf as far as the gorge Golubnjaca, where they killed them (at first mostly with blunt instruments) and threw them into the abyss.

When it was the turn of me, my brother Golub, and my godfather Gavrilo Nosovic (I think we were in the fourth group), the Ustasha pushed us in over boards into the truck, which had driven up to the door. After us they pushed in eight or nine more groups of three and then closed the tailgate of the vehicle. There were only three Ustashe on the truck: one in the cab with a machine gun directed at us, the second in the right-hand corner and the third in the left corner, both with cocked guns. The cab door was hardly closed when the truck took off. It crept slowly past our shop, on which the moon was shining. The first thing I noticed was the torn-down monument of the volunteers of Solan from the village of Korita, which was close by; then the icon of St. Nikola (on the day of St. Nikola, we had had our christening celebration), which was hung on the shop where formerly the business stood. I became afraid that they had also hauled my family off someplace and perhaps had killed them. Since we were moving on the road to Gacko, there was still a slight hope that they were taking us to a hearing there.

But when the truck stopped just before the gorge Golubnjaca on the Kobilja-Kopf surrounded by Ustashe who were armed to the teeth, it was quite clear to us that this was to be an execution site, where these henchmen would slaughter us like cows or club us like rabbits. The helpless people suddenly became restless; desperate cries and tumult arose: some cried like children when they thought of their poor children, wives, and parents; others gnashed their teeth in helpless despair, while others spit in the faces of their henchmen and cried out defiantly: "You crooks will answer dearly to God and to humanity with blood for your outrageous deeds!" Fired with rage, the Ustashe hit us with their fists, feet, rifle butts, the blunt edge of axes, and other objects to try to subdue the wailing and to be able to carry out their slaughter in peace.

The bright moonlight lying on the rocky peaks of the Bjelasnica and Troglav mountains sank into darkness and was lost in the horror of what was expected. To our misfortune, we three (I, my brother Golub, and my godfather Gavrilo) were sitting close to the cab of the truck, since we were the first to be thrown into the truck, and now were the last in turn for the slaughter. So we had to watch the tormented deaths of 27 neighbors,

friends, and godfathers and to be convinced that people are worse than the most bloodthirsty animals. This horrifying sight on the rim of the Koritska Jama brings tears to my eyes yet today, rips me from the deepest sleep, and accompanies me like a shadow throughout my whole life. I can find neither peace nor calm, especially since among the murderers our acquaintances and nearest neighbors were most active: Halid Voloder, the servant Mumo Hasanbegovic from Avtovac, Dervo Custovic, shepherds from the village of Kljuc, Hodza Muharem Glavinic from Begovic Kula near Trebinja, Velija Hebib from Kljuc, Sucrija Fazlagic from Kula Fazlagic, Atif Hidovic, Velija Dzunkovic from Hodinic and the son of Sukrija Tanovic, who had come to Gacko from Tuzla, who by slaughtering innocent people could avenge his father, who had been killed by the band of Maja Vujovic after the First World War.

Contrary to the previous groups, they tried to kill us not with wooden hammers (they probably didn't think they could kill so many people this way before dawn), but shot us by using only two bullets for each group of three. The henchmen placed us in threes, tied back to back at the edge of the gorge in such a way that one of us at the tip of the triangle was turned with his face to the gorge, the second to the right, and the third to the left. The shots, which came from close up, were fired into the temples of the two standing at the sides and hit the back of the head of the one facing the gorge. Apparently the henchmen did not check to see whether all three were mortally wounded each time, but instead just immediately threw them into the 20-meter-deep gorge, causing anyone who was not dead to perish there in torment. From some, they had first taken articles of clothing—the pay for their efforts, because the Koran, as they said aloud, didn't permit undressing the dead.

These Ustasha bandits hauled one group of three after the other from the truck to the edge of the gorge, from where ugly curses and blunt blows, together with painful cries of helpless people fell on our ears.

The tormenting wait, which seemed to us to be unending, was finally at an end. The Ustashe dragged us roughly from the truck and pushed us to the entrance of the gorge, all the time hitting us mercilessly. Our attempts to escape the blows or to fend them off really awakened the base instincts of these monsters in human form. Once they had gotten us to the edge of the gorge, they placed me with my face to the abyss, Golub facing the one henchmen, Gavrilo the other. Both henchmen were waiting with guns loaded for the signal to shoot us in the head from close up. I saw sparks at the muzzle of the murder weapons and I heard the shots that threw us to the ground. Although my right shoulder was burning, I was conscious; I noticed that I was not mortally wounded. One bullet had flown past my collar without injuring my neck while the other had penetrated my right shoulder. I heard Golub and Gavrilo die gurgling and tried to think what to do. I felt the murderers loosen the strings on my shoes. I thought that they would perhaps untie my hands to get my coat (I was wearing a long

coat and Golub had one of leather), and that that would give me a chance to escape. And indeed they did begin to untie our hands as they were removing my shoes. At this moment, I could hear a commanding voice say: "What are you guys doing there?"

"These are Golub and Milija. We want to get their coats," answered the one who was in the process of untying our hands.

"There's no time for that, and it isn't allowed; stop it and throw the bodies down," said the same man in a stern voice.

But the henchmen did not want to give up their booty. Without thinking of the Koran, they untied our hands and took off our coats. Although my hands were free, I could not move my right arm; it felt like I was still tied. When they picked us up from the ground to toss us into the abyss, I cried out in despair: "Kill me. I am still alive!"

"You won't stay alive. Fuck your Montenegran mother," hissed the murderer and plunged a bayonette into my breast—fortunately on the right side.

When I regained consciousness, I learned that I was at the bottom of the hollow on a heap of bodies. I was terribly thirsty and slowly got used to the darkness. Somehow I managed to pull my left, uninjured arm out from under my body. With its help, I pulled out my right, completely immobile arm. Carefully I felt around me. Everywhere there were only bodies. There was something sticky on my hand. I began to shiver from the cold. In the heap of bodies, someone was gasping as if he were snoring. The horrifying feeling to be on a heap of dead people forced me to find a safe place, no matter where. I heard something that sounded like water dripping, which instilled even more the feeling of thirst in me. I stared in that direction and felt my way to a little split in the cliff and stuck my head in. In vain I tried to get a few drops of water into my dry mouth. Suddenly I heard the rattling of the motors, then people running back and forth and screams of pain, then the cracking of guns and the dull sound of victims rolling down the cliff. They fell like logs all around me, like the stones that the shepherds of Korita used to throw into the gorge to frighten the pigeons. This process was repeated about ten times in brief spurts; then there was dead silence in the Koritska Jama.

Once the truck had taken off in the direction of Korita, I noticed that someone was scraping along the walls of the cliff. He found my hiding place, laid himself between my legs, and rested his head on me. I felt his head with my good hand and asked: "Who are you?"

He gave a start, quickly composed himself and answered: "It's me!"

By his voice I recognized Vidak Glusac and said: "For God's sake, Vidak. How did you get here? Didn't the Ustashe release you after you confessed to having a gun?"

"Oh no!" cried Vidak. "Those scoundrels broke their promise; after I surrendered the gun, they brought me back again and put me in the truck. Then they drove me to the gorge and threw me in alive."

Three more times the truck came to the gorge from the Sokolski Dom

loaded with the other unfortunate ones, and the massacre was continued in the same way. At first we could hear curses mixed with cries of pain, then the crack of guns, dull blows, and finally the bodies rolling down the face of the cliff. The heap of bodies at the bottom of the gorge got higher and higher. From there we could hear the last gasps of the victims who were not yet dead; with our help, a few managed to escape death.

When in the twilight of 5 June the last group had been liquidated, we determined that a total of eight people had survived this fateful night: Milija Bjelica, Radovan Sakota, Dusan and Acim Jaksic, Rade Svorcan, Vidak and Vlado Glusac, and Obren Nosovic. With an insane fear, we were sure that the bodies of our wives, children, and elders were lying there before us. We breathed a sigh of relief and for a moment forgot this darkest human insanity that we had survived under miraculous circumstances, when into the pit fell our bags, the blankets, and other things that our women folk had brought while we were imprisoned in the Sokolski Dom. Also various tools fell down: axes, hammers, adzes, with which the henchmen had killed their victims. Some hand grenades also followed, which fortunately fell into the cliff wall high above us and exploded there. Finally a whole heap of rock debris came tumbling down. We also heard derisive calls like: "Haman, didn't we find you a nice hiding place and covered you with a nice soft blanket."

A while later we heard the bells of a big herd of cows passing the Koritska Jama in the direction of Kula Fazlagic. While the gorge of Golubnjaca was still steaming from the blood of the murder victims, the murderers ran into the village like beasts of prey to plunder the animals and other mobile belongings of their victims, thus leaving the orphaned children, wives, and weak old folk without a drop of milk. Later I read in an Ustasha report that on this occasion 5,294 head of small and large animals were driven from Korita. I maintain that the number was greater by far, for the village of Korita had been famous for its wealth of animals, especially goats and sheep.

We spent all of 5 June in the gorge and didn't try to do anything. Only in the evening twilight, when everything was still, did Dusan Jaksic and Radovan Sakota, who were not seriously wounded, try to get out of the gorge. First Radovan Sakota laid me so that the water would drip on any face from the side; I managed to get individual drops into my mouth. Dusan and Radovan used axes and rope that the Ustashe had thrown into the gorge and they succeeded in climbing out. We waited in fear for what would happen then; we were afraid that Ustasha guards had been placed around the gorge. Only when a belt was thrown down from above (we planned it thus) did we know that everything was OK. This again aroused our hopes for rescue.

But we had to wait for a long time yet in the dark grave of so many people and in the unbearable stench of blood and bodies. Again on 6 June, the Ustashe plundered the village and liquidated the arrested Milosevics from the village of Nemanjica and the Milovics from Zagradac near the school in Korita. Along with the Milosevics and the Milovics, Radovan Sarovic from Stepen was killed on this day, while the mutilated bodies of Dorda

Glusac and Branko Kovacevic were found later at the wall of the Trkljina. On the Kubilia headlands, they shot seven of the Milovics, while three men (Radovan, Blagoje, and Lazar) were able to escape; the brothers Milovan and Dusan Milosevic managed to escape from the courtyard of the school at Korita, so that the news of the Ustasha crimes was spread like the wind throughout all of northeast Hercegovina. Armed people from Gornje and Donje Crkvice, Vrbica, Somina, Crni Kuk, and other neighboring villages rushed to the Koritska Jama to rescue the survivors. All the adults of the Kurdulija fraternity joined them, who knew this area well. After they had gotten strong backup from Gacko and Bilece, a group came to the gorge. As long as I live, I will remember the moment when we heard the strong voice of Todor Micunovic from Crkvice: "Oh Milija, try to be patient. Don't worry, we will get you out of here." Soon the brave and bold Petar Kurdulija climbed down on a rope into the gorge. From up above they called to him that he should tie me first, because I was the most seriously wounded; then one after the other, as many as they could; apparently they were afraid that stronger units of the Ustasha or of Italians could come. But I asked Petar to take up the 16-year-old Rado Svorcan first, because his mother had only him, while mine had two children. Only after I heard a determined voice from above: "Don't worry, Milija, you will all get out," did I consent to being the first to be pulled up. Petar wrapped the rope around my belly, tied my broken right arm to my breast, and told me that I had to hold the rope tight with my left hand and kick myself out from the cliff with my legs. That's how I was pulled up from the gorge of Golubnjaca, which since this terrible event has been known as Koritska Jama, the common grave of Svorcan, Bjelica, Glusac, Nosovic, Jaksic, Sakota, Milosevic, Milovic, Kovacevic, and all the others—in all, over 150 victims. While the others were being pulled out, there was a misunderstanding: someone called out that an Italian, motorized column was coming from Bilece. The rescue was thus interrupted; only Obren Nosovic was still in the gorge. But our rescuers waited. When the error was cleared up, Ljubo Kurdulija, later a fearless warrior whose heroic deeds were the talk of all of Hercegovina, climbed down into the gorge and brought Obren up.

After I had been brought up into the daylight, I could hardly believe that I had escaped death, which had been hovering before my eyes for almost five whole days (I was arrested on 2 June). I heard and recognized the voices of my rescuers, among whom was my mother. She asked about Golub, and I only looked at her. Obren Nosovic's son pulled at my sleeve and asked: "Uncle, is my father still alive?"

"One Obren Nosovic is alive. But I don't know which one, since both had been thrown into the gorge," I replied with great effort.

They immediately put me onto a horse and we took off. In the saddle, I managed to hold out until we got to Mrda Kurduliga's house, which was not far away. There they had prepared a stretcher, on which they carried me to the house of Vulo Micunovic in Crkvice. Soon the other survivors

from the village of Korita came there. The residents of Crkvice and the members of other neighboring Montenegran villages welcomed us as kindly as their grandfathers had done in the past. They shared not only their homes with us, but also the last piece of bread. Armed men went to Gacko immediately, where, as they told us, battles had begun against the Ustasha. For that, the surviving inhabitants of the village of Korita will forever be grateful to them.

We who had survived the massacre in the Koritska Jama were examined by Dr. Vojo Dukanovic and Dr. Jovan Bulajic. Vojo gave me a shot for blood poisoning and told Vulo Micunovic, in whose house I was, to get me to the hospital in Niksic as quickly as possible and to have me operated on there, because it was the only way to save any life. That is what happened. Micunovic and the Kraljevics brought me to Miksic on a stretcher with the help of other residents of Crkvice; with us came also the two doctors mentioned above. Thanks to their connections, I was taken into the hospital and operated on immediately. I was in treatment for 48 days.

(From the archives of Vladimir Dedijer.—Milija Bjelica gave the first testimony on the murder of the Serbs in the Koritska Jama in Mostar at the trial of Hodza Muharem Glavinic from the village of Kljuc, who had organized the crimes in Korita. Colonel Savo Skoko talked with Bjelica in the village Gajdobra in Vojvodina, where Bjelica lived after the war. The text printed here is a combination of the two testimonies from Bjelica.)

10

The Massacre in the Church at Glina

Ljuban Jednjak, who was the only survivor of the forced conversion and the slaughter in the church at Glina, reports about it in his testimony in the trial of Archbishop Stepinac:

> Early in the morning, my father and I went out to fetch hay, which was somewhat further down from the house. We brought the first and second wagon home and were just about to get the third wagon load. Suddenly, as I was looking up toward the village, I heard the women wailing and saw that people were fleeing. "What's all that?" I asked my father and told him that I would go up and see.
>
> I came back and told my father that the Ustashe were arresting the Serbs. We left the wagon standing and ran home. I called to my wife and my mother and the other people in the village: "Run! They are arresting everyone. Forty have already been arrested." Then I crossed the Glina and went to Selisce, where I stayed the night. When morning dawned, the Ustashe opened fire from all four sides on these villages. I had an uncle there, whom the Ustashe likewise led off, and three cousins, and others—six to seven relatives in all. I fled through the forest into the village of Belinac; there we hid in the hay. After some time, the Ustashe came. They stabbed around in the hay with their knives, and one of them said. "These bastards. There is no one here. They have all fled into the forest." After a short while, a woman came and said: "Get out, you people. They will set the hay afire and you will burn up." When I got home, I asked my wife whether anyone had been looking for me. She told me that the Ustasha had been here and took meat and money and had asked for me. Then I went into the garden and decided to go to the woods at dark. I planned to run in the direction

of Gadan and then to flee into the woods. At the crossing, I saw a car, in which sat four Ustashe. They said to me: "Listen! Come here! Where are you going?" I said that I had a wagon and horses up there and that I was going to fetch them. Of course I tried to fool them. "Listen," said the one Ustasha, "you are a Serb. Get in the car." I did, and they told me to sit between them. One Ustasha asked: "Don't you want to tie him up?" And the other answered: "It isn't necessary. If he jumps out, we will kill him." I didn't jump out. We were half the way to Topusko; one of them said to me that I would go with them to Topusko. Another Ustasha asked me: "Listen, would you rather go to the church or to the city hall?" I said: "You needn't think I am so dumb. The people have been in the church at Topusko and in others for two days now." At the crossing he said: "The church is full; bring him to the city hall." In the city hall, I was alone in a little room. After a half hour, the Ustashe brought a truck full of people and squeezed them all into this room. They searched us and placed us in twos. The one said: "Search these scoundrels for gold and weapons. They are Cetniks." [= Serb nationalists, translator's note]* They searched us one after the other, and when they had taken the first one out of the room, they got me, and one Ustasha asked: "Have you been beaten yet?" I had mingled with those from the other room who had already been beaten brutally, and I said: "You know that you beat me!"

They took us to a truck that was full. After a few moments, the truck left. It went to the train station in Topusko. There they packed us into a rail car while we had to hold hands in groups of two. We were brought from various places: from the city hall, from the church, and from other places. Each car held 150 to 160 people, so that we were lying on top of each other three deep. . . . One man began to hallucinate and screamed: "Ankica, a fizz water please," because he thought he was in a bar where he usually ordered that. I told him he should get a hold of himself, but that didn't help, and two of us had to hold him down to keep him from thrashing around. We were all lying in a row. We stayed there from 8 o'clock

---

*The term "Cetnik" (member of a *ceta* = troop) refers to Serbian royalists. Their leader, Draza Mihailović, felt himself to be the viceroy for King Alexander, who had been murdered in Marseille in 1934; he (Mihailović) desired the restoration of the old regime, i.e., the reinstitution of the monarchy. Toward the end of the war, Hitler collaborated with the *Serbian* Cetniks against Tito's liberation army. At the very least, this fact makes clear that prior to that time Hitler collaborated with the *Croatian* Ustasha not for any *ethnic* reasons. Rather he was exclusively concerned with keeping his eastern flank (the Balkans) open to avoid a war on two fronts while he prepared for the Russian campaign. For this reason, he "liberated" this region by means of a Blitzkrieg and installed Pavelić as a willing puppet. Thus, ethnic affiliations did not interest Hitler in the least. (publisher's note)

in the evening until the next morning. Then the train took off slowly from the station at Topusko. The train master—I don't know who it was—said that the car was to be coupled because it was going to Lika and to Gospic. All the Ustashe laughed about that, and through the little holes in the car we could see that it was going to Glina. When we arrived in Glina, the Ustashe were waiting for us at the station. An Ustasha approached each of us from every side. They told us: "Hold hands tight. You are going to the hearing." We held hands in pairs and thus arrived at the church in Glina. Here were Mirko Dezelic and the son Nikica Vidakovic, who at the time of these crimes was the city superviser in Glina or something like that. They said to Dezelic: "Listen, Shorty, bring the keys so that we can lock these scoundrels in the church." He brought the key and we were locked in the church. There we simply sat down, and nobody touched anything until they came. Everything was prepared as for a service. They locked the church and went away. After a half hour, an Ustasha came again. He asked: "People, are you thirsty? Should we bring water?" We said that we were thirsty, and an Ustasha brought three buckets of water and a cup. After we had each had a turn at the water, he locked the church and went away. After a short time, an Ustasha came again. He asked: "Who among you has a baptismal certificate?" Adam Korac and Pajo Vorkapic raised their hands and left. After that the Ustashe told us: "You Serbs were condemned to death in 1918, and today the punishment will be carried out!" We asked: "Why?" And they said: "Because" and showed us the pictures in the church. In doing so they said they would sh-- on our King Petar. We said: "Leave us alone, and King Petar means nothing to us." After a few minutes another five or six Ustashe came in. They said anyone who had to go to the toilet could go. Twenty to thirty of is went out to take care of their needs, then they came back into the church. They locked the church again and went away. In the afternoon around 2 o'clock, Stevo Krestalica came and a Milekovic, who was a watchman in Glina. He commanded us to stand up and asked: "Is there here a young man who can write down his first and last names, because you are going to Lika into compulsory labor." So one after the other stood up, and we entered into the list how many children we had, where we came from, etc. An Ustasha took this list and went away without saying a word. Toward evening the Ustashe came again. They asked us: "Who is Pero Miljevic?" Pero Miljevic raised his hand, and they commanded him to tell what he knew about the Cetniks. They told him: "We will let you go home. Come here." He went to the middle of the church. They asked him: "What do you know about the Cetniks?" "I know," he said, "that the notary or cashier Ratkovic registered some Cetniks in the years 1936 and 1937. In Glina, I did that myself, and we registered the Cetniks." Then one of them cut down the two-finger-thick bell rope, one guy held him by the one hand and the other guy held him by the other hand, and they beat him until he was quite blue. The Ustashe asked further whether anyone else knew anything about the Cetniks, but no one would reply. Then

the Ustashe left.

Shortly before it got dark, we heard a vehicle pull up in front of the church. It was the Ustashe, about twenty to thirty. "Light the candles," they called. "Listen. Do you believe in our poglavnik?"—"We believe in him," we answered. "Do you believe in our great independent State of Croatia?"—"We believe in it," we answered. "Repeat that three times all together: We believe in the great independent State of Croatia—we believe in the great poglavnik." We repeated it five or six times. Then they screamed: "Lie down—get up, lie down—get up," etc. And we lay down and got up. Then we had to take off all our clothes: pants, shoes, coats . . . and throw them all on a heap.

Then they asked us: "Listen, people. Who among you is Pero Miljevic?" He raised his hand. "Come here!" He approached them. "Pero, tell us, do you know anything about the Cetniks?" He answered: "I know that some Cetniks were registered with the notary, perhaps also with the cashier, in 1936 and 1937, but I don't know anything more." While he was saying this, an Ustasha went across his chest with a knife, cut it open, and he collapsed. Then Stojan Bojic from the village of Katinovci spoke up and said: "I know something about the Cetniks. Will you let me go home then?" "Good, tell us what you know." "I know," he said, "that we were told when the Ustashe would come with trucks to the Kamenicki Most up above Topusko, we were to wait for them with axes and pitch forks, mow them down, and also cut the telephone lines to Kladusa, in order to cut off any connections." "We need such people right now," cried the Ustasha, "who destroy our state property. Come here. Get on with it. Lay your head on the table." He laid his head on the table, and the Ustasha cut his throat. "Now sing!" While he was singing, the blood squirted two to three meters from his throat. When the blood squirted in our direction, he said softly to me: "We're done for. This is what will happen to you, too." Then the Ustasha screamed: "Stab him, that son of a whore." They stabbed him in the neck two or three times with the knife from the back, and when he fell to the floor, others joined in who were there specially to crush heads. Two Ustashe jumped on him and smashed his skull. Then they threw him on a truck.

And on and on, one truck after the other. . . . When they had slaughtered almost everyone in the church and the number of us survivors had sunk to only ten, I was lying in a corner of the church and suddenly saw that there was no one in the church anymore. There were only ten of us. From the corner I was looking toward the door and saw the Ustashe carrying out bloody people. . . . Blood flowed everywhere in the church. Everything was calm. The whole church was lit with candles. I threw myself among the slaughtered people who were lying on the floor, stretched my arms out, and lay there. Three of the people who were with me hid in a room near the altar, where the priest kept his books. The other five or six did not manage to hide and were murdered. After some moments, the Ustashe came to get the dead out of the church, the first, second, third, and on down

the line. I don't know anymore how many there were. I remained lying down. But they were coming to get me, too. They went from one to the other and stabbed them with the knife. One stood on my back and stabbed everyone around me with the knife, one after the other, like this . . . (he demonstrates with his hand). Then it was my turn. He stepped on my head with his shoe and said: "It's all done." He stepped away and saw someone living. "Leave me alone, people, I'm still alive. Leave me alone, I never hurt anyone." "Good," said the Ustasha, "get up." He said to them: "Don't kill me. I am innocent. Everyone here is already killed. There is no one who isn't killed." I turned my head as far as I could and saw them murder the man. The Ustashe asked him about his loved ones, and he replied that he had an eighteen-year-old and a twenty-two-year-old sister. "Do you want to give me your eighteen-year-old sister?" And the other asked: "Do you want to give me your twenty-two-year-old sister?" When I raised my head again a little, I saw the one Ustasha holding to his one hand and the other holding his other hand. One of them ignited him with the candle, and I saw his moustache burn. Then they began to burn his eyes. It was unbearable torture. I think the greatest torture in the world. When they had burned his one eye and were beginning to burn the second, the man screamed, and one Ustasha hit him in the back with the rifle butt. "Ow'" cried the man. They continued burning his eye, then they threw him to the floor and smashed his head. They stuck him between the ribs with the knife and completely ran him through. When they trampled his head, parts of the skull flew in all directions and also fell on me.

The truck came for the fifth time to fetch the people. The Ustashe carried them out of the church. One took me by the arms, another by the legs, and they carried me out. They threw me on the truck where the slaughtered people were stacked on three heaps, all of them belly downwards. When they threw me on the third heap, it tipped over and slid. I hit my head against a board. This truck was over full, and so they threw me on another one. One took me by the legs and pulled me out so that my whole back was mauled, and as he was pulling me, he hit my head against a rock so that it split open. They threw me on another truck full of bodies and threw four or five more dead people on top of me. One of the dead fell on me in such a way that his slit throat was lying directly on my mouth. It was very uncomfortable, because all his blood was flowing over me. It ran into my mouth and down my whole body. One Ustasha asked: "Is he dead?" "He's dead," answered another. They searched the church for any remaining people. They didn't know about the three who had hid near the altar. As I later learned, these were in the church for two days. In the third night, however, they climbed to the tower and begged some men for water. The Ustashe shot them and killed all three.

The truck with the murdered people, where I was, took off. . . . I was thinking that I was alive at least, and there was still hope that I would stay alive. The truck went through Ukinac and Prekop. I raised my head

a little and saw two Ustashe sitting there in silence. I knew that the truck turned toward Novo Selo. I knew the area. The truck went over the field, and when it stopped, the Ustasha thugs were already waiting for it and they threw the bodies down from the truck. They drove the truck directly to the pit, so they could throw the bodies down easier. One pit was already over full. They took me by the legs and by the head and threw me into the pit.

I was squashed. They threw four or five on top of my legs. One woman showed signs of life. Oh, what they did with her. They raped her above the pit. She cried and screamed. "Where do you come from?" they asked her. "I am the teacher from Bovic." Then they hit her on the head, and she fell into the pit. Then one said to another. "Go look. Maybe she has a gold ring. It can be sold." And the other went down, found a ring on her left hand, and said: "This can be sold." There over the pit stood the Ustashe and were hitting people with hammers and axes. First one truck came, then a second, a third, and a fourth. I could hear one person cry and moan: "Oh, my children, my mother. I never hurt anyone." Already half dead, they hit him once or twice with the ax or a hammer. I could not see how long the pit was, but only heard the moaning of the people. When they had emptied the truck, the next one came. There were three pits, one next to the other. They completely filled the one in which I was not lying. Under me were maybe 100 people, over me four or five. I listened. Everything was quiet. I could hear nothing. I turned my head a little and saw that something was moving. I heard one Ustasha say: "Listen, people, they won't all fit. We have to put them in another pit, and we must stack them up. That will make more room." Then two came and carried them away. Then they came for the ones that had been thrown across my legs. They threw one then a second and a third, and the one who was at the other end moved. "These pigs. There are some alive down there. Shoot over here." They fired one or two shots and one struck my leg. I was bleeding. I tried to move by toes and determined: Good, the bone is not broken.

When they had thrown off those who were lying on top of me, they grabbed my arm to toss me to the other end. Then they saw that I was wearing a thick wool jacket from Lika: "This guy has some nice clothes. We have to take them off." They grabbed me by the arm and removed my wool jacket. I held my breath. They turned my face to the ground and stretched out my legs. I was completely still, and they left. I could hear nothing. Nobody was talking. I looked arownd and saw something move. I did not know who it was, whether it was an Ustasha or someone else. It began to rain. I saw someone approaching. I looked more carefully—somebody crawling on hands and feet. I cowered together. The person came and asked me: "Are you still alive?" I didn't know who it was, and so I didn't answer. He lay flat down again in the pit. A little later he came again on hands and feet to me and asked: "Are you alive?" "I'm alive." "What can we do now? Listen, we must get out of here." I went to one corner,

he to another. I looked around a little. Thirty to forty Ustashe were standing there around another one who was saying something to them. I climbed over the fence into the corn field in order to hear what they were saying, but heard nothing. The other guy did not come with me, but went into another village. His relatives then betrayed him, and three days later he was killed by the Ustasha. Below Novo Selo, I turned and went to Majska Poliana to my uncle. I did not know which was his house and ran past it. I jumped into the bushes, where I discovered a man. I was wearing just shirt and pants. Blood and dirt were sticking to me. My head was split open and scraped, my back was smashed. I asked him: "Who are you?"—and hid in the bushes. He made like he was going to flee. In 1941, the Serbs were always in flight, didn't sleep, and didn't eat. I saw that he was going to grab his coat and flee. I asked him: "Is it you, Stojan?"—"Yes, it's me." He felt uncomfortable seeing me so covered with blood and dirt. I was swollen every place. "Is it you, Ljuban?" "Yes, it is me." "Oh, what happened to you, Ljuban?" "Don't tell anybody. Murders were committed in the church yesterday. I lay among the dead, and I managed to stay alive that way. Stojan, it's all over. Come on, tell me where my uncle lives." "You went past his house"—he showed me the way, and I went to my uncle's. When I got to the house, a girl of about 18 was there; when she saw me, bloody and smeared with dirt, she fainted. I started to speak, and she recognized my voice. I said that we had been slaughtered in the church yesterday, and she said that she had heard the screaming at the pit where the people had been killed with hammers and axes. At this place I recovered a bit and stayed then for six months with them. During this time, I saw neither sun nor moon. That's how I stayed alive.

(From the archives of Vladimir Dedijer: materials from the trial of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac)

[. . .]

11

The Massacre in the Village of Urije

Milovan Dilas's report on the blood bath in the village of Urije:

> I was walking on a normal summer morning on a simple village path. It was somewhat fresher because of the rain that had fallen in the night. I was heavy hearted, and I had to cry, because I couldn't help thinking of my wonderful pals who had died in yesterday's fight with the Ustasha here somewhere in front of me on the rich fields and meadows. But what I then saw on this morning—although I had often read and heard of such things—filled me with such horror that it made me forget any pain that I was feeling for my dear comrades. . . . Yes, it all looked quite different from stories I had read. . . .
>
> First we encountered two farmers lying along the path under the wide spread of a big pear tree. They were lying in the shady grass where men from the village commonly rested. They had been shot in the back of the head. The bullets had exited under the right ear and had torn such gaping wounds that brains were running out onto the grass. Six more farmers had been killed. I saw traces of blood, smeared black in the grass, damp from the dew: the tormented signs of their last breaths. The bodies had already been removed by the few survivors.
>
> We continued on our way, which was bordered on both sides with hedges of hazelnut bushes and ferns. Suddenly lying in the middle of the path were 10 to 20 bodies (I don't remember the exact number). I believe there were only two men of middle age. All the rest were women, girls, boys, and little children. Three or four steps from this pile of blood and flesh lay an empty cradle, without bedding, without a child, but with straw that was wet with baby urine. The straw in the cradle seemed to be still warm from the body of the baby. The baby lay among the corpses. But the head was completely

smashed, no top on the skull and not a drop of blood in the empty skull. The brain—was it from this baby?—lay like a thick mush next to the head. In it were tufts of flesh. How was the child killed? Possibly with a bullet, with a rifle butt, or with a rock. Or was the baby's head perhaps soft enough for the plated Ustasha boots? The child lay on its left side, its face turned to the sky, the arms close to its body. The chest was crushed, and under the dirty, only slightly bloody shirt, an inflated belly protruded. A tiny, horrified child's face without a skull . . . it was a girl.—One day, perhaps on a day as nice as today, sunny and green, with cheerful colors in the sky, on the ground, on the fields, meadows, and forests, she could have enjoyed everything, life, happiness, love, youth, people around her. . . . But I wasn't thinking of that. I was thinking of nothing at all. I was only looking and feeling that I was cold. I wondered how it could have happened that I wasn't feeling anything, that I did not break out in tears, and that the pain didn't rack me.

The other bodies were mutilated, too. The face of a ten-year-old child was covered with stab wounds on its forehead and cheeks. A boy, who also had an empty skull like the girl, lay in the bushes cramped and with his legs pulled up to his body, barefoot and with thin arms. Through the body growing cold, the skin was taut, and pointed, white bones jutted out of his forehead. If the boy had not been so mutilated, one could have thought he had gone to sleep here along the path in the shade and hid so that nobody could see him and scold him for sleeping instead of looking after the animals so they wouldn't trample the farmers' fields and pastures. . . .

I went on. At the crossing, from which I could see the city, lay another 25 to 30 bodies. A mountain of bodies, men, women, and children, arms, legs, and heads. A dark braid tied at the tip with a red ribbon was entwined with the hanging moustache of an older farmer.

The path was wide here and gave a lot of room for the farmers to sit in the evening to rest and observe the city. The bodies all lay at the edge of the path and at the stone walls, as if a storm had piled them up.

I saw two mothers and their babies. Whereas I could not tell at the previous group who the mothers of the children were, here I could see. A young, black-haired mother was holding her child in her arms as if she were trying to protect it. As she had been thrown to the ground, she must have almost crushed it with her body. The hands of the child were hidden by the mother's breast. The other mother was not holding her child as tight, but rather was lying on her back, the child next to her, not held, cowering together, the shirt wet at the breast. The first mother with her black eyebrows gave the impression of old, fantacized, romantic pictures of murder victims or drowned mothers with their children. But this was no old, fantacized, romantic picture. This was a murdered mother with her child, who in the rigidity of death was pressing her baby to her breast. I went back and met two farmers. A 50-year-old man without a hat showed one a bloody bump on his right cheek. He said. "We hid from the shooting in the house. They took us all prisoner—all, even the children. They asked "Were the partisans

here?"—"Yes, they were here."—"And why didn't you kill them?"—"Where is a Serb supposed to get a gun?" I asked. They began to hit me. I saw that it was getting rough and jumped over the hedge. They shot, but I didn't come back. Where my wife and the two children are now, I don't know."

The other, older farmer with a fur cap said: "And we hid from the shooting in the store. Two families. One guy threw a bomb in. Before it went off I ran down the field. He threw another, then he shot with his gun. Two sons and my daughter-in-law—I don't know where they are. They killed my wife, too. . . ."

A little shop with stone walls, whitewashed and full of blood, and there in the semi-darkness a heap of tattered bodies with broken limbs, thin arms and wounds as big as the palm of your hand . . .

"Come here, look!" called the farmer to me. I entered the house. The seventy-year-old man was fumbling among jumbled things and broken dishes. It seemed as if he was trying to do something or was looking for something to kill time, but he was just wandering in the trashed house. In the room lay his two dead sons. The old farmer lady lay cowering and dead next to an empty trunk. The younger, blond son lay in the middle of the room; everywhere were parts of his brain. His legs were spread, his hands, the big hands of a farmer, were clutched and pointing upwards, the fingernails dirty from the earth and from the field. The second, older son lay half under the bed.

The room was small. It was full of blood, in which one could see a footprint: apparently the old man had left this print behind in the blood of his sons as he was stumbling about.

In the other house everything was tossed about. At the door post were traces of bullets; at the fireplace lay a farm woman with her throat slit. The bubbles were coming out white, because the wound was pulling apart. It was a young, 30-year-old woman, who was smeered with blood on her chin and in her face—did they smeer blood on their hands while they were holding her? She lay peacefully and beautiful in her destroyed home, arms and legs stretched out. Her little, chubby hands jut from the wide, not quite clean, linen sleeves. She was fat smeared, like after milking the cows.

I made the rounds from house to house.

There were no survivors to bury the dead. I saw two or three farmers and their wives, whose loved ones perhaps had all been killed—not all the bodies had been found yet, because they lay in the woods and in the fields. They were not crying. Their eyes were glazed, hard, and without expression.

On the fields and meadows, the animals were grazing without masters and were bellowing. Two farm women were driving sheep ahead of themselves. I spoke to them, but they just stood there as if they did not hear me. I remember: I had on a black hat and a black shirt, and they must have thought that I was an Ustasha. But why did they not run away, but instead stood standing?

"Don't be afraid! I am a partisan," I said. They approached me. The

one was an older, haggard farm woman, the other was fat cheeked and stout. She had recently married in the neighboring village and was on the way to visit her relatives. But the relatives were no longer. She was searching for them. It was very diffcult for her to search alone, and so she asked me to come with her. We walked around on the battlefield. In the meadow next to the path, we found two more young men. Next to them a tobacco box and a little purse, smeared up, open, probably empty. . . . Over one of the two, she said: "From my house, oh misery . . . my cousin!" But she did not cry; she spoke just like she would speak about anything else; and when we finally got to the pile of corpses at the crossing, after we had looked in many houses full of dead people, she turned around and asked with a blank and veiled look and folded hands: "What was that, brother?"

I felt nothing. My dear comrades, too, who had fallen in this village, didn't arouse pity in me. It seemed to me that I could easily and without effort just die. I would not have ducked a bullet, even if I knew the direction it was coming from. I had no feelings anymore for my own person and my own life. The farm women did not run away. No one cried. And still I could just as coldly have taken revenge.

Indeed, in my head and in my heart was only the one thought, which surely everyone had: Life in this world is not worth living as long as there are people who commit such atrocities. There is nothing else for us to do: it's either us or them . . .

July 1942
Dido

(As I noted in my diary on 17 July 1942, Milovan Dilas, member of the high staff, reported to comrade Tito on the massacre in Urije in western Bosnia, which had been carried out by the troop of Colonel Francetic. Afterwards I asked Dilas to write in my diary in his own hand what he had told comrade Tito. He complied to this request and made the entry printed above.)

12

Documents on Massacres under the Leadership of Priests

The State Commission on the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers in the document numbered 12849/45 determined that *Brale Bozidar,* Roman Catholic pastor in Sarajevo, was the organizer of the murders in Bosnia and made the following statement on him:

> Immediately after the founding of the NDH, he became the representative of the Ustasha commissioner in Sarajevo. After Germany's attack on the USSR, he ordered the mass arrest of all patriots. With the help of the occupiers, he gathered criminal elements in the Ustasha formations. These bands under his leadership conducted many massacres in the immediate vicinity of Sarajevo: Brale with weapon in hand also personally took part in the massacres on the bridge of Ali Pascha in Reljevo against innocent farmers and returned from these raids with groups of farmers who were then taken to the camp at Sarajevo and later disappeared. . . . Brale acted apparently with the approval of his superior, Archbishop Dr. Saric. Hardly a month after Brale had begun to head the Ustasha bands personally, he was named by Archbishop Saric to the position of honorary head of the archbishopric of Upper Bosnia with the right to wear the violet belt. It was generally known that the priest Brale was Saric's favorite and therefore, in spite of his youth, was put into a responsible position in the Church. On the day of his appointment, Brale said in a meeting of the society "Trebevic" that he would work "as my archbishop and my commission in Zagreb wish" [This concerns the Ustasha Commission, publishers note.] Archbishop Saric explained his choice of Brale on the occasion of presenting him with the certificate of nomination by saying that he had "recognized the services of Reverend Brale

Bozidar." Brale said the following to the same assembly of the Trebevic society: "From the ranks of the members of the Trebevic Society, we recruit the Ustashe, the national militia as well as the Ustasha women and female functionaries." And at this meeting, he said in his report: "The youth corp was not able to fulfill its duties completely because many of its male members have voluntarily donned the Ustasha uniforms and have been enlisted enthusiastically in the battle against the sworn enemies of the Croatian people."

Brale was especially enthusiastic about the horrifying atrocities of the "Black Legion" of Francetic. He said on 10 July 1942 on the occasion of the burial of fallen Ustashe: "As pastor and Ustasha, I kneel before these fallen heroes and with the Ustasha salute I report to them that their 'black comrades,' whose voice resounded in the Kozara mountains, will also enter the Ivan mountains and the slopes of Konjic and Bradina, to speak there just the same. In these historical mountains, the machine guns and the voice of the Ustasha will be heard. Eastern Bosnia will be witness to how the Black Legion speaks."

After the death of the Ustasha colonel Jure Francetic, Brale said: "Bosnia learned to know and love him and will hold him in memory as well as the day on which he entered the date of the founding of the Black Legion in his military diary. There is no doubt that Ustashadom represents the innermost kernel of the Croatian state. It is tightly and indivisibly bound with the history of the first revolutionary days and to their essential element. Therefore, it is no wonder that the opponents of the young state are fighting with all their energy against Ustashadom and the Black Legion, as its representative in Bosnia. In the face of his knightly figure, which remains with us, we assert our rights and swear now as in his lifetime:

'Immortal among the immortals! Gather them and us in the Legion so that our souls will watch and hover over all; forward to the stars of your Ustasha! . . .

'We call to you as you to us at the head of the Romania: Arise, ye dead, arise, thou, our Jure, so that you may command the living from the arcades of immortal Croatian sons, how to live, fight, and fall for the poglavnik and Croatia. Stay with us, with your eternally grateful Black [Legion]. Without you, we are orphans, for none among us has been so worthy, so famous, and so great as you, our beloved Jure. . . .' "

He said of himself that he was "an uncompromising fighter for the principles on which the young NDH state is built." When he came to Banja Luka to visit Dr Viktor Gutic, he told him exuberantly: "The Trebevic Society thanks you, dear brother Viktor. You are the head and soul of everything. If you could look into our hearts, you would see the old flame that the poglavnik first ignited and which you, Viktor, have spread in all of Croatia. We are always prepared for the poglavnik, for you, and for the NDH."

When the commissariat was dissolved, the press of Sarajevo wrote: "The commissioners exercised extremely prudently the power that they had taken over in a very difficult and critical situation, so that one cannot imagine

that anyone could have done it better. By the fact that our great poglavnik appointed them as his commissioners, he again proved how well he knows how to find the right man for every post. Without worry he was able to bequeath to our two leaders the power in our province; still today, having left their posts, they have left behind countless evidence that they were completely competent in their tasks. In a word: they had knowledge and understanding. . . ."

The truth of these remarks is attested to in the following testimonies and press accounts: Zorka Krajica, Kosta Curcic, Nikola Maljkovic, Abaz Ljubuncic, Ela Petrovic, Dragutin Savkovic, Mustafa Kurto, Dr. Mahmud Mehmedbasic, et al. Newspaper exerpts: "Osvrt" Nr. 7; *Sarajevski novi list* Nr. 80, 77, 93, 3, 69, 48, 247, 358, 584, 49, 30, 372, 22, 6, 7, 9, 17, 4, 281, 73, 13, 353, 27, 8, 72, 379, 582, 581, 558, 427, 644, 473; *Hrvatski list* of 4 May 1941, 21 April 1941, 3 May 1941, 7 May 1941, 9 May 1941, 5 May 1941, and 1 May 1941.

According to the judgment of the High Court for Bosnia and Hercegovina, Brale Bozidar was found guilty in Sarajevo under the documentation number Kv: 1145 of having committed the following crimes:

He is guilty:

1. of having cooperated politically with the enemy during the war in Sarajevo by using his position as member of the action committee of the Croatian nationalists to hold a meeting with the German colonel Becker, at which the demands of this committee were presented and the German commander was asked to make it possible for this committee to have contact with the "poglavnik," whereupon the enemy placed vehicles, weapons, and travel passes at the disposal of the members of this committee;

2. of having committed war crimes during the enemy occupation by being responsible for—while in Sarajevo as a member of the "NDH commission for the former Drinska Banovina," and instigator, organizer, and commander—the arrest, torture, compulsory emigration, and transport of Serbs and Jews to the concentration camps, as well as all those inhabitants of the former Drinska Banovina who were known to be freedom-loving citizens and opponents of the occupiers and of the Ustasha; also by carrying out compulsory conversions of Serbs and Jews to the Roman-Catholic faith and revoking the citizenship of these people and by organizing the plundering of the private property of the disenfranchized and expelled Serbs and Jews and carrying it out in his position as chief of the Napretkova Society in Sarejevo;

3. of having committed war crimes during the enemy occupation in his role as functionary of the terrorist Ustasha apparatus, by also being directly the propagator of murders and of the arrests and tortures of the inhabitants of the area of Pale and other areas of eastern Bosnia.

Interrogation of the Ustasha lieutenant Zlatan Mesic before the investigating authorities in Sarajevo on 20 August 1945:

What do you know about Brale Bozidar?

In 1941, when I came to Sarajevo with Vokic, I met with Brale as the Ustasha representative for Bosnia and Hercegovina; he and Hakija Hadzic were representatives of the poglavnik. Brale's secretary was Zvonko Dusper, who lived in Zagreb on Palmoticeva Street (his sister Zora knows the exact address), while Hakija's secretary, Trebinjac, later secretary to the District Leader in Travnik, where he founded the organization "Young Moslems" and then went over to the partisans. These two might know something about Brale's work.

In 1941 he came to Vokic one month after the latter had become Director of the Railroad, and demanded a purge among the employees in the administration. He said he knew that there were still Serbs, Jews, and communists in the employ. When he got nowhere with Vokic, he turned to Hladnik, the functionary in the directorship of the Ustasha security service. Among his closest associates were Hladnik, Jilek, Rados, Hraski, and Zubic.

I am familiar with his speeches, which were so extreme that the press would not even print them. For example, I was present in 1943 in Livno when Brale held a speech on the occasion of the celebration of 13 June, in which he attacked the Serbs and the partisans and demanded the annihilation of them and their families. Because his speeches were so extreme, he became popular in the extremist Ustasha circles. He held all these speeches in his role as priest.

In 1943 Brale went from Sarejevo to Zagreb, where he stayed a short time and then to Maribor. I heard—but I don't remember anymore from whom—that in Maribor he was appointed by the Gestapo and that he always wore a German uniform in Zagreb. I don't know anything further about him.

Zlatan Mesic

Frater *Petar Berkovic,* pastor and deacon in Drnis, behaved similarly to Brale who systematically carried out Ustasha directives in Bosnia and by murder solved the "National Question" in the NDH. From the report of the Commission for Determining the Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers, document F45O2/I, and also from the testimony of the eyewitnesses Joze Drezga, prison guard from Drnis, Mate Primorac, civil servant from Drnis, Stevo Vukasin, civil servant from Drnis, Petar Nakusic from Drnis, Spiro Skocic, son of Ilaja, farmer from Nos Kalik, and Simo Loncar, son of the deceased Lazo from Siveric, we learn the following:

Frater Petar Berkovic, as Ustasha functionary, together with the well known bloodhound, the field-camp director Juro Marojevic, is responsible for arrests, abuses, and murders of the Serbs in Drnis and the vicinity. The arrested individuals were brought out of the community jails in Drnis and put into court prisons and from there were deported individually or

in groups in the direction of Knin, where they disappeared without a trace. Thus Dusan Njegus, the son of the deceased Mate, Cedo Andric, son of Toda from Drnis, Ranko Beader, the son of the deceased Stjepan, Niko Janjic, son of the deceased Marko from Kricak, and Kosta Jovic, son of the deceased Jovo, were taken from the local jail to the court prison on 7 June 1941 and then deported on 14 June 1941 by the car belonging to the Mijanovic brothers in the direction of Knin, where they disappeared. Ranko Beader was sentenced especially harshly, and the prison guard of the county jail in Drnis, Joze Drezga, secretly brought a doctor in to him, Dr. Marko Skelin. Other prisoners were: Jovan Milos, the former policeman Mile Ivaz, Mile Loncar, and Jovo Njegic. They, too were taken from the local jails to the court prisons on 8 June 1941 and on 16 June 1941 were deported by car in the direction of Knin.

On 17 July 1941, Stevo Vukasin, son of the deceased Petar, and Vojko were arrested. They were, however, released again on 27 July 1941. Jovo Petranovic, called Juvelja, was arrested at the same time and released again; but at the second arrest of the Serbs, he was killed. Simo Colak, Mrden Mihovil, Niko and Branko Jovic, and Ranko Vukasin were arrested together with Stevo Vukasin and Vojko.

Mirko Kuvac, a teacher from Tepljuh, was taken to jail only because he asked that Vjeko Sirinic be released. The Ustashe beat him in the face, stomped him with their feet, and said that if he demands the release of Vjeko Sirinic, then he must be just as much a communist as the latter.

On 6 June 1941, Frater Petar Berkovic, along with Marojevic and the other bloodhounds Dogan and Ivica Matkovic, came into the house of Loncar Simo, son of the deceased Rade from Siveric, took his son Kosta along and locked him in the court prison in Drnis, where he stayed for 15 days; there they tortured him and finally took him to an unknown place, where they must have thrown him in a gorge.

[. . .]

From the personal diary of the priest *Duric* it is clear that he prepared the arrival of the Ustashe. He can be viewed as the inspiration of the bloodbath against the innocent Serb people. From numerous testimonies made to our investigating organs by witnesses of the bloody crimes of the Catholic priest and Ustasha camp director Antun Duric, who in 1941 and during the first half of 1942 committed criminal terror in the county of Dvor on the Una river, it is clear that he personally took part in the murders of Serbs, carried out arrests, and sent numerous Serbs to the camp; with the Ustasha military units, he set Serb villiages on fire. The fact that he as direct instigator is mainly responsible for these crimes, is clear from his diary:

On 14 April 1941, I drove my car from Divusa to Kostajnica and from there continued with the train to Zagreb in order to take care of necessary things in the re-organization and to assume authority for the whole county of Dvor. There I received a written decree, through which I was appointed Ustasha authority for the county of Dvor. On Wednesday 16 April, I returned from Zagreb. In the evening I met immediately with the leaders of all the villages, and we agreed on everything.

On 17 April, I went to Dvor, where I met 80 civil servants and employees.

On Monday, I again went to Dvor. On this day (28 April) 18 Croatian Ustashe from Kostajnica came with two offcers to Dvor and set up quarters in the school. On the same day, they arrested a Serb policeman who had been placed at our disposal and who contradicted them, then a toll officer and a former mail carrier, the retired Mladen Durman, and then an even greater number of prominent Serbs. Also Dragan Kosier, community notary from Divusa, was arrested and taken to Dvor.

In the same night, the guard of the Croatian Ustasha was attacked at the school. But since no one was recognized, the Ustashe shot four of the prisoners in their place: the toll officer, the policeman, Mladen Durman, and Vaso Mrkobrada, a retired notary.

On Tuesday 29 April, I was in Dvor and saw the bodies, which were buried on the same day at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. . . "

Testifying against Duric, the eyewitnesses of his crimes from the village Dabici, in the county of Dvor on the Una said:

We know very well that the priest Antun Duric from Divusa took over the control in the county of Dvor in April 1941. Thereafter, he went from community to community and swore in the civil servants and employees. At the same time, he issued the edict that everything in Cyrillic script had to be removed from schools and other establishments and replaced with signs in Latin script.

We remember that the Ustasha camp director, Father Duric, on 14 April 1941, along with Mato Stankovic, came by car to Zrinj. He immediately gathered all the residents and informed them that the Ustasha had to be organized and that he would help them with it. He immediately appointed Franjo Jakovac as Ustasha field-camp director, Franjo Jukic as Ustasha adjutant, and Martin Marakovic as troop leader and promised to send the necessary weapons. Then in the community of Zrinj, the notary Nikola Gajic was replaced by the Ustasha Juraj Stipic. Then camp director and priest Duric swore in all offcials in the community of Zrinj, fired the Serb community officials, and put Ustashe from Zrinj in their place. When the residents of Zrinj complained that they were too crowded in their village, Father Duric spread his arms out in the direction of the Serb villages and said: "Take whatever you need. I will help you with anything you need." Afterward the Ustashe bought ropes from Jakovac's store and had them cut up for tying

up the Serbs in the vicinity of Zrinj. They all bought padlocks, so that every resident of Zrinj would have chains and padlocks. On the order of Father Duric, they then began to arrest all the people from the villages of Rogulje, Brdani, and from the surrounding villages. They kept them for several days in jail and tortured them there in various ways. . . .

On 14 May 1941, the Ustashe from Zrinj, upon the order of the camp director and priest Duric, arrested 14 Serbs from the village of Rogulje, who were all prominent people: Teso Kravajica, Bozo Medic, Duro Jugovic, Stojan Jugovic, and others, who were taken to Koprivnica and never returned. At the same time, the Ustashe carried out house searches in the Serb houses in the neighboring villages of the community of Zrinj and took lard, meat, grain, liquor, and small animals, which they took to Zrinj. They used these things in part for the banquets, and gave part of them to the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric in Divusa.

On 19 December 1941, the Ustashe came on the orders of the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric and surrounded the village of Rogulje, where they captured twelve men and two women, took them to jail in Zrinj, and there tortured them in a beastial manner. They stripped the women and forced them to ride through the whole village singing. They chopped the men into pieces alive as they were riding on a donkey.

On 29 January 1942, the Ustasha, on the orders of the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric, came into the village of Segestin and carried out a massacre in this villiage, killed 180 people, plundered the village completely, and set fire to a fourth of the village.

On 26 February 1942, the Ustasha, on the orders of the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric, surrounded the village of Rogulje, burned it completely down, plundered it, and killed 14 people. This time they also plundered the village of Sam Draga, destroyed it completely by fire, and arrested Duro Petosevic, whom they took to Dvor, and killed him there.

It is also known to us that the Ustasha, on orders of the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric, forced their way into the village of Goricka, plundered it completely, and captured 117 people in order to send them to Kostajnica to the camp, where they since disappeared; they took a great part of the animals; they were accustomed to leaving the small animals in Divusa with the Ustasha camp director and priest Duric, who turned them over to his Ustashe.

We also wish to add something that we forgot along the way: The Ustasha camp director Duric sent the Ustasha chief Bujic to the Orthodox Church in Segestin to plunder it; they took all the valuable objects to the priest Duric.

Similar reports about the priest of crime, Duric, were given by the eyewitnesses Duro Coric and Mile Sase, who said among other things:

In the fall of 1941, the priest Duric came to the village of Uncani, where he said the following things in his speech: "Anyone who feels he is a Serb should move beyond the Drina, because we don't have any place here for Serbs. This is a Croatian Ustasha state, and anyone who considers himself decent should convert to Catholicism, because only that can be his salvation; you see how the Serbs travel to Belgrade in rivers and streams, and that will happen to anyone who considers himself a Serb; every Ustasha has orders to drive out those who live in the villages along the Una. These pigs should better float down the Una than to live on its banks." His lieutenants Imbro Kostelac and Milan Vrstan, the Ustasha murderers, acted accordingly.

We remember that in the summer of 1941 this same priest gave the Ustashe the orders to lynch us, i.e., about 80 Serbs from the village of Uncani, whom they had taken hostage; the executioners were his sworn Ustashe Pero Mutavdzija, Jure Spicnagel, Matija Stipic, among others; they beat Nikola Brdar most, whose ribs they hit so hard that he still suffers from the severe results today, as do Dmitar Brdar and Petar Jankovic.

This same priest Duric had Duro Coric, Milan Coric, Bozo Buinjac, Nikola Rabljenovic, Dragan Crnobrnja, Dragan Rabljanovic from the village of Kuljani, and Dragan Gvozdic from Kozibrod arrested; they were tortured in various ways, and Nikola Rabljenovic was killed on the orders of the priest Duric.

The eyewitness Nikola Dabin from the village of Gornja Orahovica in the county of Dvor on the Una testifies:

I know that the priest Duric in the summer of 1941 personally in his residence in Divusa shot Mladen Filipovic from the Bosanski Ravnice in the county of Bosanski Novi, that he tortured and killed him. This same priest, along with the head of the community of Divusa, gave orders for the mass shooting of the Serbs in Volinja at Rovinje; then he ordered the remaining Serbs from the vicinity of Divusa to dig graves and bring quicklime to scatter on the dead. I know that he roamed through the neighboring villages with the Ustasha colonel Mrak and deployed his spies for the Ustasha state; specifically those Ustashe who were the most ruthless opponents of the Serb people during the NDH.

Until July 1942, the priest Duric held the function of the Ustasha camp director for the county of Dvor and after that continued the same activity in Kapela Batrina.

The eyewitness Mirko Vranesevic reports the following about Duric:

. . . at the six-month celebration of the founding of the NDH, the priest Duric held a speech in Dvor, where he had gathered all the residents, and

admonished them that they had three possibilities of proceeding against the Serbs in the county of Dvor: conversion, deporting, or purging with the iron broom (the gun). They were to choose from these possibilities.

The above-named priest emphasized again and again that a hundred Serbs would be killed if even one Ustasha Croat would come to harm. He had this announced in Dvor to the accompaniment of a drum roll.

This same priest Duric plundered the Orthodox Church of St. Dorde in Dvor, which he entered without removing his head covering. He took a golden chalice, a candelabra of silver, and the vestments of the priests.

[. . .]

In the State Commission for the Identification of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers, under document number 12861 there is a statement by Milka Skobic, the wife of Dorde, born in Sarajevo, who tells the following about the crimes of the priest *Eugen Gujic*:

My brother-in-law Miladin Minic was an Orthodox priest in Biljesevo in Zenica. At the end of April 1941, I visited him. In the night of 27 April, four men came to his house, of whom one introduced himself as Eugen Gujic, representative of Poglavnik Ante Pavelić, former Catholic priest in Busovaca. With him were Nezir Becirevic, Saban Sabanovic, and a Hercegovac whose first name I do not know. They were all from the vicinity of Lasva. I did not know them personally, but I learned their names from any sister, the wife of the deceased Miladin Minic. They arrested Miladin immediately and threatened us that they would come back and kill us if we left the house. In all this, they hit and abused my mother and my sister, whom Gujic struck on the back with his gun and broke two of her ribs. Mother was hit, too. Then they plundered the house and took with them all the valuables they could find. They took Miladin away and locked me and my mother Vasilija Skobic, my sister Divna, and her child in a room. Immediately after they had left the house, we heard a shot. From our house, they went into the Orthodox Church which they likewise plundered. Then they came back and with the intention of killing us, they threw a hand grenade into the house, which, however, did not explode, because they didn't know how to handle it. Then they disappeared again. In the next morning, we left the house, since we were not being watched, and in front of the house, we found our dead Miladin.

In the plundering of the house, they took the following things: three gold rings, 4,800 Dinar in silver, and a sum—I don't know exactly how much—in bank notes, a gold fountain pen, the riding equipment belonging to the deceased Miladin, and several other things. I do not know the value of the items.

This was also confirmed by Divna Minic, the wife of the deceased Miladin, in her statement that she gave before the State Commission for the Identification of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers under document number 12861. Among other things, she said the following:

> . . . Back then I knew what would happen to Miladin, and I asked the priest Eugen Gujic not to kill us. I told him he could take all our things. I knelt before him and folded my hands, but he slapped me and said that he didn't want anything to do with women.

The priest *Mate Mogus* incited national and religious intolerance between Serbs and Croats along the Udbina. As a long-time Ustasha, he helped with the disarming of the Yugoslav army in 1941 and organized the Ustasha militia along the Udbina. Mogus was the Ustasha authority for the Udbina area and in this function issued the orders for the arrest of the Serbs, and in doing so he was simultaneously responsible for the murders of many people. In the trial, he gave a confession about his participation in these crimes, which was confirmed by the testimony of Nikica Momcilovic from Vrebic and Nikica Majstorovic from Udbina:

> Mogus often held meetings with the leading Ustasha murderers; at these meetings, they planned the elimination of the innocent and poor Serbian people, and after every meeting came arrests and murders, which were decided in advance. This was the case with a Montenegran who was arrested on Mogus' orders and was killed in Lovinac by Ustasha thieves along with the miller Bozo Mrkobrada from Mekinjar and seven other persons from various villages of the province of Udbina.
>
> Thus several times 60 people were arrested and killed. In three actions, about 20 people were killed in Mornara and in Gaj on the island of Korija, another 10 in the gorges on Krbavsko Polje and 15 in the cemetery at Korija. All this happened while the Ustasha authority was in the Udbina area and according to his plan and at his command.
>
> After the persecution, the flight, and the murdering of the Serbs, Mate Mogus came to their wasted farms, which he and other Ustashe in his command plundered. An example is the plundering of the business of the merchant Cveticanin from Visuci.
>
> He spared no words nor violence in rebaptizing the Serbian people. On 13 June 1941, the name day of the Ustasha poglavnik, he spoke publicly at a mass meeting in Udbina: "We will move the Serbian people out of Croatia and eliminate them, and I will be happy when I can divide up Serbian soil among the Croats. The Ustashe will fight mercilessly and will eliminate everyone who is not true to the independent state of Croatia and its poglavnik and founder Ante Pavelić. People, look at these sixteen brave Ustashe, who have 16,000 bullets and will kill 16,000 Serbs with them. Then

we will divide Mutilicko and Krbavsko Polje among ourselves like brothers."

After this speech, the Ustasha bandits set about to convert their commander's words into deeds and began their mass murders of the Serbs in the province of Udbina.

The priests *Petar Sivjanovic* and *Jakob Marjanovic* prepared the arrests of Serbs in Grubisno Polie. They suggested to the Ustasha emigrant Ivaca Saric to come to Grubisno Polie with a company of Ustashe because there was allegedly a threat of a Serb rebellion. It was said they intended to revolt on St. Dorde's day.

In the indictment from the provincial court at Daruvar on 22 October 1945, the document number 424/45 states:

Petar Sivjanovic was the instigator organizer, and aided in the mass, arrests, murders, compulsory resettlements, the transport to the concentration camps, and the compulsory conversions to the Catholic faith.

Following the instructions and directives of Dr. Lujo Stahuljak, a former attorney in Grubisno Polje and deputy in the Interior Ministry of the NDH, at the end of April 1941 he along with the priest Jakob Marjanovic composed a letter about the establishment of the Ustasha authority in the county of Grubisno Polie. This letter was delivered by a certain Horvat to Franjo Saric, the father of the well known Ustasha emigrant Ivica Saric. Ivica Saric was chief of the Ustasha police in Zagreb. In the letter it was stated that the Serbs of the county of Grubisno Polie were planning an uprising on the day of St. Dorde. On the basis of this letter, Ivica Saric, Dido Kvaternik, and several other officers came on 26 April 1941 in a special train from Zagreb accompanied by a police troop of about 120 men. Ivica Saric, Dido Kvaternik, and the other officers immediately went to the pastoral office in Grubisno Polie and reported to the pastor Sivjanovic. They said they were coming to fetch all the Serbs in the county of Grubisno Polie, since they were preparing an uprising on the day of St. Dorde. Thereupon Dr. Lujo Stahuljak and the county supervisor Zorislav Mikic were brought in, who issued the arrest orders for the Serbs. They then went into the building of the county offices, where they continued their work. Thereupon 504 Serbs were arrested and on the next day sent to the camp Danica in Koprivnica. Later they were taken to the camp on the island of Pag and finally to Jadovno, where they were all killed except for a few exceptions. Sivjanovic admonished the Serbs to convert to the Catholic faith, and for this purpose he also made propaganda outside the church. He led them to believe that they then would not be killed. Although he demanded a steep tax, he was successful in converting over 100 Serbs to the Catholic faith, who, however, were later taken away anyway.

[. . .]

In Hercegovina right after the capitulation of the former Jugoslav state, the Ustasha carried out mass murders at the beginning of May 1941 in the vicinity of Mostar Stolac, Capljina, Bilece, Nevesinje, and in other places. The priests were the incitors of a deep hatred of the Serbian people and they themselves took part in the persecutions and murders.

Among them, the deacon of Stolac, *Marko Zovko,* stands out, who was then in the Ustasha committee and in this function was responsible for the terrible massacres that were committed in the county of Stolac. The Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers says the following in document 12846:

> In 1941 he received the troops of the occupiers enthusiastically and with open arms and tried to convince the people gathered around him of the justice of the Hitler war and his unconquerable power. He jubilantly embraced Italian fascists, housed them in his parsonage, and hosted them royally.
>
> Within a short time, he became the religious instigator, organized the Ustashe, and helped them in the formation of the Ustasha army. For this purpose, he, as pastor, frequently held consultations with respected Croatian farmers from the neighboring villages of the county of Stolac. He tried to trick them with lies and to make them afraid of the danger threatening them from the Serbs if the latter were not liquidated promptly.
>
> He carried out the mass compulsory baptisms of the Serbs by promising them that the baptism certificates were a guarantee for saving their lives. Nevertheless, the Serbs later fell victim to the terror and the violence of the Ustashe. He continued his agitation when 200 people were killed in the gorge in Vidovo Polje. And without thinking even for a moment of what had happened the day before, the next day, with a newspaper in his hand, he held a speech on the market square about the unstoppable encroachment of the Germans in Russia and about the imminent end of the war.
>
> He declared that they had done well to kill so many Serbs promptly, because otherwise no Croats would have been left alive. When he had made clear to everyone which side was winning, he gathered all the bitter enemies of progress and of patriotism around him and in Stolac received the Ustasha minister Frkovic and the Ustasha General Begic, as well as high German commanders.
>
> At the meeting with the well known bloodhounds, he adopted the words of Minister Frkovic and repeated before everyone present that there dare be no more Serbs in Croatia.
>
> With agents and denunciators of the Italian OVRA, the German Gestapo, and the Ustasha Security Service, he organized the arrests and internments of patriots in prisons and camps. He did all this insidiously and carefully and in doing so acted as if he had nothing to do with it and knew nothing about it.
>
> According to the testimony of Desimir Mihic, which is in the docu-

> ments of the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers, Marko Zovko "consoled" his newly converted faithful as follows: "It was not our intention to save your lives. History teaches us that there were people in former times who disappeared, and the Serbian people will do the same. When we converted you to the Catholic faith, we had the intention of saving your souls."

The Catholic priest *Don Ilija Tomas,* pastor in the village of Klepci, will remain in the darkest memory of the Serbian people. The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers says the following about him in document 12846:

> At the time of Jugoslavia's capitulation, he was pastor in Klepci. He distinguished himself here in the disarming of the army and in the abuse of Yugoslav soldiers who were in the vicinity of Capljina and his parish.
>
> He placed himself at the disposal of the Ustasha quarters in Capljina and was one of the main organizers of the massacre of 1941. Cleverly he was successful in organizing the unruly Ustashe; he himself was named the deputy in the tobacco station in Capljina, where he immediately distinguished himself in the persecution of orthodox officials and workers. When most of the preparations were made and the Ustashe organized, Don Ilija Tomas took over the leadership. He gave his blessing, and the annihilation of the Serbs could begin.
>
> The Ustashe murdered every day. The Neretva was colored blood red every day, and the ravines in the Bivolje mountains and in Opuzen were full of innocent victims. Every day Don Ilija made new suggestions at the meetings of the Ustasha in Capljina concerning the destruction of the Serbs. In addition to these meetings, he also held farmers' meetings with significant Ustasha murderers. In Tasovcici, he came daily to Mara Cokjat and over a good meal and drinks they discussed "whom they would kill this evening." They put out a list of people who were to be killed on the current day or in the night. When the Serbs recognized that their destruction was planned, they converted to the Catholic faith upon his bidding. Don Ilija accepted the new converts in the church of his parish, so he could increase its size with the new members. In July 1941, he held a speech in the church, which was filled with Catholic and Orthodox citizens, and said the following: "We are preparing now a new field, because we wish to sow a new fruit, but hear well: As long as this new field is not completely rid of weeds and as long as it is not free of them, this field will not bear the fruit that it should bear." This was an allusion to the Ustasha state and the Serbian people and was saying essentially that without the annihilation of the Serbs, no prosperity was possible. And although the whole population of Capljina and the surrounding villages had converted to the Catholic faith, in July 1941 women, children, and babies were deported in rail cars to Capljina

and from there to Surmanci to the gorge into which they were all thrown alive. Don Ilija, full of joy that there were no more people in the villages, and after he had furnished his house with all sorts of plundered objects, spent peaceful nights with the teacher Lujza Spari from Dracevo, while he got drunk and awarded his coworkers with things that he had stolen from the poor people. Every evening in the company of his lady friend school teacher, with whom he was also sleeping, he would have a festive meal. They celebrated their actions and spoke about how many Serbs they had killed on that day.

Don Ilija had a motorcycle. In ten minutes he was in Capljina, where he received new instructions for his work and where in the Ustasha quarters, he could receive the information collected in the foreign service on how one could most quickly and thoroughly eliminate the Serbs.

On 1 May 1942, the partisans attacked Prebilovci. When Don Ilija noted that things were getting rather hot for him, he took a truck and along with everyone who had murdered in Trusina, Nevesinje, Capljina, and other places, he drove to Bekija. After he arrived there, he organized the gangs for the battle against the partisans and promised them that there would be meat for the eagles and the ravens. Fully baffled by the fact that he was having such great trouble with the defense of his parish, he said: "We should have killed them all in 1941, then we would have nothing to fear now."

In the commissariat for Refugees in Belgrade, a great number of Serbian refugees reported on the barbaric behavior of the Ustashe in this area. Here we present an excerpt from the testimony of Desimir Mihic:

It is hard to remember the enormous number of victims, and it is also not possible to describe the horror that they experienced before the Ustasha beasts gave them the death blow. But we figure that in the county of Stolac, over 4,000 completely innocent Serbs were killed. Primarily they killed men over sixteen, but in many cases, they also did not hesitate to kill women and small children in the cradle. A Croatian nurse in the hospital at Stolac told me that in the battles in Brekovici where she was serving, she saw mountains of dead children who had been killed in beastly ways. Why? Who taught them to hate their innocent comrades, their blood brothers, so horribly? In my opinion they were people like the one on whose door I knocked in Christ's name (Don Ilija Tomas is meant).

He forced about ten unhappy brothers from the village of Klepci and other villages nearby to convert to the Catholic Church, then gave them communion and brought them to the school, where the Ustashe were waiting for them and murdered them in a beastial way.

Other refugees from Capljina also described the criminal character of Ilija Tomas:

On 26 June 1941 in Capljina, there was an appeal to the Serbs to convert to the Roman Catholic faith. For this, they were promised that they would be given equal status with the Croats and would not be persecuted. The Serbs who were in prison were promised that they would be able to go home after the conversion to the Roman Catholic faith. Since at that time all male Serbs had been thrown into prison and many had also been killed, only women and children had remained at home. Many women after this announcement went to the branch offices of the county authorities and declared that they wished to convert to the Roman Catholic faith in order thus to save their men, sons, and brothers from death. This did them no good, however. The Serbs were killed anyway. Right from the beginning, the Serbian Orthodox Church in Capljina was closed as were the Serbian Orthodox churches in the villages of Klepci and Gabela. On the orders of the Ustasha, the Serbs went to the Roman Catholic church. But first the Ustasha had plundered all the Orthodox churches completely.

Three days after Easter 1942, Don Ilija Tomas led the Ustasha from the village Klepci into the village of Prebilovci. There was a fight between Ustashe and Serbs in which Don Ilija died. Out of revenge for his death, the Ustasha prepared a further massacre of the Serbs. . . . In addition to Don Ilija Tomas, the Frater Tugomir from Capljina was also prominent in the persecution of the Serbs.

From the report of the Ustasha priest Eugen Beluhan, "The Pastor from Neretva—Don Ilija Tomas," published in *Hrvatski Narod* on 25 July 1942:

In Hercegovina, the parishes were divided among outside priests and Franciscans. Each church, each cloister, especially in the mixed religions, looks like a tower, a bunker, or a plant nursery of faiths or of Croatiandom. Shortly before the present war, outside priests also made themselves prominent. . . .

Shortly thereafter, Don Ilija was named chief deputy of the Ustasha for the whole area. He too continued his daily work and first of all performed his pastoral duties as a Catholic pastor. Therefore early in the morning, shortly after eight o'clock, on his motorcycle he visited his parish. Then he went to work as deputy. . . . He gave aid and recommendations, so that the right people got into the right positions. He worked with the Germans, who also supported him. . . .

In the county of Stolac along with Don Marko Zovko, the initiator of the Ustasha murders, *Don Ivan Raguz,* a priest from Stolac, was also prominent. About him, Savko Ivanovic, the son of the deceased Ahmet, said before the investigative authorities on 3 March 1945 under the document number 169/45 the following:

Already during the time of old Yugoslavia, Don Ivan was known to one as a follower of Pavelić and the Ustasha movement. Right after the capitulation of Yugoslavia, he became one of the most important Ustasha functionaries in our town. He was always in the company of Franjo Smolo, Don Marko Zovko, Ilija Raguz, Ivo Fabijanec, and Omerbeg Rizvanbegovic—known Ustasha functionaries—with whom he also conferred. I remember precisely how Don Ivan in April 1941 approached the conquered troops returning from Albania and taunted them with the most despicable names: "Where did you march off to, you cowards? You didn't need to go anyplace to fight with the great axis. Get on home. To hell with you!" and such.

Two days before the Ustasha slaughtered the Serbs, Don Ivan said on the street near his house: "There's going to be a slaughter. We'll take care of them." And indeed within two days all the Serbs were killed. After the murder of the Serbs, he said that some communists had appeared who would also have to pay. He constantly worked with the above mentioned Ustashe and in the café of Salko Cimic where I was present, he publicly bragged that he along with the Ustasha would solve all the problems and that he would take care of the Serbs most promptly, etc. After the massacre of the Serbs, he told Cvija, the widow of Gaso Krunic (she lives today in Borovo): "We shouldn't leave even one of their children, so not a single germ would remain of this brood."

I forgot to mention that on the day after the murder of the Serbs, he raised the flag and said: "How nice everything is now. Now everything is OK, the way it is supposed to be. Now we have houses to live in and roasts and everything else to eat."

After the occupation of some Russian cities, he invited his friends, the above-mentioned Ustashe, to a dinner.

He threatened to kill my wife because she did not raise the flag as the German troops were marching in. He announced that all Serbs and communists would be killed as soon as the Germans were finished with the Russians. In general, he was known in our village as a high Ustasha and as the instigator of crimes. He was one of the main initiators of the gruesome deeds.

The Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers shows the following about Don Ivan Raguz under document number K 846:

At the time of the massacres of the Serbian people, he admonished the Serbs to convert to the Catholic faith; this was the only chance of their survival. His goal, however, consisted of getting the people to stay around so that the Ustasha could completely eliminate them. He publicly sanctioned the actions of the Ustasha and celebrated whenever there was a massacre someplace. In his sermons, he incited the Croatian people from the pulpit to shed the blood of the Serbs. He portrayed Pavelić as the legal and

> true leader of the Croatian people, and he depicted the Ustasha movement as a movement that all Croats should join. This was the proper route that would lead them all together with the "poglavnik" into a happier future.

The official of the Church court in Plaski, Jovan Trbojevic, reported on the terror of the priest *Morber,* who had been a member of the culture group in Gracac. Among other things, he testified as follows:

> The massacre in the village of Stikada was carried out by the Ustasha from the village of Gudura with the help of the then Roman Catholic priest Morber from Gracac. On the day of the massacre, the pastor drove his car from Gracac to Stikada and called the people to the inn "Stikadske Bare." There they were to convert to the Roman Catholic faith and then would have to fear no persecution. The Serbs believed the pastor and gathered in great numbers at the named spot. Anyone who did not go voluntarily was forced to come. Nevertheless, some of the Serbs were able to save themselves by fleeing from the village, because they suspected that a massacre was at hand. When the Serbs had been gathered, the militarily armed Ustasha from the village of Gudura carried out the massacre of them. Upon excavating the bodies in 1942, it was learned that some must have been killed with axes and wooden hammers, since their skulls had been crushed with blunt instruments. Some must have been buried alive and standing up.
>
> (*Archives of the Commissariat for Refugees:* A IX., Nr. 4365)

The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers came to the following conclusion in the case of *Frater Silvije Frankovic* from Bugojno—document 12846:

> During the massacres of the Serbs in 1941 Frater Silvije Frankovic from Bugojno was seen constantly in the company of the worst Ustasha murderers and of Ustasha officers. Before the inn of Pero Mrsa in Bugojno, he met the Ustasha captains Bozo Krizanac, Perica Kutlesa, and Ivo Jerle (from whose leather coat a knife could be seen). These men asked him laughingly: "Reverend, when will you be hearing our confessions?" Frater Silvije answered: "It is still too soon for you. Once you have taken care of everything, then you can come and I will hear your confessions." When Markica Pazin and Milan Sesun converted to the Catholic faith in 1941, Frater Silvije said: "Too bad that we didn't kill the Moslems first and then the Serbs." When Branko Ustra, the county supervisor in Bugojno, told him he killed fourteen people, he replied: "When you have killed forty, I will hear your confession and forgive you everything."

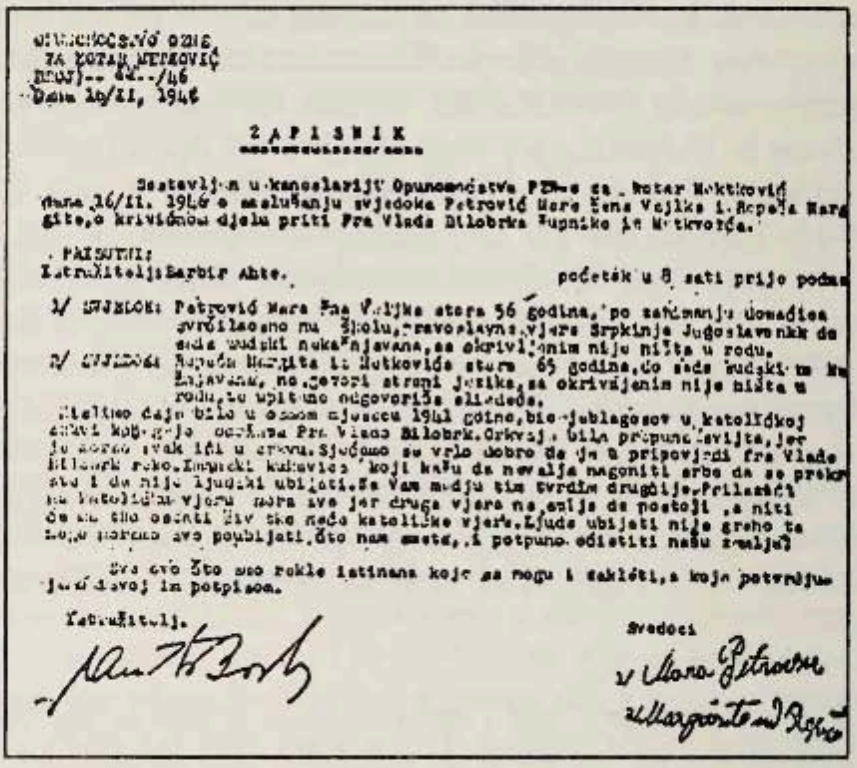
As in Bosnia and in Hercegovina, a portion of the priests in Dalmatia also supported the Ustasha crimes. While the Ustashe were carrying out their massacres of the Serbs on the borders of Dalmatia, a portion of the Franciscans in Dalmatia itself were trying to kill the Serbs living there.

One of these Franciscan pastors was the *Frater Vlado Bilobrk* in Metkovic. He carried out the compulsory conversions of the Serbs in Metkovic. He organized the Ustashe along the Neretva and along with *Frater Roko Ronac* and *Don Martin Gudelj* was the initiator of the Ustasha murders in Metkovic. From the testimonial statements that were given to our investigative authorities, it is clear that Frater Vlado Bilobrk was a sworn Ustasha since 1935. As an Ustasha deputy for Metkovic in 1941 and as field camp director at the time when the Serbs were being persecuted and murdered in this area, he was responsible for these Ustasha crimes. Veljko Petrovic from Tuzla, who lived in Metkovic, testified about him as follows:

> I know Frater Bilobrk well, and I also know that in 1941 as the Orthodox people were hauled out of Metkovic and killed near Opuzen, he exerted all his strength to force the Serbian people to convert from the Orthodox to the Catholic faith. One evening in July of the same year he came to me personally in order to convert me too. In doing so, he insisted that this was my only chance of survival. Once I understood that they were killing people every day and that Bilobrk was the driving force in this, I converted to the Catholic faith.

Similar testimony about the criminal behavior of Frater Vlado Bilobrk was made also by Drina Unkovac, Dorde Popovac, Stanka Jelic, Ljuba Unkovic, Stanka Dujmovic, Bozo Petrov, and many others. The witness Veljo Sukoveza, the son of the deceased Tomo from Metkovic, testified the following about Frater Bilobrk:

> I have known Frater Vlado Bilobrk since 1940 when he came to Metkovic as deacon. I am aware that from the beginning he was a sworn Ustasha. Right after the capitulation of former Yugoslavia, he became an Ustasha organizer in Metkovic and began to incite religious and national hatred. He scared the Serbs in Metkovic by telling them they would be killed if they did not convert to the Catholic faith. Thus many Serbs converted out of fear, among them Nikola-Dule Buntic, Anda Vukosav with his whole family, and Mice Popovac.
>
> As one of the main organizers in the persecution of the Serbs in Metkovic, in 1941, right after the fall of the former Yugoslavia, he assumed the function of the Ustasha field camp director in Metkovic. During the persecution and the massacres of the Serbs in 1941, Spiro Mostarac met the same Bi-



Broj:-- 42../46
Dana 16/II, 1946

Z A P I S N I K

Sastavljen u kancelariji Opunomoćstva PZ-e za Kotar Metković dana 16/II. 1946 o saslušanju svjedoka Petrović Mare žene Vejlke i Repeša Margite, o krivičnom djelu priti Fra Vlada Bilobrka župnika iz Metkovića.

PRISUTNI:
Istražitelj: Barbir Ante.

početak u 8 sati prije podne

1/ SVJEDOK: Petrović Mara Fra Vejlke stara 56 godina, po zanimanju domaćica svršila osnovnu školu, pravoslavne vjere Srpkinja Jugoslavenka da sada sudski nekažnjavana, sa okrivljenim nije ništa u rodu.

2/ SVJEDOK: Repeša Margita iz Metkovića stara 65 godina, do sada sudski nekažnjavana, ne govori stranih jezika, sa okrivljenim nije ništa u rodu, te upitano odgovorile sljedeće.

Mislimo da je bilo u osmom mjesecu 1941 godine, bio jubilagosov u katoličkoj crkvi kod župe je ispovijed Fra Vlado Bilobrk. Crkva je bila prepunjena svijeta, jer je morao svak ići u crkvu. Sjećamo se vrlo dobro da je u pripovijedi fra Vlado Bilobrk reko. Imajući kukavice koji kažu da nevalja nagoniti srbe da se prekrste i da nije ljudski ubijati. Za Vas mudju tim tvrdim drugčije. Prilazeći na katoličku vjeru nema sve jer druga vjera ne znači da postoji, a niti će ne tko osjetit živ tko neće katoličke vjere. Ljude ubijati nije grehota te koje moramo sve poubijati, što nam smeta, i potpuno očistiti našu zemlju?

Sve ovo što smo rekle istinama koje se mogu i zakleti, a koje potvrđujemo svojim potpisom.

Istražitelj.

Svedoci

Mara Petrovic

Margarita Repeša

Facsimile of the testimony of the witnesses Mara Petrovic and Margita Repesa about the influence of the Ustasha pastor Vlado Bilobrk.

lobrk in Metkovic and told him: "Frater Vlado, it is not right to persecute people and kill them. If anyone is guilty, he is to be put into forced labor." Bilobrk replied to him: "We cannot use an enemy either before us or behind us. The residents of Capljina had to endure murders among them, and it will be the same for the residents of Metkovic."

Here follows the protocol of the hearing of the witness Mara Petrovic, the wife of Veliko, and Margita Repesa concerning the crimes of Frater Vlado Bilobrk, the pastor of Metkovic.

Hearing

Begin: Eight o'clock in the morning.

First witness: Mara Petrovic, wife of Veliko, 56 years old, housewife, grammar school graduate, Orthodox, Serb, Yugoslav, no previous convictions, not related to the accused.

Second witness: Margita Repesa from Metkovic, 65 years old, no previous convictions, not related to the accused.

They replied to questions as follows:

We think it was in August of 1941. Frater Vlado Bilobrk was conducting a benediction in the Catholic Church. The church was overbilled, because

everyone had to attend. We remember quite well that Frater Vlado Bilobrk said during the sermon: "There are cowards who think it is not right to force the Serbs to convert, and that it is not humane to kill them. I maintain, however, the opposite. Everyone must convert to the Catholic faith because no other religion has a right to exist and no one will live who does not adopt the Catholic faith. To kill a person is no sin; on the contrary, we must kill everyone who hinders us and must cleanse our land of these.

We swear to the truth of our testimony and confirm it with our signatures.

Mara Petrovic
and Margita Repesa

Among the Dalmatian Franciscans, *Frater Ivan Hristic* was prominent as an unbending enemy of the Serbian people. He gathered Ustashe around himself with whom he took part in the disarming of the Yugoslav army in Sinj and there also constructed the Ustasha camp. He took part in the persecution of the Serbs in Vrlica and transported the prisoners in two trucks from the village Mahovice to Sinj. Since there were simultaneously massacres of the Serbs in the county of Livno, he gave the order to transport to Livanjsko Polje the captive Serbs who had been brought from Vrlica. There they were all killed in August 1941 and thrown into the coal mine in the village of Prolog. When the Italians took over in Dalmatia, he joined the militia of the military priests and achieved the rank of a batallion commander. He took part in the campaigns in the Kozara mountains in Bosanska Krajina, where his units committed atrocities against the Serbian population. The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers made the following conclusions in document Nr. 12799:

The cloister in Sinj was known for its anti-national attitude and for the crimes that were committed by the brothers of this cloister. Especially the *Fraters Ivan Hristic, Stanko-Litre Milanovic* and *Jozo Olujic* distinguished themselves in these deeds. Upon their orders, 25 persons were locked in the prison of Sinj, whereby Frater Ivan Hristic was the main instigator. He threatened to raze Sinj, because it was a breeding ground of "Communes." On 14 August 1941 in the village Kosuti, 24 champions of the partisans were captured by the Italians and thrown into the prison. They lay in this prison in Sinj in the coal bin for eight days without food and water. Frater Ivan Hristic came to the basement and began to tread on the chained partisans. Full of rage, he pulled a large revolver and stuck it into the mouth of Borozan, one of the prisoners. He was about to pull the trigger, but Frater Stanko Milanovic stopped him with the words: "Don't dirty your hands with this filth. A grave will be dug for them soon enough." Then

> Frater Hristic kicked Borozan in the face and in doing so knocked two teeth out. The mobile summary court, which had been formed through a special arrangement from Pavelić, condemned these 24 people to death. The sentence was carried out on the same day in the presence of the Fraters Ivan Hristic, Jozo Olujic, and Stanko-Litre Milanovic. Frater Ivan Glibotic photographed the dead prisoners. Responsible for these murders as instigators are: Frater Ivan Hristic, Frater Stanko-Litre Milanovic, who was also Ustasha captain and military priest in the 27th Ustasha battalion in Sinj.
>
> Documentation: The written word of the county authorities in Sinj V.T., Nr. 35, on 26 August 1941 and the copy of the sentence of the mobile summary court on 26 August 1941, Nr. 1/41. Protocol report of 4 May 1945 from Ante Bareza and others. Protocol of the hearing of the injured: Danica Perica, Andro Perica, Zorka Borozan, Katica Markotic, Dobrila Urlic, Ozic-Pajic Bartula, and others.

Petar Vuletic, son of the deceased Kamilo from Sinj, testified as follows in the protocol that was recorded by the County Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers from Central Dalmatia in the document 26-Zh. 16919–16934:

> In the night of 8 to 9 February 1944, the following citizens were taken hostage in Sinj: Dusan Tripalo, Darja Bojanic, Jakov Vardar, Ante Stipkovic, Blaz Branic, Ante Bareza, Jakov Delic, Ante Vujevic, Ivan Acalija, Milena Boko, Petar Pavlovic, Vjera Covic, Stjepan Milun, Miko Einspieler, Nikola Kulic, and others. Responsible for these arrests are: the Fratres Ivan Hristic, Stanko Milanovic-Litre, and Krsto Krzanic. The witnesses are: Petar Vuletic, Ante Vuletic, Ante Bareza, all from Sinj.

Cohort of Vlado Bilobrk in the execution of the mass murders of the Serbs in the Neretva valley was *Don Martin Gudelj*. The testimony of Jure Dujmovic from Opuzen, which he made before the investigative authorities in Metkovic (document 85/46), says the following:

> When the Ustasha rule of terror began in 1941, Don Martin Gudelj was one of the main organizers. From the pulpit he demanded participation in the Ustasha movement. In the church he demanded also that ditches be dug under the poplar tree so that the Serbs could be buried there. This was done, and when the first group had been murdered, Don Martin gathered people in Opuzen who were to dig more ditches because on the next day even more Serbs were to be added. Thus Don Martin had 450 Serbs killed. When the Ustasha butchers were through with their bloody deeds, Don Martin invited them to eat and hosted them with various drinks, which he had stolen from the people. He showed no shame in preaching from

> the altar that all Serbs and communists had to be killed to the last man, because they were against God and against the faith. Thus Don Martin solicited young men in Neretva-Kessel for the Ustasha movement. In the same manner he along with Stanko and Jure Salacan, Jozo Pecani, and the camp director Jelavic organized banquets for Italian and later also for German officers. I know that Don Martin, as the Germans were arriving, told everywhere that they had been sent by God to kill all the communists and that every proper Croat had to make his contribution by denouncing the partisans and their helpers. Every Sunday he admonished the people from the altar to fight against the partisans, whom he characterized as communists. Later, after I had fled, I found out that Martin Gudelj was constantly in touch with the Germans and that they visited him first when they came to Opuzen. When the Germans were in Opuzen later, he cooperated with them.

The Italian fascist journalist Conrado Soli published in *Il Resto di Carlino* on 18 September 1941 the article "Gli Uccellini di Graciaz" (The Birds of Gracac). The heading of this revealing article refers to the observation of the "Sparrows of Gracac," which is connected with the legend of St. Francis of Assisi, and refers also to the recollection of the conversation with the German artillery Major K., with whom he had traveled the territory of the NDH. The fascist journalist characterized the clero-fascist terror in the NDH as follows:

> The first Franciscan from Assisi made brothers and sisters of the birds and fishes, but his pupils and spiritual followers in the NDH full of hate slaughter innocent people, brothers by the father in heaven, brothers by the same language, brothers by the same blood, and brothers who live on the same mother earth, which nourishes them all in the same manner: They slaughter, kill, bury living people in ditches, throw dead people in the rivers and seas or throw them in gorges.

And then (literally):

> *Ci sono state bande di masacratori che erano e verosilmente lo sono ancora capeggiate ed infiammate da sacerdoti e da monaci cattolici.* (There were bands of murderers who were led and incited by Catholic priests and monks and who are probably still Catholic priests and monks.)

The original of this issue of the Italian paper is kept in the Archives of the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes in Belgrade.

Also in Bosnia there was a large number of Catholic priests who supported the Ustasha bloodbath and themselves took part in it. They supported the efforts of the Ustasha leadership to solve the "National Problem" in the NDH through murders. They incited national hatred in the people and provoked them to murder.

This attitude of a part of the Catholic priesthood gave the Ustasha local authorities a strong hold, since they could use the authority of the priests as an excuse, who sanctioned the murders out of national-religious reasons. Here follow some typical examples:

Bozo Simlesa in 1941 was a pastor in the village of Listani in the county of Livno. Right at the beginning, he joined the Ustasha regime and was one of its most active helpers. Later he held the office of a county supervisor for the county of Livno.

Testimony exists against the pastor Simlesa, in which it is emphasized that at the time of the massacre in the community of Listani he acclaimed to the people from the altar that the time had come to annihilate all Serbs in Croatia. The elimination of the Serbs, he said, was the duty of every Croat for the sake of Croatia and the poglavnik. Such testimony concerning the pastor Bozo Simlesa comes from the following persons: Lucija Brcic from Listani, Dizdar Izet from Livno, Janja Lukac from Listani, Stipe Duran from Gajici, Mijo Curak from Listani, Ivan Suker from Listani, Mate Peric from Donji Rujani, Niko Jureta from Donji Rujani, and from many others.

Testimony
of Janja Lukac, wife of Jako from the village of Listani, community of Listani, county of Livno, Roman Catholic.
Re: Don Bozo Simlesa, the former pastor of the parish of Listani.

What can you tell us about Bozo Simlesa, the former pastor of your parish? What did he do at the time of the NDH? What do you know?

I know that Bozo Simlesa after the capitulation of Yugoslavia and after the founding of the NDH immediately joined the Ustasha movement as an active worker and in the churches and in the villages promised all the youth and those who wanted to join the Ustasha as volunteers that that would be salvation for them, that the Croats had been without rights before the time of the poglavnik and the Ustasha, and that the poglavnik was the only one who could preserve the Croatian people and that all others would be annihilated with the help of the Germans. When in July massacres of Orthodox people were committed in our community, he told the people during the mass in church that the time to annihilate all Serbs in Croatia had come. If we Croats would not eliminate them soon, then they would kill us, and

thus it was necessary that all Croats in our county launch into the destruction of the Serbs just as the Croats in the other counties had to fulfill their duty to the Croatian people and to the poglavnik. Furthermore, he said in church that every Croat who regretted the destruction of the Serbs would meet the same fate and those who went to Ceprazlije to tip off the Serbs would immediately be thrown into the ravine by the Ustasha. Anyone who went in the direction of Dalmatia to run an errand would immediately be killed too and his belongings would be taken from him: "I tell you that, and I will bear the responsibility for all this." Simlesa told us all that on the day before the massacre in the church of Listani.

What more can you tell us about Bozo Simlesa? What did he do as Ustasha organizer where you lived and in the massacres? What do you know?

I also know that after the massacre a Dalmatian appeared and that Simlesa ordered the Ustasha Gujo to take him away and kill him, which he did. Together with others who had been picked for the purpose, he was the organizer of the massacre, and when it was carried out, Simlesa repeatedly went to the guards under his command and forced them to guard the Orthodox people, who were attempting a revolt. We do not know whether he killed people himself and threw them into the ditch. But we do know that he and Bozo Cenan organized the massacres. The two were the main organizers and had the authority over the property of the Serbs who had been killed. The people had to obey the orders of Simlesa and Bozo Cenans from Gornji Rujani strictly. The two fled the whole time before the people's liberation army and retreated along with the Ustashe. I know nothing else about him.

The testimony, which records my words exactly and which I hereby sign, was read to me. The above facts are known also to Lucija Brcic, the daughter of the deceased Pero from Rusani, which she attests to by her signature adjoining mine.

Livno, the 1st of November 1945

Janja Lukac
and Lucija Brcic

Testimony
of Stipe Duran, called Pipa, son of the deceased Tomo from the village Cajici, community of Listani, county of Livno, farmer by profession, Catholic.

What can you tell us about Bozo Simlesa? What did he do at the time of the NDH? What do you know?

I know that immediately after the capitulation of Yugoslavia and after the founding of the NDH Simlesa joined the Ustasha movement as an active participant. In the church he then gave an address to the people saying that all able-bodied men should join the army, which doesn't accept just everyone,

Livno 1/XI 1945 godine.

I Z J A V A.

Duran Stipa zvani Šipa rok Tome iz sela Čajića opštine Lištani srez Livno po zanimanju zanljoradnik vjere Katoličke predmet Izjave o Don Šimlaši koji živi u Županiku kuće Lištani:Izjave prililjene kod Opunomoćstva OZN-e za srez Livanjski.

I

Da li znaš ti: kakav je Šimlaši bio prije nego je ušao u redove Ustaše kolikо ti je poznato?

Znam to po Kapitulaciji Jugoslavije i dolasku NDH-e Šimlaša je odma pristupio kao aktivni saradnik Ustaškog Pokreta isti je odma u crkvi narodu govorio da treba da svi sposobni mladići idu u Ustaše jer da je njima tu pravo mjesto i da u toj vojsci nije svak pravo samo Hrvati. Da je sada donao Hrvatskom Narodu pravi spas kojeg nikо njima ne more da oduzme i da rijuna čelu sa Poglavnikom i njegovim Ustašama isti je salazio po selima i stalno narodu govorio da su Ustaše naj priznatija vojska kod Poglavnika i da u tu vojsku nemože svak da ide samo onaj koje do krajnosti biti vjeran Hrvatskom narodu i Poglavniku i čiji čin ili muk ode sada da će taj imati naj veću nagradu od Poglavnika. Isti je stalno po selima išao da sjetuje Hrvate da šalju ginove u Ustaše i domobrane da se bore protiv Engleza i Amerikanaca i da je njima jedini spas Njemac koji će do krajnosti biti uz Hrvatski narod i da će oni biti pobjednici naroda. Veliki broj se odazva na Njegovo Savjetovanje kao Popa i otišao u Ustaše i domobrane.

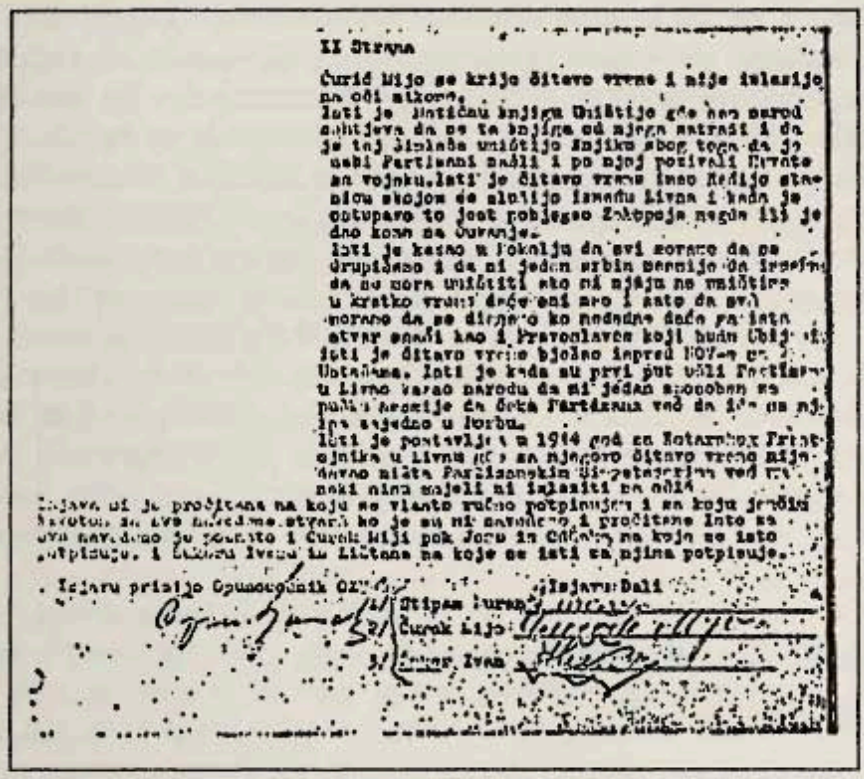
II

Da li još znaš da kakav je Šimlaši bio za vrijeme NDH-e koliko znaš?

Znam još to kada je nastao pokolj u 1941 god u mjesecu julu da je isti bio glavni Organizator pokolja na našoj opštini čitavo vreme a izrodito za vreme pokolja kod njega su dolazili Emigranti na savjetovanje kako je lakše da se Uniši Srpski Narod kada je bio pokolj pod njegovim naređenjima je vršen pokolj i kada je izvršen pokolj onda je isti sa Emigrantima Zagonio narod na ide u Borbu protiv Ustanka srpskog Naroda isti je čitavo vreme obilazio straže koje su čuvale položaj Istiđ je pred Čurkom Mijom kazao da treba sve one Ljude koji idu u Dalmaciju uništiti kao i robe jer ti ljudi nose vjesti Komunistima i dade ji on. Lične da ubije koji god pokuša da prede Granicu bosne i Dalmacije.
a koji god dođe iz Dalmacije da ga Ustaše odma moraju da bace u jagu i danu nedaju noću Naš narod i dade lične Šimlaša da sa te svestvari odgovara,po pokolju na nekolika dana nazišao je jedan Dalmatinac koji škopio krmat i odma je Šimlaša poslao Ustaše da ga ubiju isti je odma te noći ubijan,Isti je po Čurka Miju slao Njemce da ga dovede i da ga streljaju da je on zabunitalj Hrvackog naroda

Duranc

Facsimile of the first page of the testimony of the witnesses Stipe Duran, Mijo Curak, and Ivan Suker about the criminal activity of the pastor Simlesa.



II Strana

Čurić Mijo se krije čitavo vreme i nije izlazio na oči nikome.
Isti je knjižnu knjigu uništio gde ga narod ubijeva da se ta knjiga od njega nađe i da je taj jedinu uništio knjiku zbog toga da je nebi Partizani našli i po njoj poveli Hrvate na vojnku. Isti je čitavo vreme kao Nedelja stao nicu stojom da zaustavi Livno i kada je ustuparo to jest pobjegao Zakopoja negde ili je dno kona na Čuvanje.
Isti je kazao u lokalju da svi moramo da se drupiđemo i da ni jedan srbin nemoje da izgine da se mora uništiti ako ni njega ne uništiše u kratko vreme doćeće ovi mro i zato da svi moramo da se dignemo ko nedadne dođe za isto otvar ognji kao i Pravoslavac koji budu Ubij... Isti je čitavo vreme bjelano ispred NOV-a u Ustaši. Isti je kada su prvi put ušli Partizani u Livno govorao narodu da ni jedan sposoban na puku nemoje da čeka Partizana već da ide na njih zajedno u borbu.
Isti je postavlje... u 1944 god za Kotarskog Pristojnika u Livnu ... za njegovo čitavo vreme nijedno nijta Partizanskim ši-petaterima već ... neki nisu mogli ni izlaziti na oči.

Izjava ni je pročitana na koju se vlastoručno potpisujem i za koju jamčim istinitom. ... stvarna ko je su ni navedeno i pročitano ... navedeno je ... i Čurić Mijo pok Jozo ... na koje se isto potpisuje. i ... Ivan ... na koje se isti za njima potpisuje.

Izjavu primio Opunomoćnik OZN... Izjavu: Dali

Štipan Juraj
Čurić Mijo
... Ivan

only Croats, and that for the Croatian people with the poglavnik and his Ustasha, salvation had come, which no one could take away from them again. He went into the town and told the people that the Ustasha was the army that the poglavnik thought the most of and that not everyone could join this army, just men who were totally dedicated to the Croatian people and the poglavnik. Every son and husband who would join the army would receive the highest reward from the poglavnik. He constantly visited the villages and advised the Croats to send their sons to the Ustasha and to the militia to fight against the English and the Americans, and he characterized the Germans as the only salvation, since they stood by the Croatian people and would conquer the other peoples. A great many men followed his priestly advice and joined the Ustasha and the militia.

What else can you tell us about Simlesa? What did he do at the time of the NDH? What else do you know?

I know that when the murders began in July 1941, he was the main organizer of the massacre in our community all this time. The emigrants came back then to get his advice on how they could eliminate the Serbian people most easily. When the massacre was carried out at his command, he forced the people along with the emigrants to strike down the Serb rebellion. The whole time he was reviewing the guards who were securing the position. In the presence of Mijo Curak, he said that everyone who wanted to flee

to Dalmatia should be eliminated just like the Serbs, because they would deliver messages to the communists; he personally would kill anyone who tried to cross the borders to Bosnia and Dalmatia. Anyone coming over from Dalmatia would have to be thrown into the gorge by the Ustasha immediately, so that no contact with the people would be possible. He would have to be personally responsible to Simlesa for this matter. Several days later when a Dalmatian came to castrate pigs, Simlesa immediately sent soldiers who killed him that very night. He set the Germans on Mijo Curak, whom they were to fetch and shoot, since he was stirring up the Croatian people. Mijo Curak, however, hid the whole time and was seen by no one.

He destroyed the birth register when the people asked for it so that the Partisans couldn't find it to conscript the Croats into the army. All the time he had a radio broadcast apparatus, which he operated in Livno, and when he retreated, i.e., fled, he buried it somewhere or gave it to someone to keep.

At the massacre he said that we all had to fall in line and that no Serb dare be left alive. If we didn't eliminate them soon, they would do it to us, and therefore everyone should join in who didn't want to suffer what the Orthodox were suffering now. Along with the Ustasha, he was all this time fleeing from the people's liberation army. When the partisans marched into Livno for the first time, he told the people that no one who was able to carry a gun should wait for the partisans, and that everyone had to join him in the battle.

In 1944 he became the county supervisor in Livno, where the whole time he acted severely against the sympathizers of the partisans, who did well to stay out of his sight.

The testimony, which I hereby sign, was read to me. I swear on my life that the facts contained herein are correct. The content is also known to Mijo Curak, the son of the deceased Joso from Odzak and to Ivan Suker from Listani, who likewise sign the protocol.

Stipe Duran

Mijo Curak

Ivan Suker

The State Commission for the Establishment of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers reports the following about the pastor Bozo Simlesa in document 12846/45:

He organized the Ustasha militia and from the altar admonished the people to join the Ustasha. In order to acquire weapons and other utilitarian items for the police, he went to Livno. He forced the people to arm themselves and gave instructions for the crimes. He posted guards and checked them personally.

On 23 July 1941 he admonished the whole parish to come to the house of Ante Brcic. The men were to bring guns, axes, hay forks, and other weapons. At this gathering, he said that no Serb dare escape; the day of revenge was upon us. He asked the Ustasha Petar Katanic from Dalmatia whether they had killed all the Serbs. Twenty-four hours had passed, he said and asked whether he [Katanic] did not know that the poglavnik had ordered that no Serb be permitted to live in Croatia any more. After Petar Katanic had reported that all the men had been killed and the women and children were still waiting for nightfall in order to follow the men into death, Simlesa ordered that they not wait until night. In 1942, he preached from the altar that every Dalmatian Serb would have to be taken care of, because they were all communists. If anyone should get across the mountains, he should not be brought to the camp but he should be shot on the spot with a bullet in his heart.

He was a friend of the well known Ustasha murderer Ivan Kelic, who went to the village of Celebic to kill.

When a Dalmatian once came into the area to castrate pigs, he sent Ustashe, who were supposed to kill him. Still in the same night, he was killed; that happened in 1941 or 1942.

Simlesa used every opportunity to turn his bloody intentions into deeds. He worked with the Ustasha, but exploited his position as county supervisor to exterminate the Serbs with the help of the Germans.

In document 12846/45 of the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers the following is found:

As county supervisor in Livno, he worked with the German authorities in such a manner that he accused citizens of being followers of the People's Liberation Front. Thus Alija Terzic and Muharem Jeles were arrested and condemned to death. The death sentence, however, was not carried out, because Livno was bombed and the two were able to save themselves in the ensuing confusion.

In July 1941, when the massacre was carried out on the Serbs, he admonished the people from the altar to eliminate the Serbs in Croatia, because otherwise they would soon eliminate the Croats. In doing so, he made it clear to everyone that no one dare cry about the death of those Serbs from the village of Ceprazlije, also anyone who tipped off the other Serbs would be thrown into the abyss by the Ustasha.

Witnesses: Mato Poric, son of Ilija from Donji Rujani, Niko Jureta, son of the deceased Stipe from Donji Rujani, Ivan Cular, son of Marko, and Milka Brcic, daughter of Jako from Listani, Mile Cenal, son of the deceased Joze from Gornji Rujani, Ilija Sukar, son of Grga from Listani, Ivka Brcic, daughter of the deceased Bozo from Gornji Rujani, Stipe Duran, son of the deceased Tomo from Cajic, Janja Lukac, wife of Luka from Lis-

> tani, Izet Dizdar, son of the deceased Mustafa from Livno, Muharem Jeles, son of the deceased Nasko from Livno, Alija Terzic, son of the deceased Adil from Livno, Bozo Duran, son of Stjepan from Cajic, and Ivan Ivanovic, son of Stjepan from Cajic, county of Livno.

In his crimes, Simlesa resembled *Frater Mijo Cuntic* from the village Pukovi in the county of Duvno. The Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers in the document 12846/45 says the following:

> When the Ustasha camp in Duvno was being built, Frater Mijo Cuntic was constantly in the company of the well known criminals Jozo Brstilo and Bairo Tanovic and gave they instructions for their criminal activity. During the massacre in the villages of Cebara, Prisoje, and Vrila, in which not one Serb escaped, he was constantly in the Ustasha camp with the above-named criminals.
>
> Before the massacre, he organized a team that was to command the Serbs in the villages to convert to the Catholic faith and, in the event that they did not do that, was to threaten them that the same thing would happen to them that happened to those who had already been thrown into the ravines.
>
> On 21 July 1941, he organized a group of people who were to command those inhabitants of the villages of Rascan, Mandina, and Srdani, who had fled, to return to their homes; nothing was to happen to them. However, they awaited the Serbs, who had fled in all directions, with axes, guns, and other weapons, and locked them up immediately. In the afternoon around 4 o'clock, trucks with Ustasha butchers carried the Serbs off intending to throw them into the Paklina ravine. But this devilish plan failed because the women laid themselves in front of the trucks and prevented them from carrying the men off.

Frater Mijo Cuntic was one of the main organizers of the Ustasha regime in Duvno. He formed the so-called "People's Committee," at whose head he himself stood. In addition, he organized the "People's Defense," joined mostly by Pavelić people who had emigrated. The task of this "Defense" was to disarm the Yugoslav army.

Among other priests in Bosnia, *Frater Franjo Udovic,* the pastor in the village of Koricani, was prominent as the leader of the Ustasha terror in the neighboring villages. From the report of the the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers, document 12846 says the following:

I Z J A V A

Izjava Simo Jokanovića, pretsednik općinskog n.odbora Vitovlje, srez Travnik, data dana 26 jula 1945 god. u Odjeljenju OZN-e za Bosnu i Hercegovinu

o fra Franji Udoviću.

Ostatkom NDH u nalazio se u mom mjestu Župnik Žagar, koji se odnosio vrlo dobro prema srpskim životom - uoči čega je nakon kratkog vremena smenjen, a na mesto njega došao je gore navedeni Udović.

Dolaskom Udovića nastaio je naoružanje civilnog katoličkog stanovništva u tom kraju, a čemu je bio povod sam Udović, što se kasnije u potpunosti razotkrilo.

Služio se svim mogućim načinima da što više vrbuje tog katoličkog života u ustaške redove, a kada je negde naišao na otpor poštenih katolika-primjenjivao je i prisilne mjere za mobilizaciju.

Ovo smo tačno provjerili od onih ustaša koje je on vrbovao ili prisilno mobilisao, a koje smo mi kasnije zarobili. O tome bi takodjer mogli posvedočiti sledeći i to: Jozo Blažević, Martin Balta kao i njegova braća, Niko Nikić, a osim toga i svali pošteni seljaci sela Koričana.

Takodjer je u jesen 1941 godine /decembra/ organizovao - uoči ustaša u selo Koričane i Imljane kojom je prilikom u toku ubijeno 11 lica medju kojima Ilija Jokanović, Lazar, Nikola Jokanović, Luka Slavnić i njegova žena Mara, Slavnić Petar i dr.

Pored toga celo Koričane i Imljane su toga puta do krajnosti opljačkali i popalili oko 30 kuća i 20 ostalih drugih zgrada.

Osim toga njemu su svakog jutra donošeni izvještaji o stanju na terenu, u kojima je naročito izvještavano o pojavama partizana, i svakog puta kada je izvještano o našim pojavama - preduzimani su ispadi od strane ustaša, što jasno govori o tome da je on bio glavni stub za održanje ustaškog vlasti na tom terenu i kao takav - glavni je krivac za sve zlodjela počinjena u tom kraju.

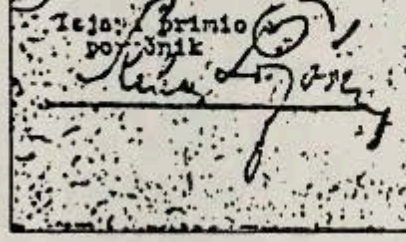
Pravoslavce je nagonio da rade ustaškim porodicama na vremu najvećih poljoprivrednih radova, a osim toga je naredjivao da ni jedan pravoslavac ne smije udaljivati od svoje kuće. Bez njegova znanja nije bilo udaljivanja.

Niz drugih njegovih protu-narodnih postupaka još postoji za koje su mi mogu ni sjetiti. Podatke mogu još o istom dati major Ilija Slavnić - kda. podr. B. Luka i por. Slavnić Jovo 53 p

Izjava mi je pročitana i sve su moje riječi tačno zabilježene.

Potpis

Izjavu primio
poručnik



The testimony of the witness Simo Jokanović about the activity of Pater Franjo Udović.

Frater Franjo Udovic was an Ustasha since 1941. With a gun, he led the Ustashe and took part in the arsons in the villages of Koricani and Imljani. He organized the Ustasha militia in Koricani and was himself their commander. When the Ustashe needed the animals from the village of Janje and drove them to Travnik, he was the one in charge and gave most of the animals to the inhabitants of Koricani, who were his loyal servants.

On 26 July 1941, Simo Jakanovic testified that Udovic was responsible for the arson in the villages of Koricani and Imljani and for the murder of twelve farmers.

Testimony
of Comrade Simo Jokanovic, chair of the Community People's Committee from Vitovlje, county of Travnik, on 26 July 1945:

Upon the founding of the NDH, Zagar was the pastor in my village. He treated the Serbs quite well and therefore was soon replaced. His position was filled by the above-mentioned Udovic.

When Udovic came, as we found out later, the civilian Catholic population in this area upon command was equipped with weapons.

He applied various methods to gain as many Catholics as possible for the Ustasha. If he would encounter the resistance of good Catholics, he had them recruited by force. We checked this by questioning Ustashe whom we captured and whom he had enlisted or conscripted. The following persons can also attest to this: Jozo Blazevic, Martin Balta, his brother, and Niko Nikic and the other good farmers from the village of Koricani.

In the fall of 1941, Udovic organized the attack on the villages of Koricani and Imljani, during which 11 people were killed, among whom were Ilija Jokanovic, Lazar Jokanovic, Luka Slavnic and his wife Mara, Petar Slavnic, and others.

At that time the villages of Koricani and Imljani—about 30 houses and 20 other buildings—were completely plundered and set afire.

Every morning reports were made to him about the situation on the front and especially about the positions of the partisans, and every time our presence was reported, we were attacked by the Ustasha. This shows clearly that he was very much responsible for the maintenance of the Ustasha power in this area. He is mainly guilty of all the crimes committed in our area.

He forced the Orthodox to work for the Ustasha families whenever heavy agricultural work was to be done and also ordered that no Orthodox person was to leave his home. No one dared go away without his knowledge.

There is still a whole series of examples for his actions against the people, but I can't remember them exactly anymore. Major Ilija Slavnic, commander of Banja Luka, and Captain Jovo Slavnic from the 53rd division

can also give testimony about him. My testimony was read to me. Everything that I said was properly recorded.

Simo Jokanovic

The Catholic priest *Frater Mirko Brandic* came to the village of Tramosnica in the county of Gradacac in 1943. After the retreat of the People's Liberation Army from this area, he organized the Ustasha militia. From the altar he ranted against the People's Liberation Movement. He delivered reports to the Ustashe and demanded that they persecute the sympathizers of the People's Liberation Movement and arrest them. There is testimony from Ivo Sokcevic and Juro Matic about his criminal activity.

Testimony
of Comrade Juro Matic (son of Sainkov) from Donja Tramosnica:

I am aware that the priest Frater Mirko Brandic was in close communication with the Ustasha leaders, and not only that: He was also the initiator of everything that the Ustasha did in our village and in the vicinity.

The above-named person came to our village at the beginning of 1943 and immediately began the persecution of everyone who cooperated with the partisans. Several persons were turned in to the Ustasha because of this cooperation, locked up by them, and several were also beaten. Upon the command of Frater Mirko Brandic, the Ustashe came to me, tied me up, drove me to a school and beat me terribly. Once they had released me, he ordered me captured again. Then they beat me again and stabbed me twice with a knife. With a pliers, they pulled on my tongue and screamed at me: "You are a communist and do not believe in our church." The Ustashe did all this upon the orders of Mirko Brandic. I can attest to this because they showed me the orders from Frater Mirko whereby Juro Matic was to be punished because he cooperated with the People's Liberation Movement and was against the Ustasha state.

Mirko Brandic organized the Ustasha police in 1944, for whom he—at the cost of the inhabitants—acquired 400 guns. He forced the people to arm themselves without regard for whether they could use a gun or not. The people had to sell their animals, their food, and even their clothes, or else they would be beaten. During the Sunday services, the pastor constantly ranted against the People's Liberation Movement. He said, for example, that the partisans slaughtered people and would sleep with their mothers and sisters. Anto Gagulic, Anto Zovkic, and Boni Knezevic can attest to any testimony, and I can swear to it.

Juro Matic

Frater Ante Klaric was a priest in the village of Tramosnica in the county of Bosanski Samac. After the formation of the NDH, he became the field camp leader for the Ustasha and took part in the disarming of the former Yugoslav army. With the Ustashe and other units, he took part in the attacks on the Serb villages. He recruited the farmers for the Ustasha militia and organized their attacks on the surrounding Orthodox villages. He incited hatred against the Serbs and from the pulpit said the following to the people:

> You are old wives and should wear skirts, because up until now you have not killed even one Serb. We have no weapons and knives, and therefore we should forge them from old scythes and sickles. Wherever you see a Serb, slaughter him.

In the testimony of the cleric Srecka Roki from Bosanski Samac, we read that Frater Ante Klaric led Ustasha groups who in the night plundered the Serb villages and terrorized them.

The Orthodox priest of Lapovo, Risto D. Jovanovic, expressed himself more thoroughly and more impressively in his report concerning the tragedy that befell the Serb people by the Ustasha and by the priests infested with the Ustasha spirit. We print here an excerpt:

> The Ustashe committed all these crimes on order of their field-camp director, Frater Ante Klaric, the pastor in Tramosnica. This pastor was the main initiator of the persecutions and mistreatments of the Serbs in this area. He came personally with the Ustasha units to our villages, called the Serbs together in some towns and had them line up in lines facing each other. He ordered them to slap each other and to call each other the most vile things. Afterwards he drove them all to his church, locked them up there in a stall and kept them prisoner for several days without food and water. Before his eyes, the Ustashe beat the people with gun butts and whips. And as agreed, they hit even harder and more brutally when he said they should not hit so hard. Frater Ante took pleasure in the cries of the Serbs and entertained himself all the while with a lady innkeeper. In his parish, there were also several Serbs, and the holy cult objects of the Orthodox churches, as, for example, the chalice and other old religious objects, were found in his home in the most unworthy places. He expelled the Orthodox priest and distributed the remaining things from the church among his followers.

This report, among others, is found in the Archive of the Commissariat for Refugees (D LXVIII Nr. 3789).

Even Slavko Ristic, priest and the archbishop's representative in Brcko, accuses Frater Ante Klaric and depicts him as "the Ustasha who has most

distinguished himself in the persecutions and mistreatment of the Serbs in our area." (Archive of the Commissariat for Refugees D LXVII Nr. 3789).

Ante Lucic, Jelena Durkovic, Ivo Zoljic, Pavao Durkovic, and Marjan Ivkic also report on his deeds.

Testimony
of the undersigned from the village Domaljevac:

Ante Klaric was born in 1901 in Domaljevac, was pastor in the village Tramosnica in the county of Gradacac until 1941, and then came to our village Domaljevac as pastor.

From the time of his activity in Tramosnica, we know him as an active organizer of the Ustasha movement; he executed various acts of violence and crimes in the neighboring Serb villages. Whenever he came to a Serb house where the family was at the table, he upset the table with his feet. We also know that he carried out a search in a Serb house and stole 8,000 Kunes belonging to the man of the house, whom we do not know.

When he came to Domaljevac in 1943, he and Siman Andic from the village of Domaljevac organized the Ustashe there, too. Under their command were 700 Ustashe. We also know that he terrorized Luka Curkovic from Domaljevac, who was eventually killed at his command by the Ustashe.

We ourselves heard him order the Ustashe to forge knives from scythes, to go to the Slavonic partisan villages and to Babina Greda, and there to kill the partisan families and plunder their houses.

We saw the Ustashe returning from their action driving pigs before them, which they had stolen from the partisan families. They slaughtered the pigs, and the priest Ante Klaric also took some of the meat home with him.

We also are aware that Ante Klaric carried out actions against the Serb village of Brvnik and that in doing so, he took along a crate of chickens as well as other things. He himself led the Ustashe against this village and on his command, the house of Bozo Mitrovic and the farm buildings of Ronic from Brvnik were set afire.

We are aware that he was a participant in the murder of 18 people fetched from the village of Orasje and killed in Bazik on the Save river.

Once this same Ante Klaric drove to Samac with the criminal Ante Mrkonjic, the then commander of the Ustasha battalion. On the way to Samac, they encountered two women and a man, whom they killed in Tisina and threw them into the frozen Save. It was winter.

In the church, he admonished the Ustashe and the people: "Forge knives and slaughter them one after the other."

Everything that he ordered was carried out according to command. For example, he ordered my husband Luka Durkovic to be killed, and he threatened me as follows: "You are not to tell anyone that the Ustashe killed him. You say that it was the partisans, otherwise I will kill all the rest of you in this house."

И з ј а в а !

доле потписаних из села Домаљевца, који изјављујемо следеће:

Кларић Анто, рођен у Домаљевцу 1901 год. био је као парох на служби у селу Трамошници, срез Градачац, све до 1943 год. када је дошло на дужност у исто село Домаљевац.

За време свога боравка у Трамошници, истога познајемо као активног организатора усташког покрета и као такав врло је рана насиља и злочине у околини српских села, тако да је долазио у српске куће и натјерао фамилију за столом, где руча, то је ногама сто преврнуо. Исто познато нам је да је у једној српској кући вршио претрес и опљачкао 6000 круна, од непознатог нам домаћина.

По доласку у Домаљевац, 1943 год. знамо га да је опет наставио са организовањем усташа заједно са Шиманом Анђићем из села Домаљевца. Исти су имали под командом 700 усташа. Знамо и то да је вршио терор над Луком Бурковићем из Домаљевца, који је по његовом наређењу и убијен од стране усташа.

Ми смо га лично слушали када је наређивао усташама да од коса кују косе и да иду у партизанска села у Славонији у Бабину Греду да тјерају партизанске породице и пљачкају њихове куће.

Видили смо и то када су се усташе вратили из акције и ми терали опљачкано сврке, те исте клали када је и сам Кларић Анто, свештеник, носио од тога месо и својој кући, а које је било опљачкано од партизанских породица.

Исти нам је познат када је имао у акцију на српско село Брвник и да је из те акције дотерао на колима сандук живади и других ствари, а сам је предводио усташе на то село и по његовом наређењу запаљена је кућа Боже Митровића и некога Роћића штала из Брвника.

Знамо да је исти учествовао у усташту 18 људи, који су дотерани из Оранија и поубијани на Сави у селу Бановцу.

Исти Кларић Анто је једном приликом сјео у кола са сликовцем Антом Мрковићем, тадашњим заповједником усташке бојне, и потао у Шамац. У путу ка Шамац су сустигли двије жене једнога мушкарца, које су ухваћене побили у селу Тишини и бацили под лед у Саву, јер је то било у зимско доба.

Горе наведени стално је говорио у цркви усташама и народу "Кујте ножеве и косите све од рода". Он све што је наредио то је се и извршавало по његовом наређењу, тако је наредио да се убије и мој муж Лука Бурковић а исти је запретио сељанки ријечима: "Казнићу никоме рећи да су га убиле усташе, него партизани, знаћу ћу сво и вас у кући побити"

Истога знамо да је од првога дана када су се појавили усташе, да је и он од тада носио слово "У" и да је такође од тога времена стално носио оружје.

Исти је водио до задњег дана пропасти усташа борбу са партизанима, а када су они изашли у овај крај исти је се заједно са њима повукао у правцу Словеније. Од тога времена за њега ништа нечујемо.

23.X.1945 год.
у Домаљевцу.

И з ј а в и л и !

Jelena Gjurković
Pavao Đurković
Ivo Zoljić

Testimony of the witnesses Jelena Durkovic, Pavao Durkovic, and Ivo Zoljic about the pastor Klaric.

We know that from the first day that the Ustashe appeared, he attached the letter "U" to his clothes and henceforth also carried guns.

Up until the ultimate defeat of the Ustashe, he conducted battle against the partisans, and when they came into the area, he retreated along with the Ustashe in the direction of Slovenia. Since this time no one has heard of him."

Jelena Durkovic

Pavao Durkovic

Ivo Zoljic

Testimony
of Ante Lucic, son of Marko from Domaljevac against Ante Klaric:

In 1941 and until the year 1943, he was pastor in Tramosnica, and I heard that during this time he was Ustasha field-camp director and from the very first day wore the letter "U" and carried weapons. He had some sort of officer rank and after the capitulation of Yugoslavia, he took part in the disarming of the Yugoslav soldiers.

As a high Ustasha, he took part there in actions against Serb villages, himself recruited a large number of Croatian men, armed them, and sent them against the Serbs and partisans.

In 1943, he began his service in our village of Domaljevac. Right after his arrival, it became clear that he would sow the seeds of dissent in our village and that he also would force anyone who was not willing to join the Ustasha. And that is indeed what happened.

Right after he arrived, he everywhere threatened that anyone who did not want to join the Ustasha would be killed. He said that during a sermon in the church, and right away about 200 young men joined the Ustasha out of fear, whereas previous to this, no one from our village was with the Ustasha.

When he had gathered these young men—I was present, too—he gave there the following speech: "You are old women. Put on skirts. You haven't killed a single Serb. We have no weapons nor knives, so forge some. Take old scythes and sickles, take them to the smithy and make knives out of them. And wherever you see a Serb, kill him. But don't tell your wives. Take him someplace where no one will find him, and when you go to Samac and encounter a Serb there, tell him: 'Come along!' and then take him to the Save and kill him."

Our Croatian people believed the priests, and so many unknowing people joined them and then became real criminals. And he specifically persuaded many to commit crimes against the Serbian people.

He did not often take part in actions, but they nevertheless always happened at his command, whenever an action was carried out against Serb villages or any partisan site. For example, I know that he gave the Ustashe from our village the order to march into Babina Greda in Slavonia. When

they were leaving, he ordered them to kill all the residents of a house, to confiscate the property, and to set the house afire, if even just one person was with the partisans or had a family member with the partisans.

When the Ustashe returned from this action, they were driving a lot of stolen animals with them, from which he, too, received some for himself.

The Ustashe demanded from us farmers wood to heat their barracks in the village, and he issued the order that every farmer was to take his wagon to the Serbian village Brvnik, chop wood there, load his wagon, and return. No one wanted to do this; everyone wanted rather to give wood from his own supply, but he did not allow this, but rather, in order to set an example, went with Skica and Ante Mrkonjic to Brvnik as the first. They plundered many houses and brought the stolen things in a wagon to Domaljevac, so that the people could see it, too. When the others noted that even the pastor was plundering, they followed his example.

Afterwards, he ordered an action against the village of Brvnik: upon his urging, the village was plundered.

When the Yugoslav army appeared in 1945, he and the Ustashe retreated in the direction of Slovenia and took part in many battles against the Yugoslav army. Those who wanted to retreat, he tried to persuade to come along, and anyone who did not wish to continue fighting he had shot.

Anto Lucic

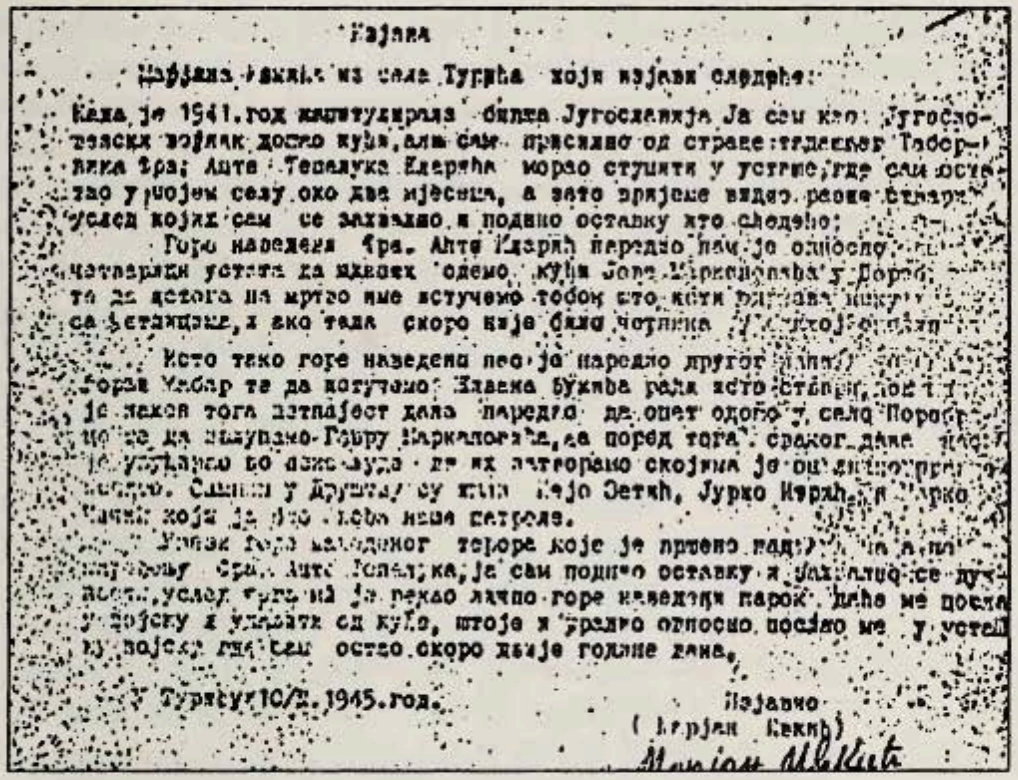
Testimony
of Marjan Ivkic from the village Turic:

In 1941, when the former Yugoslavia capitulated, I went home as a Yugoslav soldier, but was forced by the former field camp director, Frater Ante Tepeluk Klaric, to join the Ustasha, with whom I stayed for about two months in my village. During this time, I saw various things that opened my eyes and caused me to submit my resignation. I was concerned about the following:

The above-named Frater Ante Klaric ordered me and three other Ustashe to enter the house of Jovo Markanovic in Porebrice and to beat him to a pulp because he allegedly was connected with the Cetniks, although at that time there were almost no Cetniks in the vicinity.

On the next day the above-named person ordered us to go to Gornji Zabar and to beat Zivan Cukic for the same reason. Two weeks later, he commanded us to go to the village Porebrice again and to beat Gavro Markanovic. In addition, he sent us out every day to arrest someone or other and to lock them up, people whom he then personally interrogated. I accompanied Pejo Zetic, Jurko Itric, and Marko Cicic, the leader of our patrol.

Because of this terror, which was carried out on people on the orders of Frater Ante Tepeluk, I submitted my resignation and quit the service. Thereupon, the above-named pastor told me he would send me away from home into the army. This he also did—to the Ustasha army—where I stayed almost two years.



Facsimile of the testimony of the witness Marjan Ivkic about the influence of the Ustasha pater Ante Klaric.

How *Frater Marko Calusic,* the Ustasha pastor of the Church of St. Ante in Sivsa, functioned as leader of the Ustasha murderers is described by the Ustasha newspaper *Nova Hrvatska* on 28 June 1942:

> In the moment of danger, Frater Marko walked the path of the famous Luka Imbrisinovic. He, however, did not carry a sword but went into battle with a gun over his shoulder in defense of his parish members. Some time ago I heard of his perfect defense organization. The name of the priest-captain Frater Marko was familiar to me. When the attacks of the rebels from Ljeskove Vode and Gojakovac began, where the partisans had their staff, Frater Marko sent his people in. He set them up at the border. In the beginning he had 30 armed men, later 60, and now there are 180.

Marija Bogunovic, housewife from Livno, and Ljubo Crnogorac, innkeeper from Celebic, county of Livno, made concurring testimony in the hearing on 24 June 1942 in the commissariat for refugees. Their testimony concerned the horrors that the Ustasha had committed in Livno county. Their spiritual leader, so they said, was *Dr. Srecko Peric,* a Franciscan from the cloister Gorica near Livno. They reported the following:

> The above-mentioned massacre of the Serbs in Livno county was led by Frater Dr. Srecko Peric, a Franciscan from the cloister Gorica near Livno. This Frater came from Livno county and had a sister there who was married to a Serb. On Sunday before the massacre, he from the pulpit ordered the Croats assembled in the church in Gorica to begin the massacre of the Serbs by saying the following: "Croatian brothers, go and slaughter all Serbs. First kill my sister, who is married to a Serb, and then kill all Serbs one by one. When you have finished, come to me in the church so that I can hear your confessions and forgive your sins." Then the massacre of the Serbs began. At the same time the Ustasha plundered the Serb houses and subsequently set them afire. Then they were intending to tear down all Orthodox churches in Livno county.—In Livno county, the Serbs were not forced to convert to the Roman Cathoiic faith, because they were all murdered. Up until 20 August 1941 in Livno county, according to very precise figures, 5,600 Serbs, men, women, and children, were killed and slaughtered. In the persecution of the Serbs, the Ustasha Dr. Frater Srecko Peric was especially prominent, who at the time of Yugoslavia was a Roman Catholic priest for a long time. In addition to Peric, 20 other brothers of the cloister took part in the persecution of the Serbs.
>
> (Testimony of Serb refugees, pp. 20–26)

The farmer Mile Miskovic from Radovica, in the community of Cetingrad, reports on the crimes of the pastor *Petar Medved*

> Petar Medved was the instigator and spiritual originator of all crimes that the Ustasha committed in this area. The village Begovo Brdo had converted fully to the Islamic faith. But that did them no good, because in March 1942, the whole village was slaughtered. . . . Petar Medved was the one responsible for all the crimes that the Ustasha committed against the Serbs in the community of Cetingrad.

Josip Kaurinovic, the pastor in Prijedor, was an Ustasha and a glowing "missionary" and right from the first day of the Ustasha crimes and violence, proceeded quite aggressively against the Serbian people, just as the pastor Milan Borojevic from Prijedor reports on him (Archives of the Commissariat for Refugees, DLXXXVI, Nr. 3738). Also a Mohammedan, the judge Muhamed Sadikovic, accuses the pastor Kaurinovic in his report of 19 August 1942 as colleague of Dr. Viktor Gutic in the annihilation of the Serbs. His report is very thorough and it alone comprises seven pages containing only horrors of the Ustasha regime. Among other things, he writes:

> Upon the council of Kaurinovic, the Orthodox priests were arrested. He also took part in murders and marched around with his gun in his own parish.

The pastor *Dr. Branimir Zupanic* knew the condition in Bosanska Gradiska very well. He took part in the organization of the Ustasha forces and took part in a massacre of several hundred Serbs. The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers determined the following in their document number 12847/45:

> Dr. Branimir Zupanic, who was the pastor in Bosanska Gradiska,, already at the time of old Yugoslavia, was an active member of the Ustasha movement. According to testimony of the witnesses Mahmut Causevic, Osman Tabakovic, Smail Kulenovic, Vaso Kovacevic, Smail Kurbegovic, and others, the above-named person was a personal friend of the poglavnik Ante Pavelić. Upon the suggestion of Zupanic, the poglavnik named Margan Mosarac as county supervisor in Bosanska Gradiska and named Zvonko Lukic as camp director. These same witnesses claim that the pastor Zupanic, together with the above-named persons, organized the massacre of the Serbs in the village of Ragolji, where over 400 men, women, and children were slaughtered. At the meeting where this massacre was planned, Zupanic was in charge. He is seen as the spiritual originator of all crimes in Bosanska Gradiska. For his antinational activity, he was honored with the service badge 2nd class, inventory number 171, running number 11-54/44.

Frater Branko Bandic, already before the capitulation of the former Yugoslavia, worked in the Ustasha organization. Even back then he was an adherent of the race theory. The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers reported the following in document 12858/45:

> Frater Branko Bandic, pastor in Hrvacani in the county of Prnjavor, had taken the Ustasha oath and in 1941, right after the establishment of the NDH, was named Ustasha deputy. The witness Jakov Kurcebe from Hrvacani claims he was interrogated by Bandic concerning why he was not joining the "Black Legion," and Bandic said in front of everybody that anyone who did not join the above-mentioned legion would regret it. The witness Vaso Vojic, the son of the deceased Pano from the village of Drugovici in Prnjavor county, claims that pastor Bandic in his function as Ustasha deputy and with Dusan Jovanovic took hostages. In June 1941, Bandic as Ustasha deputy sent a patrol to the village of Drugovic to fetch the most respected people there, whom he then brought to Prnjavor under guard. At the end of July 1941, he went to Prnjavor, where he agreed with the other Ustashe to arrest and kill the people in the whole county of Prnjavor who were dangerous for the Ustasha movement. Upon the return from Prnjavor, he brought along many Ustashe to Hrvacani, with whose help he arrested about 120 people and sent them to Banja Luka.

Frater Miroslav Filipovic, chaplain from the cloister of Petricevac near Banja Luka, already in 1940 took the Ustasha oath. Upon the founding of the NDH, he and the other Ustasha functionaries organized the persecution of the Serbs and himself took part in the massacres. Among his many crimes are the massacres in the villages of Drakulici, Sargovac, and Motika near Banja Luka. On 7 February 1942, he and a company (the Pavelić battalion) set out for the above-named village with the intent of killing the Serbs living there. The first victim, the child of Duro Glamocanin, was killed by the priest Filipovic as he called out:

> Ustashe, this is taking place in the name of God; I baptize these offspring, and you follow me. I as the first take the whole sin upon me; I will hear your confessions so that you will be forgiven of your sins.

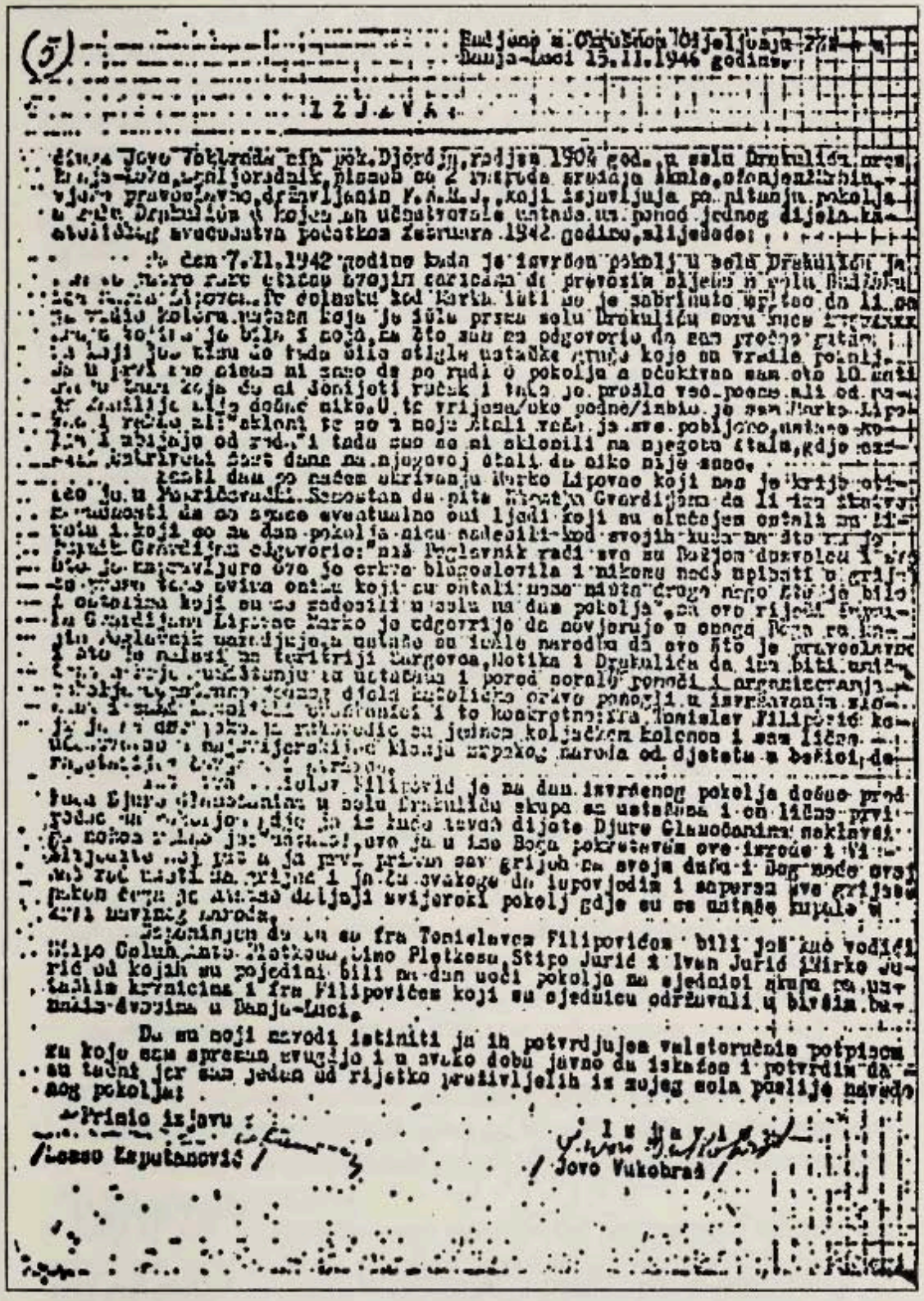
Thus he incited the Ustasha criminals, who thereafter killed about 1,500 men, women, and children with axes and rakes. Since he had proven himself as a human beast upon this occasion, whom the Ustashe could well use, they promoted him and named him commandant of the infamous camp at Jasenovac. There he daily carried out murders with his own hands, mainly of women and children, whom he killed with blows from a wooden hammer to their heads. He terrified the camp inmates and killed them without pity, as can be gathered from the testimony of the survivors.

Because of these murders of innocent men, women, and children, Pavelić rewarded him with the rank of a battalion commander.

Testimony

of Comrade Jovo Vukobrada, son of the deceased Duro, born 1904 in the village of Drakulici in Banja Luka county, farm worker, knows how to read and write by virtue of being a graduate of two middle-school classes, married, Orthodox Serb citizen of the federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, concerning the massacre in the village of Drakulici:

> On 7 February 1942 when the massacre was carried out in the village of Drakulici, I left early in the morning with my sleigh to take hay to Marko Lipovac in the village of Budzak. When I arrived at Marko's place, he asked me with great concern whether I had seen a troop of Ustashe headed toward Drakulici on the road where my house was. I replied that the Ustasha troops that committed the massacre had not gone along the road that I used. At that time I did not at all know that a massacre had taken place and I was expecting my wife to bring me my lunch around 10 o'clock; but the morning passed and no one arrived from my family. Around four, however, Marko Lipovac appeared and said: "Hide in my barn; your loved ones have all been killed; the Ustashe are slaughtering and murdering us all one after the other." Thus we hid in his barn, where we kept hidden for six days



(5)

Banja-Luci 15.11.1946 godine

I Z J A V A

Facsimile of the testimony of Jovo Vukobrada, who survived the massacre in Drakulici.

without anyone knowing it.

Six days later, Marko Lipovac, who had hidden us, went to the cloister Petricevac to ask the cloister administrator if there was any possibility of rescuing those who had not been home on the day of the massacre and therefore had survived. The director answered him: "Our poglavnik acts only with divine permission. Everything that has happened has been blessed by the Church, and she will not see it as anyone's sin. So don't expect anything different for the survivors than for those who happened to be in the village on the day of the massacre." Upon these words from the cloister director, Marko Lipovac replied that he did not believe in that God that the poglavnik was relying on for help. He said he was outraged that the Ustashe, who had orders to annihilate all the Orthodox in the area of Sargovac, Motika, and Drakulici, were getting not only moral and organizational help from a part of the Catholic Church but also the personal help of Catholic priests. For example, he said, Frater Tomislav Filipovic, who led a column of murderers on the day of the massacre, was personally involved in the killing of the Serbian people, from the child in the cradle to the oldest men and women.

This same Frater Tomislav Filipovic came to the house of Duro Glamocanin in the village Drakulici on the day of the massacre accompanied by the Ustasha; he himself started the massacre by fetching a child from the house of Duro Glamocanin, killed it with a knife, and said:. "Ustashe, look!. I baptize this offspring in the name of God and you shall follow me. I, as the first, assume all the sin; God, will not view our work as sin. I will hear your confessions and absolve you of all sins." Thereupon began a bestial massacre in which the Ustashe wallowed in the blood of the innocent people.

I draw attention to the fact that in addition to Frater Tomislav Filipovic, Stipo Golub, Ante Pletkosa, Simo Pletkosa, Stipo Juric, Ivan Juric, and Mirko Juric were present as leaders and that several of them on the eve of the massacre were present with the Ustasha bloodhounds and Frater Filipovic at a meeting that was held in the former court of Banus in Banja Luka.

I attest to the veracity of my testimony with my signature. I am willing to state publicly and to affirm at any time that my testimony is true, since I am one of the few survivors of the massacre in my village.

Jovo Vukobrada

"The commando of the Ustasha Surveillance Service" shows the following in its report on the massacre in the village of Drakulici:

. . . We have carried out your radio command fully and give the following report:

On the 7th of this month, the 2nd company of the "'Poglavnik Battalion" carried out the following action led by First Lieutenant Josip Mislov and in which the Reverend Miroslaw Filipovic, pastor from Petricevac, now captain in the Ustasha battalion, took part:

On this day, about ten Ustashe of the above-named battalion came to the Rakovac mine near Banja Luka at 4 o'clock in the morning. The Ustashe fetched several workers of Greek-Eastern [derogatory designation for "Greek-Orthodox," translator's note] faith who were staying in the duty room of the mine and killed them immediately in the direct vicinity of the mine. At 8 o'clock in the morning, the remainder of the company joined them, whereupon the Ustashe arrested the workers of the first shift coming to work, checked their identity, led away all workers of Greek-Eastern faith, bound them, and killed them in the immediate vicinity of the mine. This took place by first striking each of them on the back of the head with a blunt instrument and then killing him with a blow from a pickaxe in the head. When they all had been murdered, they arrested the workers from the third shift, who were just then emerging from the pit, and did the same with them. They ordered the remaining workers to dig a ditch to bury the dead. Thirty-seven were buried and—according to the statements of several workers—up to 52 were killed. The Ustashe came to the mine again at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, checked all the workers, but this time did not kill anyone. In the Rakovac mine there had been 60 workers of Greek-Eastern faith employed. Those who were not murdered fled into the forest.

From Rakovac, the Ustashe went to the village of Drakulici and were shown by Ivo Juric, a mine worker, Stipe Golub, and the field worker Simon Pletikosa the houses of the Greek-eastern people, from which they dragged the people and killed the men, women, and children, too, one after the other.

A massacre was also committed in the village of Sargovac; the number of the murdered in the two villages amounts to about 1,300 to 1,500 people. They were killed in the same manner as in the Rakovac mine, only that this time axes were also used.

On the return from Sargovac, the massacre was also carried out in the village of Motika, where about 70 families died in the same manner. The Ustashe ordered the remaining farmers to bury the dead. The burials began on the same day and were finished on the 10th of February. Some bodies were eaten by pigs and dogs.

After all this, the Ustashe came again to the above-named villages and transported food, animals, and fowl from them. Later they did the same with the household objects. This removal lasted until 11 February of the year. . . . According to reports held by the commissariat, the Greek-Eastern people in the above-named villages behaved perfectly calmly. They had also not helped the Cetniks, since they were surrounded by Croatian villages.

The events of the Ustashe and the preceding attack on the jurisdiction of all the city offices not only caused tremendous bitterness and panic among

the citizens, but also among the residents of the surrounding villages, who feared the revenge of the Cetniks.

From the judgment of the county national court—Gospic Nr. K 30/1946-9 of 7 February 1946 it is seen that the nuns *Zarka-Julijana Ivasic,* born in 1908 in Krasic, *Danica Hubertina Dzimbreg,* born in 1920 in Otok, Sinj County, *Lucija Celestina Radosevic,* born in 1914 in Prnjavor, and *Jadviga Venera Fostacz,* born in 1918 in Ljaskovka, Poland, were found guilty in the following points:

1. . . . together on days not precisely known in the summer of 1943 in Otocac several times sent bread, eggs, and other food, which they purloined from the hospital, to the Ustasha bandits who were hiding in the woods surrounding Otocac. Specifically, the accused Julijana Zarka Ivasic sent to the Ustasha band medical material also. Thus they supported the armed bands by giving them food and medical material;

2. . . . on days not precisely known in the summer of 1941 in Otocac in a joint agreement informed the Ustasha bandits in the forest concerning the strength and movements of the partisan units in Otocac and gave the band further necessary information on the basis of which the Ustasha in the night of 13 September 1943 suddenly entered Otocac, set many vehicles on fire with gasoline upon this occasion, killed several civilians and partisans, and retreated then from Otocac. They thus were conducting spy activities by gathering information that according to its content was military secrets and transferred it to the fascist bandit organization;

3. . . . on a day not precisely known in the summer of 1943 in Otocac in joint agreement organized the liberation of a wounded Ustasha from the partisan hospital in Otocac and transported the same to the forest and to the Ustasha bandits. Thus they were helping the armed bands by maintaining communication with them and performing service for them;

4. . . . in the time from April 1943 to 13 September 1943 in Otocac as nurses in the hospital treated the wounded and ill partisans entrusted to them in an inhuman manner by withholding the necessary care and attention for which they were professionally bound;

5. . . . in the night from 13 to 14 September 1943 in the hall of the hospital at Otocac received Ustasha bandits enthusiastically about whom they knew that they would enter Otocac. They embraced them and kissed them, gave them schnapps and apples after the massacre, and fled with them in the same night in the direction of Gospic.

The accused Julijana Zarka Ivasic was further found guilty of:

1. in the night from 13 to 14 September 1943 upon the occasion of the attack of the hospital in Otocac, denouncing a commander of the partisans to the Ustasha bandits on the steps of the hospital; the Ustashe immediately killed him with a knife. Thereafter she led the Ustasha bandits from room to room in the hospital and denounced ill partisans, whereupon the bandits upon this occasion tormented and killed twelve severely wounded people in the most gruesome manner with guns, knives, and other stabbing instruments.

2. on a day not precisely known in July 1945 in Osijek as a nurse in the hospital hiding from our authorities two known Ustashe and the Ustasha priest Jerko Eterovic so that he could escape just punishment of the national court. . . .

(*Documents concerning the Antinational Work and Crimes of a Part of the Catholic Clergy*, p. 124)

PART THREE

THE DEATH CAMP JASENOVAC

13

Decrees concerning Sending People to the Camp

Near the junction of the Una and the Save before the war lay a large, growing town on the northern banks—Jasenovac. The population was predominantly Serbian. The town lies on the train route between Zagreb and Belgrade, and even before the war there were several industries here, for example, the brick factory "Ciglara" and the small tooling plant "Lancara."

On the east side of the great Jasenovac plain, the tributaries Strug and Lonja enter the Save, and the whole area is constantly subject to spring and fall floods.

Even before their entry into Yugoslavia, the leaders of the terrorist Ustasha organization knew very well that they had no hold on the masses and that they could stay in power only through terror. Shortly after their defeat, when they entered Italy on tanks with a troop of their fascist criminals, who already before the war had been maintained by fascist money and had been trained in various Italian centers for the execution of terrorist acts, right in the first days of the occupation, under the protection and with the active help of German and Italian troops, they began to carry out mass arrests according to a previously laid plan and began to murder Serbs, Jews, and progressive Croats.

According to their ideas of the purity of the race and the nation, they planned to annihilate all Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies in Croatia; at the same time, they planned to eliminate all those Croats who—no matter how—had expressed their antifascist stance. Thus all prisons and jails were filled in a short time.

USTAŠKA NADZORNA SLUŽBA

RAVNATELJSTVO USTAŠKIH REDARSTVA NEZAVISNE DRŽAVE HRVATSKE U ZAGREBU

Br. U. Z.

Predmet:

ODLUKA

Na prijedlog pod br. 7.497 sa strane

te nakon provjerenja svih odlučnih okolnosti određuje se prisilni boravak u logoru nad osobom:

time da se gore navedena osoba uputi u skupni radni logor u

Trajanje prisilnog boravka određuje se 1 godinu t.j. od

Izvršenje ove odluke povjerava se:

O tome obavijesti:

1. Predlagaču
2. Izvršiocu
3. Logoru u
4. Uredu
5. Ovouredskoj pismari
6. Strani

Ovoj odluci prilozi i potrebne Uputnice za logor.

Datum

Upravitelj

Facsimile of the incarceration decree for the twelve-year-old Mirko Seve in the Jasenovac camp.

To be sure, the Ustashe founded camps in other places, too, for example, in Dakovo, Sisak, Stara Gradiska, Lepoglava, Lobor, etc. But these were smaller. Jasenovac became the largest and most important concentration camp in the so-called NDH.

The Ustashe killed or resettled the entire population of Jasenovac and erected a permanent Ustasha garrison in the town itself.

The first transports brought the prisoners, mainly Jews and Serbs, to the village Krapje, which lay about 12 kilometers west of Jasenovac There they were ordered to build the camp that was to get the official name of "Jasenovac Camp Nr. 1."

Since the number of prisoners grew more and more, a second camp was founded between Jasenovac and Krapje, which got the official name "Camp Nr. 2." The prisoners had to build these two camps, the barracks and the dams, themselves, but the water destroyed everything again and again.

Finally the Ustashe saw that the two selected sites were unsuitable for concentration camps. They abandoned the sites after a short while and founded a new camp near the brick factory "Ciglara" in Jasenovac; it got the official name "Camp Nr. 3."

In Jasenovac itself, they erected "Camp Nr. 4" in the former leather factory, while the camp at Stara Gradiska, which lay not far from Jasenovac, is mentioned in the Ustasha reports several times as "Camp Nr. 5."

All the camps together could receive up to 7,000 prisoners. During all the "work," there were never more than 3,000 to 4,000, not even at the time when there were various shops in camp Nr. 3.

(*The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers concerning the Concentration Camp Jasenovac,* pp. 3–4)

Legal decree of the poglavnik Ante Pavelić and of the Justice and Religion Minister Mirko Puk of 25 November 1941 concerning sending people to assembly and work camps who are considered "unsuitable and dangerous" to the NDH.

Legal decree
concerning the compulsory relegation of undesirable and dangerous persons to assembly and work camps

1. Undesirable persons who are a threat to public order and security or could threaten the peace and quiet of the Croatian people or the achievements of the war of liberation of the Croatian Ustasha movement, can be compelled into the assembly and work camps. The Ustasha Security Service has the authority for the establishment of these camps in the individual sites of the NDH.

2. The length of stay in the assembly and work camps may not be shorter than 3 months and not longer that 3 years.

The Ustasha Security Commander can at any time according to his judgment shorten the length of stay for individuals and reduce the custody and supervisory measures.

3. The Ustasha Police Force as a branch of the Ustasha Security Service has the authority to decide on the compulsory relegation to the assembly and work camps, on the length of stay there, and on the degree of security and supervisory measures according to the rules of this legal decree.

All administrative and self-administrative offices as well as all other institutions of the Ustasha movement are obliged to report to the Ustasha Police force via the Regional Police of their area the persons indicated in point 1 of this legal decree.

There is no legal recourse to the decision concerning compulsory relegation of people to the assembly and work camps; therefore, no complaints can be lodged with the administrative court.

4. Preceding the decision concerning the compulsory relegation of people to the assembly and work camps, there shall be a process intended for administrative penal cases. The Ustasha Police Force routes the process directly or indirectly through the administrative offices of the place of the original referral.

5. The time that the person spends in the custody of the administrative offices and of the police authority, until the decision is made concerning compulsory relegation to the assembly and work camps, is to be calculated in the length of imprisonment.

6. The Ustasha Security Commander will issue a book of regulations concerning the relegation, the activity, the supervisory measures, and the care of the persons incarcerated in the assembly and work camps.

7. This legal decree becomes effective on the day of its announcement in the public newspaper; its execution is entrusted to the Ustasha Security Commander.

Zagreb, 25 November 1941

The Poglavnik of the Independent State of Croatia

Dr. Ante Pavelić

(handwritten signature)

Nr.: CDXXIX-2101-Z-1941Z10

The Justice and Religion Minister:
Dr. Mirko Puk
(handwritten signature)

(from A. Miljetic, *Das Konzentrationslager Jasenovac* 1941–1945, Vol. I, pp. 89–90)

Directive of the commandant of he Ustasha Security Service Kommando Eugen Kvaternik of December 1941 concerning the methods of handling persons sent to work and assembly camps (Archiv VII, a. NDH, Vol. 172, Reg. Nr. 2/1):

Kommando of the Ustasha Security Service

Prs. Number. 12473/41.

Re: Procedures with persons who are sent to work and assembly camps.

To all districts, to the police authority of the city of Zagreb

In the legal decree of 25 November 1941, Nr. CDXXIX-2101-Z.p.—1941 concerning the relegation of undesirable and dangerous persons to assembly and work camps, it is determined that the decision or the relegation to the camps will be made by the Ustasha police authority (§3).

In the spirit of a unified procedure in these matters, the addressee is directed to forward to the district police and all subordinate administrative offices of his area a memorandum in which the following guidelines are outlined:

The offices and institutions designated in the legal decree direct a justified complaint against the persons named in § 1 to the district police. The latter will transmit such complaint to the Ustasha Security Service, Office I (Directorship of the Ustasha Police Force of the NDH—Zagreb, Petrinjska Street 7/IV) who will either carry out the process as an individual case as provided for in § 4 of the legal decree, or give the assignment to the primary court of justice of the administrative authority, so that it will carry out the prescribed procedure.

If the complaint lodged via the authorities named in § 3 is not clear or is insufficiently based, the district police authorities themselves can carry out the process prescribed for the administrative court, or charge the primary court of justice of the administrative authority therewith.

The district police authorities transmit to the UNS [Ustasha Security Service; translator's note], Office I, the motion to execute compulsory relegation to the camp according to the above-named process and according to the accompanying form (Form L1). That office will make the final decision. In its motion, the district police authority will consider the result of the process as well as the political and moral background of the persons to be relegated. Likewise, the date of the incarceration of these persons is to be indicated at the administrative or police offices.

The complaint and the motion can contain a justified suggestion of the authorities of the primary court of justice or of the district police authorities regarding the length of incarceration.

The recommendation on the form (Form L1) will be made in quadruplet.

One copy remains in the office that recommends compulsory relegation to the camp, and three copies are to be sent to the UNS.

All costs of the administrative process as well as the costs for the photograph are to be borne by the person being relegated, unless he/she qualifies for poverty status according to the existing laws.

The UNS, Office I, then makes the final decision on the basis of the recommendation to incarcerate, contrary to which no legal recourse can be made (§ 3). The office making the recommendation will be informed of this decision as well as the party or the person being relegated to the camp, the district police, and the assembly or work camp that carries out the decision. The UNS will add a relegation order to the decision, without which the camp commander may not accept a person. Upon receiving the relegated person, the camp commander will issue a confirmation, which is to be forwarded to the relegation authority and the execution authority.

The district police authority will maintain a register of names of the incarcerated persons.

Although legal recourse to the decision to incarcerate is excluded, individuals will submit requests for dismissal from the camp, or something similar. In this instance, such requests are to be delivered to the primary court of justice of the administrative authority and stamped according to the law.

The primary court of justice of the administrative authority will admit such requests into the process and will check and confirm the submitted information. The district police authorities will deliver these requests to the commander of the Ustasha Security Service. The district police authorities will, if necessary, elaborate on the confirmation of the primary court of justice of the administrative authorities and will cite the number and the date of the decision of the UNS, Office I. Requests that are to be sent directly to the UNS will be returned and will follow the prescribed course.

The execution of the regulation will begin on 1 January 1942.

The necessary forms can be gotten from the UNS, Office I (Office of the Ustasha Police Authority of the NDH—Zagreb Petrinjska Street 7/IV). By 20 December 1941, the districts will assign a reliable person to fetch these forms from the UNS.

Prepared for the homeland!

Commander
Eugen Kvaternik
(handwritten signature)

The accuracy of the copy is attested to for official use.

Secretary of the UNS
(Josip Turkalj)

(from A. Miljetic, *Das Konzentrationslager Jasenovac 1941–1945,* Vol. I, pp. 104–106)

14

The Various Methods of Killing in Jasenovac

A report by Dr. Nikola Nikolic:

Revolver

All Ustasha officers carried revolvers of various, primarily German makes. Matkovic and Majstorovic had automatic Parabellum pistols. Danon, a former convict and head of Group "D" of the liquidators in Gradina, also owned a large revolver, with which he liked to strut around.

Only selected individuals were killed with a revolver at public executions: doctors or prestigious political opponents. They were killed with a shot in the back of the neck. The victim had to kneel; his hands were bound with wire; his face toward the ground. Because of the trauma to the brain, the victim again straightened up, stretched out, and fell forward. Death usually came quickly. Only if Majstorovic shot at an angle, to "torment the criminal a bit," did it take hours for the victim to die. No one was allowed to touch him.

The entry wound was always very large, and blood and brain tissue oozed out. The bullet often exited through one of the eye sockets.

Carbine

Maricic usually used the carbine in the murders in "3C" and at public executions. The highly explosive shells smashed the heads completely; death came quickly.

Machine Guns

The machine gun "Svarzloze" was used in the first mass murders in Krupnje. First, they shot the legs then the stomach, and finally through the breast and head. So-called rebellious elements as well as the Serbs from the Kozara mountains were killed with the machine gun.

Bombs

With bombs, the Ustashe killed children whom they had thrown alive into ditches in Gradina. These children often died in advance from fright, horror, and fear, as the Ustashe themselves told.

Knives

Following the example of Mussolini's fascists, the Ustashe carried knives as stabbing weapons. It was an obligatory requirement and adornment for the Ustasha uniform, a murderous symbol of power, like the dagger among the Hitler Youth and Mussolini's "Black Shirts."

In addition to the knife, the Ustashe also used daggers, double-edged knives, or stilettos for slaughtering people. The daggers with ornaments, braid work, and the letter "U" were manufactured in the metal factory in Serin. Master Volf, a prisoner who formerly had manufactured surgical instruments, was obliged to plate them with nickel. The engraving was done in the metal-art studio. The dagger was simultaneously decoration and officer's weapon.

A slaughtering knife once fell into the hands of our partisans. It was a 12 cm long, curved knife, whose cutting edge was on the outer curve. The blade was attached to an arched, oval copper plate and this was in turn attached to a thick, leather arm band.

At the end of the blade, directly at the copper plate, the letters "Grafgati Gebr. Solinger" were engraved, and on the leather arm band was the name of the German firm "Grevizo." The leather arm band, which had a hole

for the thumb, was worn around the wrist. The other fingers remained free. On the lower edge, the arm band was pulled tight with a leather strap. For a long time, I contemplated why the cutting edge was on the outer part of the blade, and concluded the following about the knife's function: When the user hit his victim in the neck with the knife, he drew the blade toward himself with the cutting edge turned toward his body and thus the swing of the movement cut through the whole neck tissue. The killer kept the knife circling constantly, similar to a turning wheel, so that by means of the swing, the necks of the innocent victims, held by another killer, were cut through. It was a kind of machine with a mounted knife that turned and cut off the people's heads with a great speed—a murderous assembly line for slaughtering people.

Axes

From the groups of Gypsies brought into the camps, the Ustashe selected certain ones and promised to grant them their life and freedom and to reward them if they would serve as henchmen. They fed them especially well and gave them a liter of liquor every day so that they were always drunk. They received axes and wooden hammers as henchmen's tools. The axes were simple like those that farmers use, with a broad, flat side and set into beechwood handles. When the victim was unaware, they attacked him in the dark suddenly with the blunt side. When their victim then fell to the ground, they split his head, his chest, or his stomach with the blade.

Hatchets

For their slaughtering, the Ustashe also used a carpenter's hatchet, a small tool with a large, sharp cutting edge. The hatchet is a light-weight tool and because of its large cutting edge is quite suited to splitting wood. It can also be a terrible weapon.

The Ustashe used hatchets especially in mass killings of women and children. In doing so, they proceeded as follows: They ordered the victim first to kneel and to place his or her head so that the neck was on a block of wood. The hands of the victim were tied at his or her back with a wire. The Ustashe struck through the victim's neck, spinal column, and arteries. Older people and children were thereby beheaded. Because of paralysis of the torso when living nerves, blood vessels, and the spinal column are severed, death came quickly, unless the blow was not strong. People with strong necks often were not killed immediately, but had to writhe

for hours mortally wounded. They were thrown into large mass graves and covered with dead bodies and dirt without consideration of whether they were still living and twitching.

Killing with the hatchet was carried out by so-called hatchet men at the rim of gigantic ditches in Sibovi and Colinke. These ditches were dug specifically for these victims. They were dug by prisoners, usually Gypsies, who later were themselves killed. Without knowing for whom they were intended, they were digging their own graves, so to speak.

Prisoners who escaped the Ustasha knives in Gradina, saw Gypsies who were themselves killing with hatchets. I also heard from prisoners in the camps that these Gypsies—forced by the Ustashe to help them in the mass murders—chopped off the heads of other prisoners.

Wooden Hammers

As a result of the unexpectedly strong indignation on the part of the Serbs and the Croatian population, the Ustashe right after the first public mass killings made an effort to see that the victims in their despair about the threatening liquidation did not get stirred up. There were some such rebellions in the course of the first mass killings. Therefore, they had to find killing methods in which the sobbing and the screams of the victims, who were awaiting their death while standing in rows, could not be heard in the vicinity. Since they themselves were afraid, the Ustashe screamed at their victims and lambasted them to quiet them down and to discourage them, and to get them into a state of passive patience awaiting their death. In the beginning, they used firearms for the mass liquidations like the Germans, but later, when they were trying to disguise these murders, they quit using these weapons in most cases, since the shots were revealing what was going on in the camp not only to the inmates but also to anyone within 5 to 6 kilometers. Therefore, they later used mainly bludgeons and stabbing weapons, with which they could kill without noise. In order to carry out the mass murders as quietly as possible, they used wooden hammers.

The wooden hammer is a wooden cylinder about 50 to 60 centimeters long, whose round ends have a diameter of 25 to 30 centimeters. For the cylinder, they used very heavy wood, usually beech or oak; in the absence of these, however, willow wood could be used. It was set on a wooden handle 80 to 100 centimeters long.

When I once visited the ill veterinarian Drazancic, who was in the horse stall in the supply room, a prisoner drew my attention to 10 such wooden hammers that were in a workshop set up especially for them. "They request them constantly, every day. There is no more beech wood for them."

I stared at this Ustasha invention and tried to imagine its use. "Let's get out of here; it is dangerous to stand around staring at these clubs. Otherwise, tonight the two of us might get a hammer in the head. They hide their weapons and are very sensitive when anybody messes around with their secrets. Let's go!" Comrade Vrancic told me.

With the wooden hammer, they killed very quickly and deftly. Although many prisoners had told me of these murders that took place at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, I didn't get a clear picture of them until the prisoner Satler, who was a doctor, reported:

> When the prisoners arrived from Zagreb, primarily laborers, intellectuals, and Communists, they were liquidated with wooden hammers. It was important to the Ustashe that the prisoners not notice anything about the executions, which were carried out as quickly as possible, because the Communists were not to know anything about the true function of the liquidation camps, so they could not cause an uprising in the camp. We were forbidden on punishment by death to observe them in their new method of mass liquidation. This threat, however, could no longer scare us. We were no longer afraid of death, only of being tortured further.
>
> Before I came to the camp, I would have gone crazy if anyone had forced me to watch this. No one in the world could have made me watch such a thing. That goes also for everyone else who watched these mass executions with me. Was it inquisitiveness or a desire for sensation that drove us to watch this horror? No.
>
> We also wanted to be eyewitnesses to these crimes of the Ustashe. We wanted to be credible witnesses—at least one of us. We all came from Croatia and were looking for our acquaintances, but in the mass of mutilated bodies, we could not recognize anyone.
>
> I looked around the corner to see what was going on there. A crowd of prisoners was standing at the end of a walkway surrounded by Ustasha officers and guards. Milos Luburic and Matkovic came in and went back out again right away. They passed the crowd and looked toward the camp to see if by chance any of the inmates was watching.
>
> "Patience! This isn't Tuskanac Park here, but rather a labor camp. You have to be registered and get your work assignments and places. In case you are sick, you have to be examined. Otherwise somebody could die and then we would have to inform his family at home. We are responsible for you." said Luburic to the crowd. And right away everyone was to walk along the walkway, then everything would go dark, and if the glint of the red color of blood should glimmer in the dark, then he would fall into the eternal darkness of Jasenovac death.
>
> The people were gullible. They did not know where they were. They "understood" the necessity and were waiting patiently for their "turn" and their information was entered into the protocol, a protocol of death that

they didn't at all need, because here it was of no significance to anyone. But the condemned themselves seriously believed that this was "necessary" and that it was all a matter of basic administrative affairs, for these were people who were in a camp. But how little did they realize the depravity of these beasts, who scorned human dignity and human life—and how near were they to their terrible end in this hell.

We saw how they then were liquidated at the other side of this walkway. When the victim exited at the other side, he or she looked around uncertainly and suddenly stopped directly before a closed door. The victim suspected something. Was it the smell of blood and splattered brains that instinctively led him to suspect the deadly blow in the next moment? Almost every victim stopped before the door that led into oblivion and over which the mechanical hammer was hanging that would smash his head. Then the guard pushed the prisoner and screamed: "Why are you stopping? Go on! Forward! Into the camp!"

The door was thrust open and the victim made an indecisive step forward. Immediately behind him, the Ustashe closed the door quickly. Then the Ustashe in the hallway broke out in laughter. "Into the camp! Hee hee hee, ha ha! He's already there! Ha Ha Ha! He's gone to the devil!" they laughed and didn't get serious again until they heard the steps of the next victim.

"Faster, man. We don't have time for your elegant promenade. You're waddling."

Later the guard told us about it quite openly. Behind the door, an Ustasha was hiding with a hammer in his hand. The victim unsteadily took two or three steps forward and then the Ustasha henchman dealt him a blow to the head.

Some prisoners watched these events. I looked around to the cowitnesses of these terrible murders of the people from Zagreb. The camp prisoners who dared risk their lives to see this horrifying scene were shaken by a convulsive laughter. They had to laugh about the death grimaces so much that tears came to their eyes. There is nothing astonishing about the reaction of these witnesses. Because of the constant stimulation, the torments, and tortures of the prisoners, the old prison inmates watching this gruesome scene were totally stunned. Every prisoner became numb because he knew that surely the same end was awaiting him, and often he even wished for a quick death.

Many older prisoners told me that they had watched from the other bank of the Save and saw the prisoners in Gradina fall to the blows of the wooden hammer. Ten "hammer men" quickly killed many prisoners kneeling before them, their heads on a block of wood.

With the wooden clubs, the henchmen from the "D" group, then the Gypsies, and then other Ustashe killed people in Gradina in the darkness. This method of "quiet execution" was later very popular among the Ustashe.

In order to grant to the weaker or already half dead prisoners in Gradina "the coup de grace," the Ustashe in Camp "3 D" used wooden hoes and posts. In the mass liquidation of small children and women in Jasenovac, wooden posts were a favorite tool of mass killing along with knives.

Criminal Ustashe prisoners held a privileged position in the camp. They worked as beaters and henchmen and for this got better food. They had permission to kill other inmates and behaved nauseatingly as spies and denouncers for the Ustashe. Their own release depended on their loyalty and the extent of their actions in the camp. They mistreated the political prisoners daily with all their strength, in order to get out of the camp as soon as possible.

Condemned Ustasha agents of the Security Service were forced to work as guards for the work on the dam. The length of time that they had to serve in this position depended on their behavior in the camp. The more brutal and beastial their treatment of the prisoners, the sooner they could purchase their freedom.

In regard to housing and food, they had the same advantages as the guards. They enjoyed the freedom to throttle and kill at will. They were especially protected by the upper ranks among the Ustasha murderers, since their offenses were not political but just criminal! They had plundered without sharing the booty, had raped Ustasha sympathizers, or such.

The Ustasha agents carried a hidden knife as a weapon and a thick wooden club. As guards for the work on the dam, they beat anyone who could not dig fast or carry dirt because of illness or weakness. Every day they killed several people at the dam with their blows. Around their necks, they wore little crosses and in their hands they held a thick, long club.

The prisoners who worked on the dam told me of how the Ustashe killed weak prisoners or even others for whom they had a specific death order. They hit them first with the club and in doing so became more and more excited, like beasts, and then finally killed them.

"Why are you loitering, you son of a bitch! Do you think this is a tennis court? You must think you are here for pleasure!" If the prisoner reacted to this, that was enough reason to murder him. The guard beat him with the stick until he died. These criminals always struck the head. The victims tried to avoid the blow, they cowered under the blows, and tried to protect their head with their arms.

The prisoners were also terrorized mentally by the guards, as they threatened to denounce them or beat them to death. When they attacked anyone especially with their threats, he had to be prepared for certain death at any moment.

The wounds from the club blows consisted of contusions of the soft spots and of broken bones especially skull bones and arms, as well as

bleeding of the inner organs and especially of the brain. Physically weaker persons died rather quickly from the club blows.

Iron Bars

The Ustashe in Gradina and Ustica also used iron bars to kill children and women. These iron bars were manufactured in the metal factory in Jasenovac. Similar to the wooden hammer or the axe, the iron bars were also used to smash the skulls of the prisoners. The striking instruments then thrust deeply into the head. They were also used to completely kill victims who were already beaten half dead. Then from the rim of the ditch, they thrust blindly into the heads, the stomachs, or the hearts. Also a kind of lance and iron hammers were produced in the metal factory.

Iron Hammers

The iron hammer, a tool for hammering nails, was used to execute children and old and sick people. They took no regard of the crying and wailing of the children and women. From the winter of 1941 to the summer of 1942, they killed the children in masses directly in the camp and bore them on tile carts to the oven of the tile factory. Many people saw half-dead, beaten children, despairing, with their mouths wide open with horror, and distorted faces. They were up to 12 or 14 years old, among them were also babies, most of them of Jewish origin.

Usually they were killed with the hammers on the head. It was important that the brains and blood flowed. They threw many half dead into the ditches. They were still breathing, flailing in the ditches, and moved making the earth over the ditch rise, and it seemed that the ditch was breathing in rhythm.

Hoes

The Ustashe also used hoes as murder weapons against children, the ill, and weak, old people. They gave the last deadly blow with hoes to the people who were shot and wounded. The prisoner grave diggers used them when the prisoners they were burying asked for a coup de grace. The hoe proved to be a very appropriate weapon, and later it became a favorite of the Ustasha murderers. With it, they struck only the head. The Ustashe themselves told that Frater Filipovic, "the Satan," killed small children and sick people quite passionately with the hoe.

Trampling

The trampling of a victim was among the worst kinds of killing, for dying was terribly slow. In the beginning, it happened frequently. When a victim fell, the guards killed him or her with their feet. To do it, they kicked the head with the tip of the shoe, in the ribs, and the sides. The kicks caused severe wounds and indescribable pain. The criminals stood on the stomach of the victim and danced, i.e., they stood with all their weight first with one foot then the other on the stomach. The wounds of the inner organs, especially the liver and the spleen, caused severe inner bleeding; the intestines burst, but the victim did not die of that, but of shock and the great pain.

I myself had the misfortune of having to watch such a murder in "3C." I saw two facial expressions: that of the victim with wide open eyes, full of blood, with foam in his mouth, gasping for air; and the second: the bestially distorted face of the Ustasha murderer, rabidly foaming, with blood-filled eyes, screaming like a triumphant savage. Two faces: that of the human victim and that of the human beast. These two have permeated my memory. They pursue me throughout my whole life.

Belts and Leather Whips

The engineer Picili carried a whip of cow hide. With this whip, he beat some prisoners to death.

He was a drinker, and this way of murdering pleased him. He was a passionate, active flagellant. Any little reason was enough for him to kill someone. It was enough that a prisoner didn't salute him; then he would say: "Why don't you salute the Ustasha superiors, you beast?" and then he would plunge into the victim with his whip and beat him to death. Like every Ustasha, Picili too could always find a reason to kill. For them, there was the unbounded freedom to exercise any imaginable sadism.

I was present at one such murder. Picili beat a prisoner with the whip. He stood in front of him screaming at him. I could not understand his words, because I was about 20 meters away, but from his facial expression, I saw how he was screaming. "Now you will see, Doctor, something you never saw before," a prisoner whom I was bandaging whispered to me.

Picili hit the prisoner again. I saw the victim bend over to protect his head, his arms raised. Then Picili bellowed at the prisoner again, holding the whip behind his back. The prisoner winced more and more. His face was distorted from horror, because he knew what was coming. One blow fell, a second, a third, and then the blows followed one after the other in streams, like rain, faster and faster, stronger and stronger. The victim

fell over. We could see how blood was rising into Picili's swollen face. The thick lips hung down half open, his eyes were wide open. His lower lip quivered, and his head twitched. His rage had not let up; only his strength diminished. He had grown tired and was resting in order to gather new strength. His breathing was fast.

After he had recovered, he began to strike anew. The victim screamed out and was bleeding; the skin was bursting and tearing under the blows from the whip, because a metal wire was woven into the whip. Picili became more and more out of control.

The screams of the victim, who was tossing and bending, incited him more and more, and he struck more and more violently and wildly. Then he paused again, gathered his strength anew, and began again with foam on his mouth, completely out of control. The beaten man gurgled and twitched, but Picili struck again and again, and even after the victim was already dead, he continued to strike.

Picili recovered only with great effort when he became aware that the prisoner was dead. He spit on the dead body and went to the exit. "Look at him! He thinks he can fool me, me, an Ustasha! He claims he is sick and can't work. I'll give him some of my medicine." He was screaming like a mad wolf. "They're malingerers, malingerers, Captain," another beater, called to him. It was Ilija Sablic, called "the uncle," who like Picili carried a whip and a belt, with which he beat the prisoners.

I often heard the prisoners tell that the Ustashe killed prisoners only with blows from a belt on the head or on the naked body.

Hanging

Many prisoners were hanged on the great "Poplar of Sighs" in Gradina at the mouth of the Una as it entered the Save. Someone had hammered gigantic iron nails into the poplar, so that the hangman could climb up more easily and for the block and tackle with which the victim was usually hoisted. The prisoner was hanged in such a way that he would remain alive as long as possible and be tormented. One could hear unbearable screams and sighs coming from the poplar; therefore it was called the "Poplar of Sighs" by the prisoners and the Ustashe.

Burning

Burning people alive is one of the most gruesome practices of the dark, Indo-European epoch and of the medieval European inquisition. The burning

of witches in the Middle Ages represents a religious punishment connected with the myth of hell. It symbolizes the beginning of the punishment of hell at God's judgment, and the inquisitor was the representative of divine justice on earth.

The inquisition knew that death by fire caused the victim the most horrible pain and therefore represents the most severe "punishment for sinners."

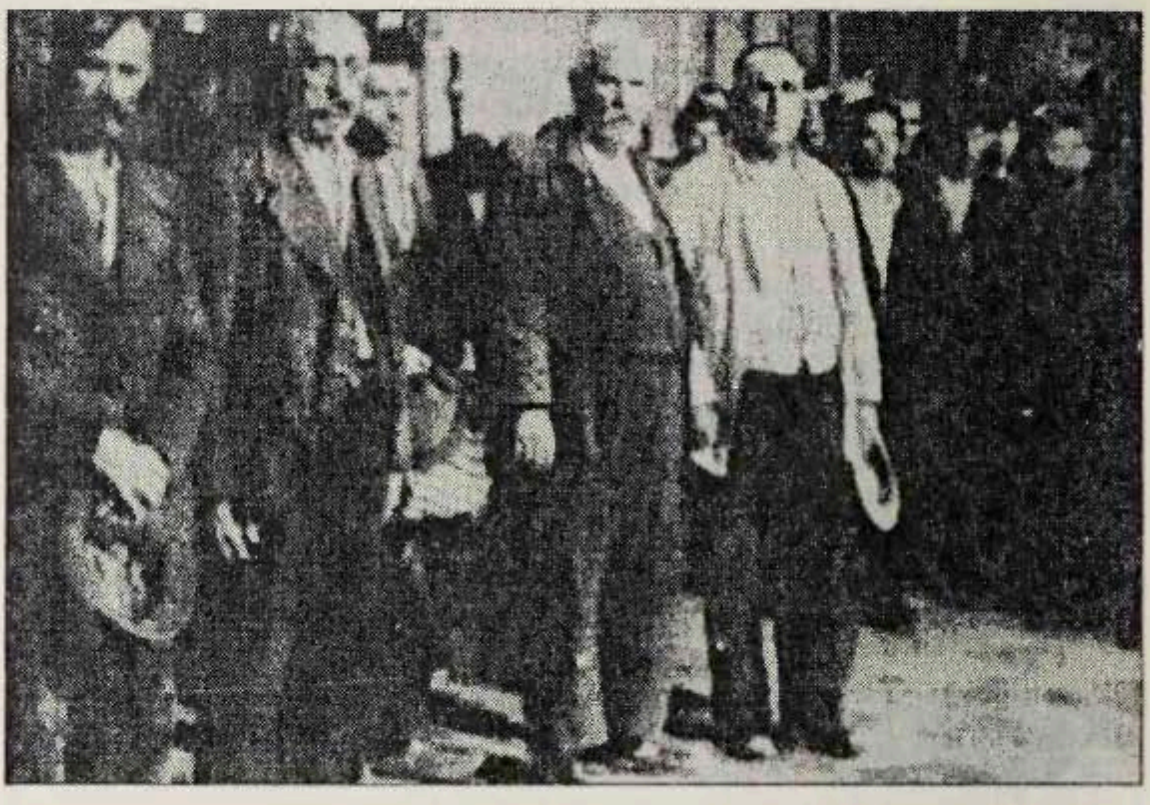
In Jasenovac, we saw a revival and reapplication of this method of human immolation by morally depraved and religiously fanatic butchers with the "great Catholic" Pavelić at their head, a method tested and proven by the "Holy Roman Alliance" in feudal darkness.

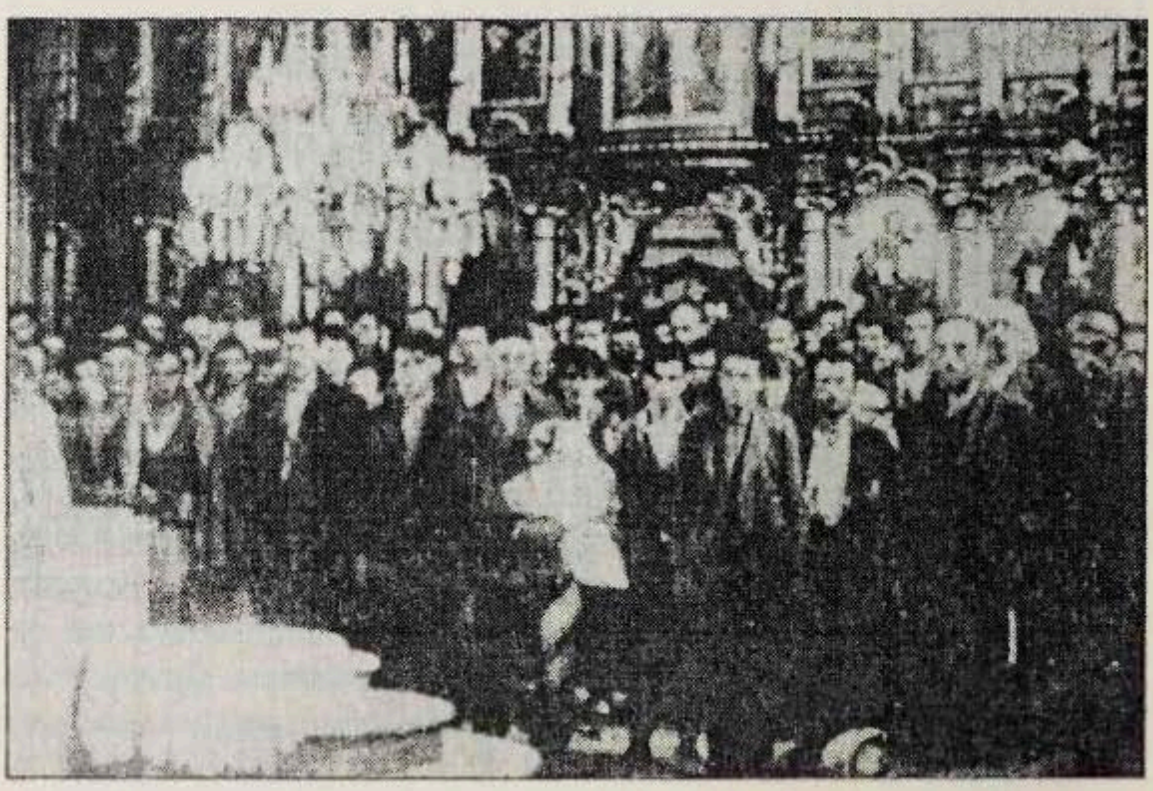
The Ustasha butchers as modern inquisitors of Jasenovac, however, had to adapt this medieval method to practical and economical standards. Picili set to work to reconstruct an oven for this purpose in the tile factory. He divided the big tile oven into several ovens with a common chimney. Each oven could hold a train-car-load of people, i.e., forty to fifty and about twice as many children. In this improvised Ustasha crematorium in one night, 450 to 600 people were incinerated. I saw this oven when I walked through the execution site. It was in a long tunnel. The individual ovens were very large and wide, about 3 × 4 × 3 meters. The door was opened from the outside, from the tunnel.

The people were brought into the notorious tunnel right up to the oven; there they stayed until night. Then they were killed with rods, knives, axes, wooden hammers, iron hammers, or sometimes with a pistol or a rifle.

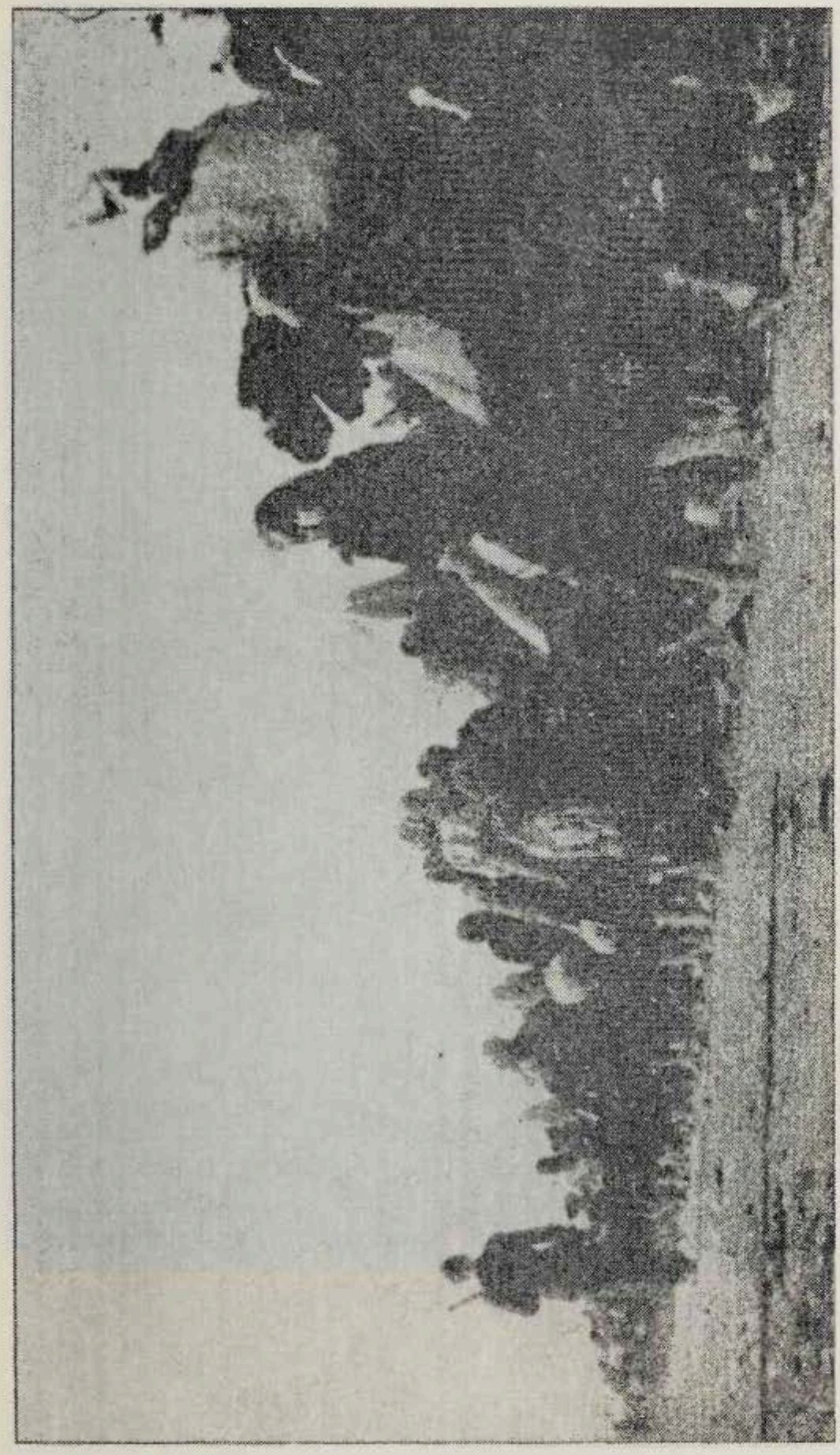
This caused a terrible panic, but no one could get out of the tunnel. The prisoners huddled together with bloody heads; they were completely beside themselves, and everyone tried to hide behind someone else. Almost suffocated, they screamed and pled to God. But everyone had to die, and neither from God nor from anywhere else did there come a single spark of hope. The Ustashe surrounded them in this arena; there was no escape. Some fainted, others became quiet and thought they could perhaps escape if they would lie down and pretend to be dead. These suffered the most. The janitors and crematorium employees came and bore them to the big iron door. One opened this hellish gate and a hot, stinking stream of air heated the faces. The victim was thrown into the fire of this pyre of Jasenovac: Screams could be heard, millions of sparks from the body's fall and its last twitches were blown upwards, flames rose, then the dull thud of the heavy iron door. The dead could, of course, not cry anymore; they only caused millions of sparks to rise and spread the smell of burning human flesh, an evil, sweet stink.

Loaded box cars brought slaughtered children, girls whose throats had been slit. They looked like little slain lambs. The bloody heads hung on

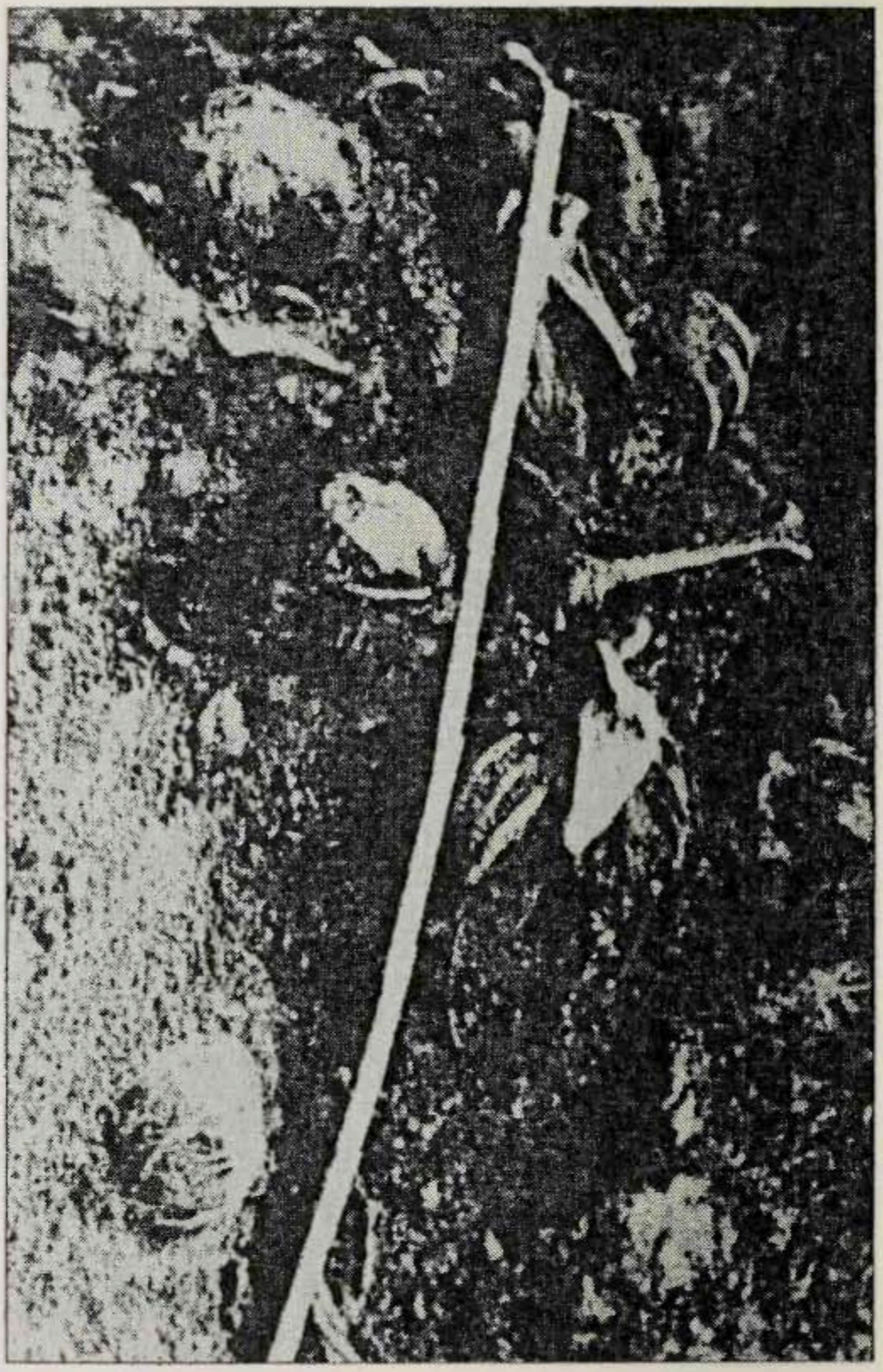




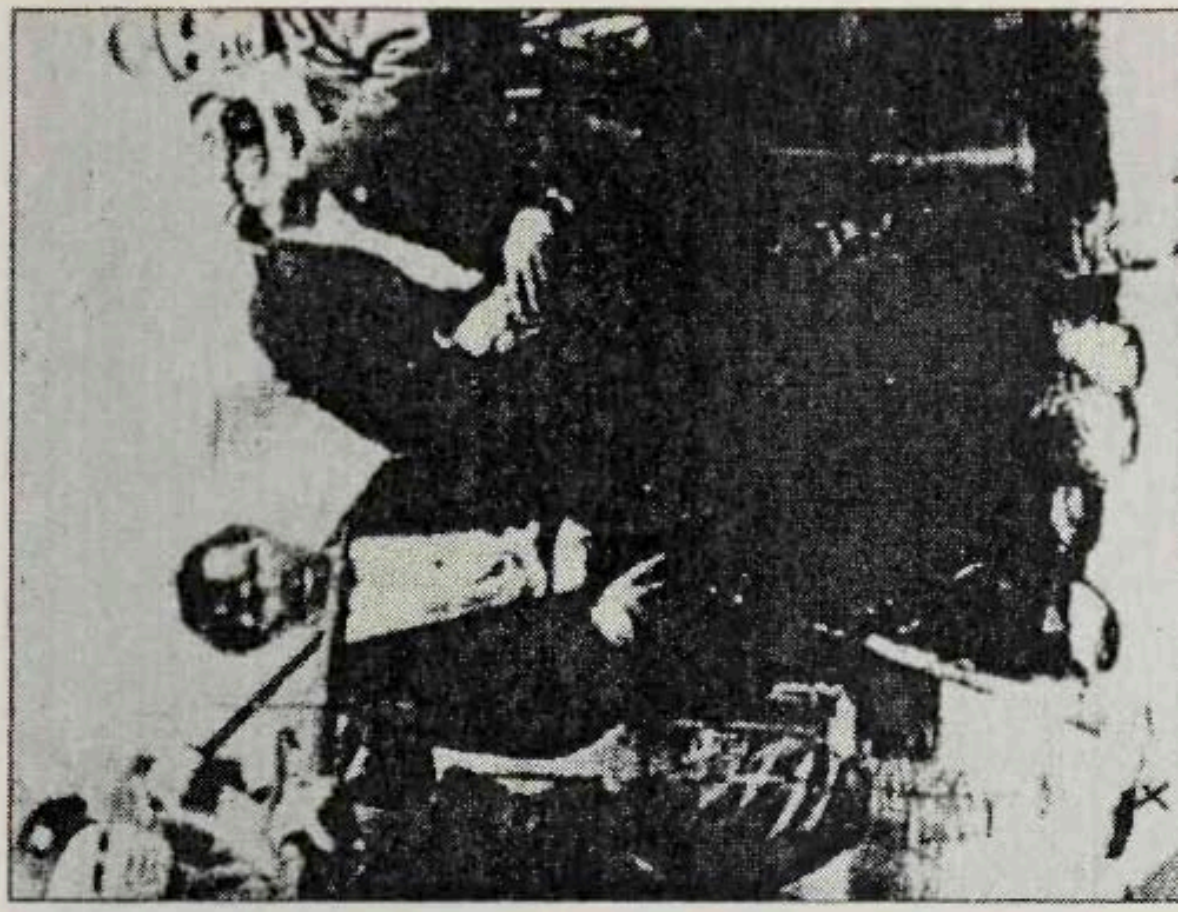
The Ustasha's infamous massacre of the Serbs in the Serbian Orthodox church in Glina took place on 21 August 1941. There was only one survivor, Giebo Jadnak.



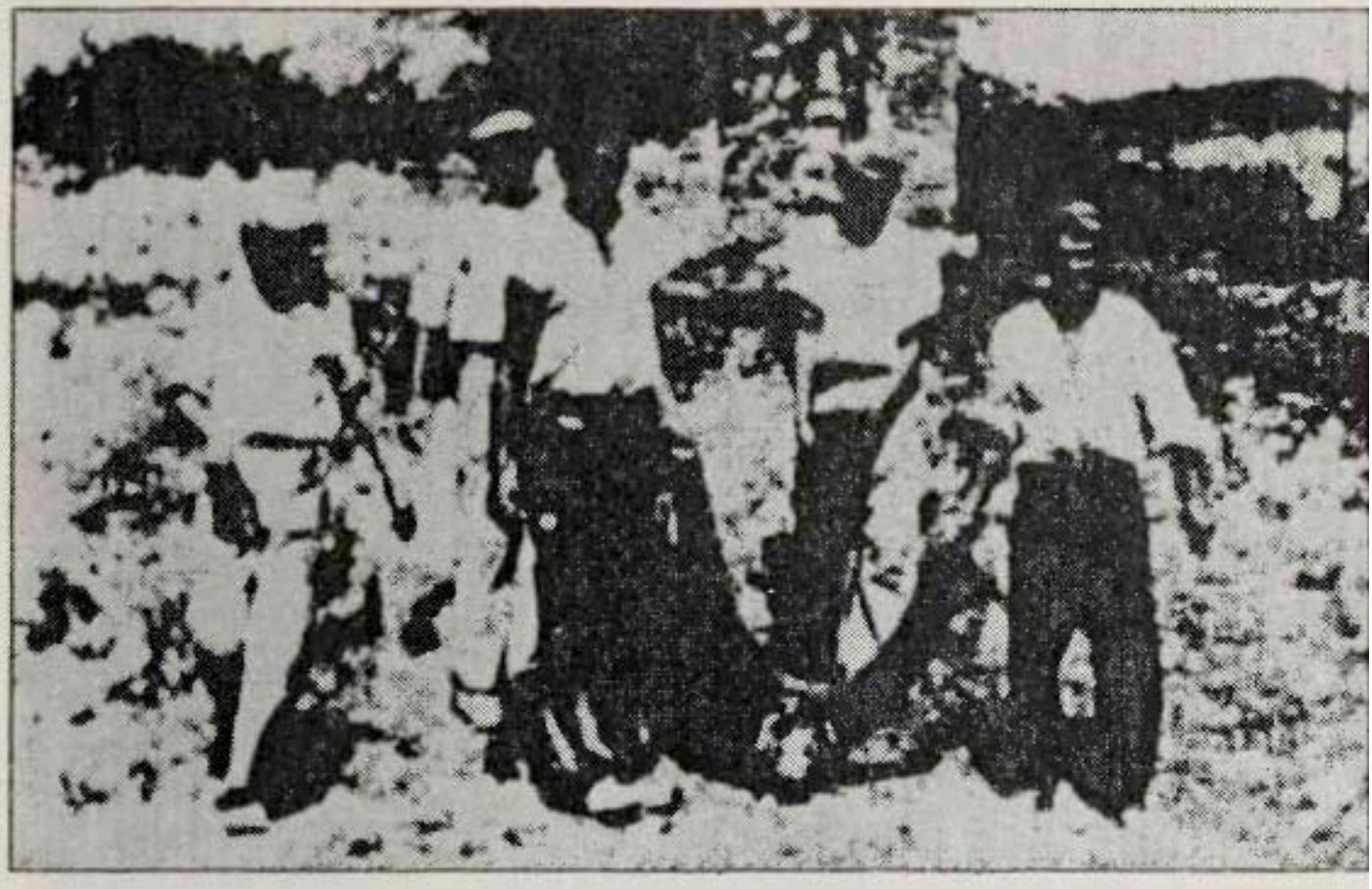
Serbian women and girls on their way to the concentration camp.

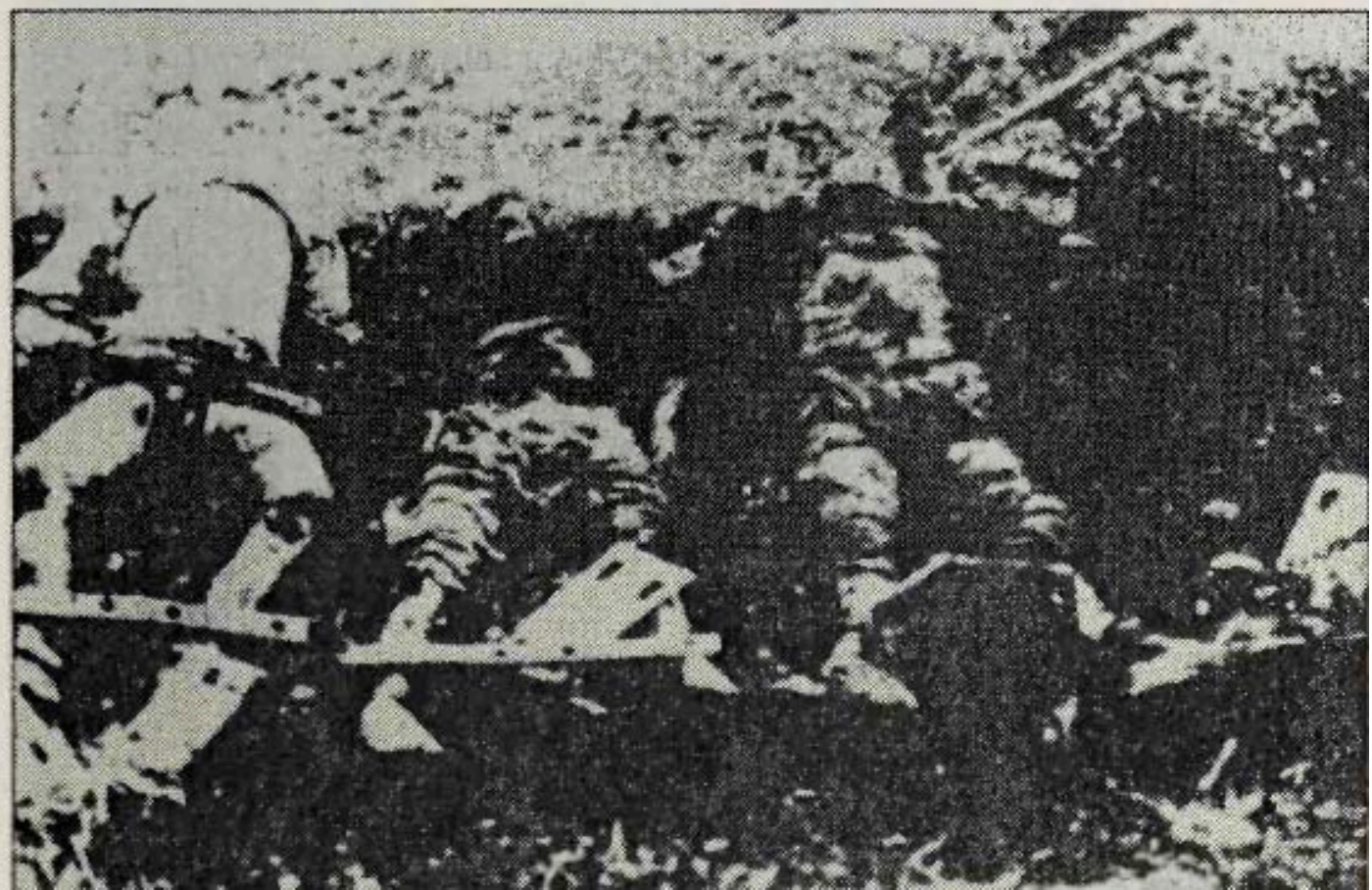


In Gradina, the largest execution site in Jasenovac, which has not yet been examined, the river Save is still uncovering the bones of the victims—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

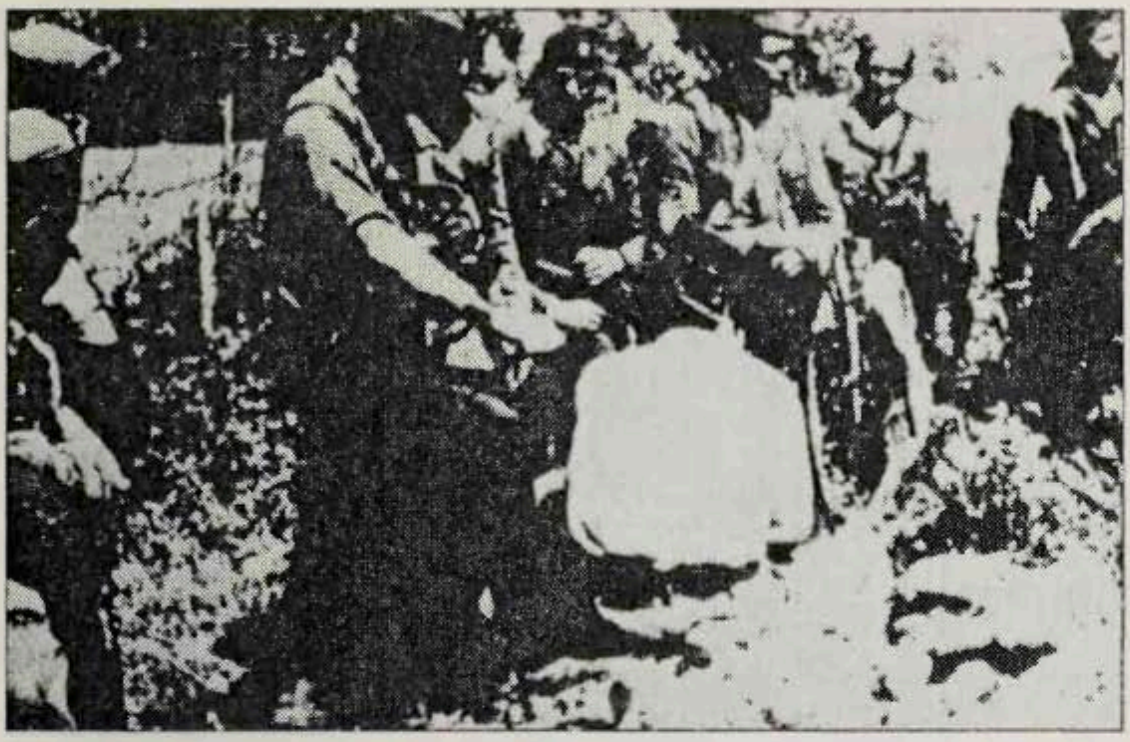


Mass grave containing the bones of prisoners murdered in Gradina—Yugoslav Cinemathek No. 5047.



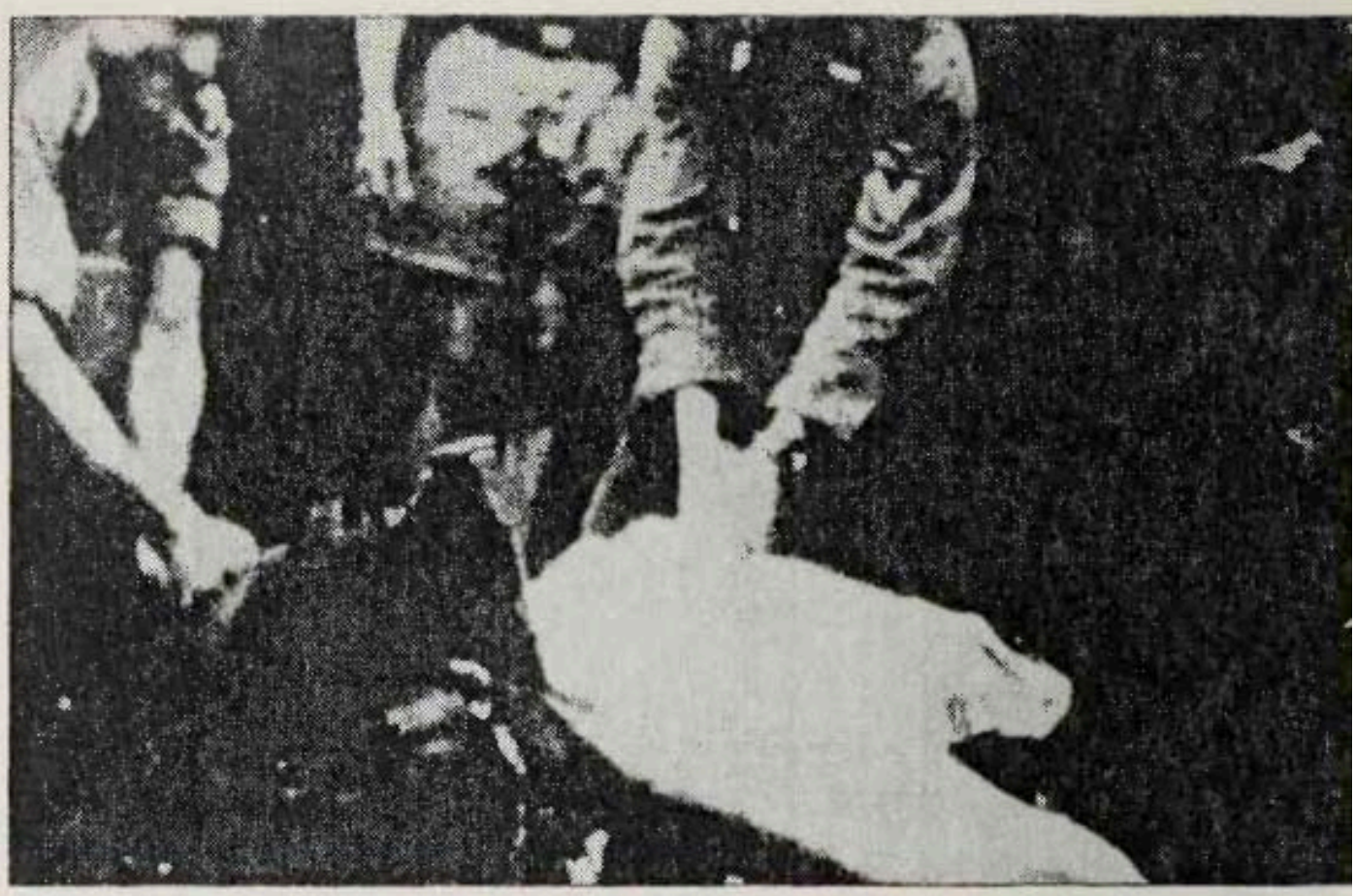


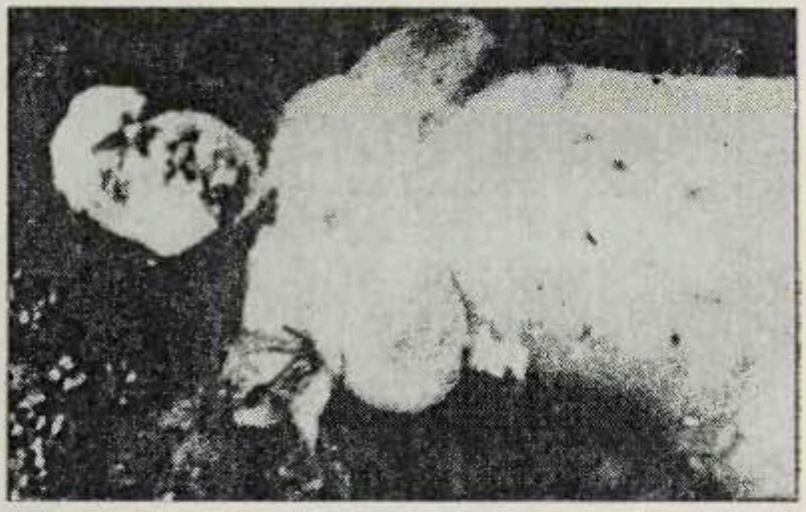
Ustashe carrying the head of a Serb Orthodox priest.

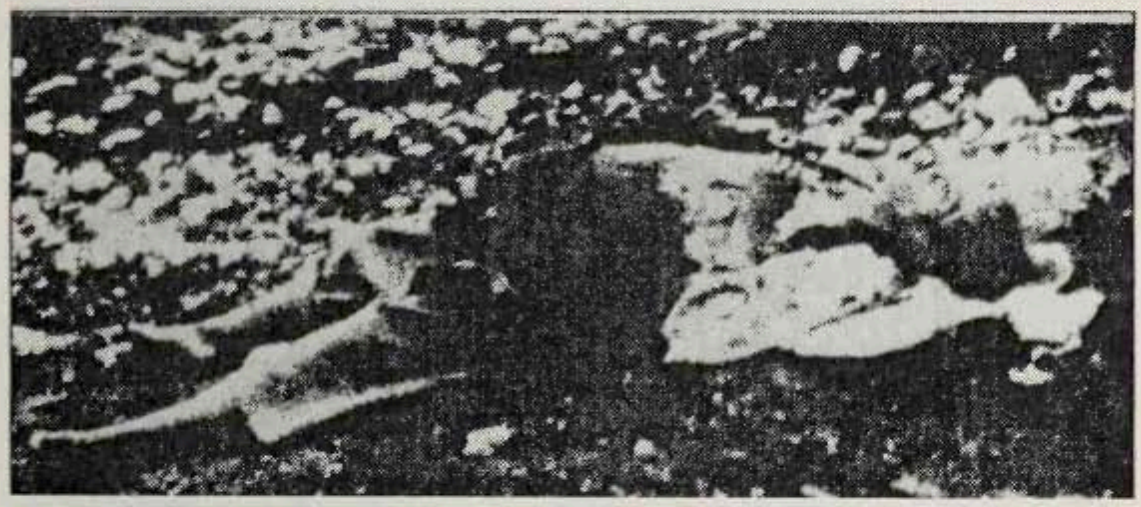


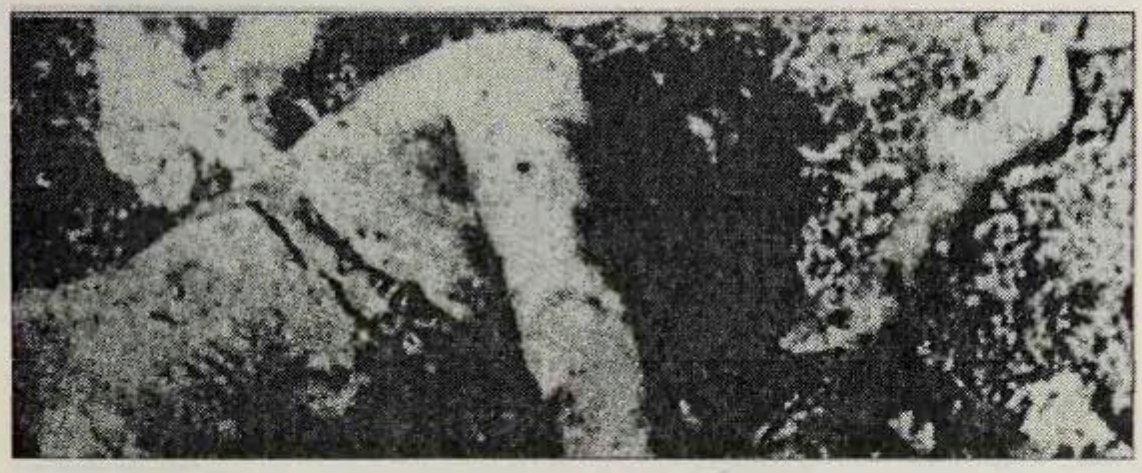
Above, This farmer had to dig his own grave. Sadistic Ustashe show him the knife with which they will kill him.

Below, After the work is done.



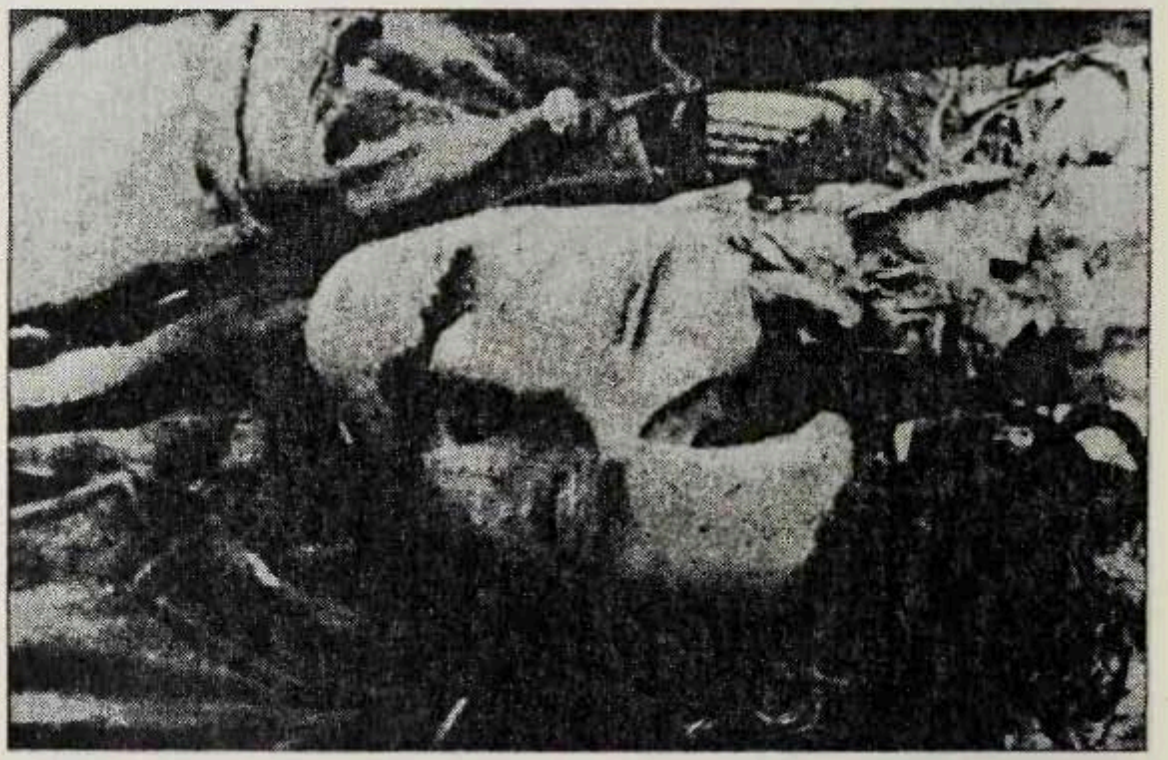


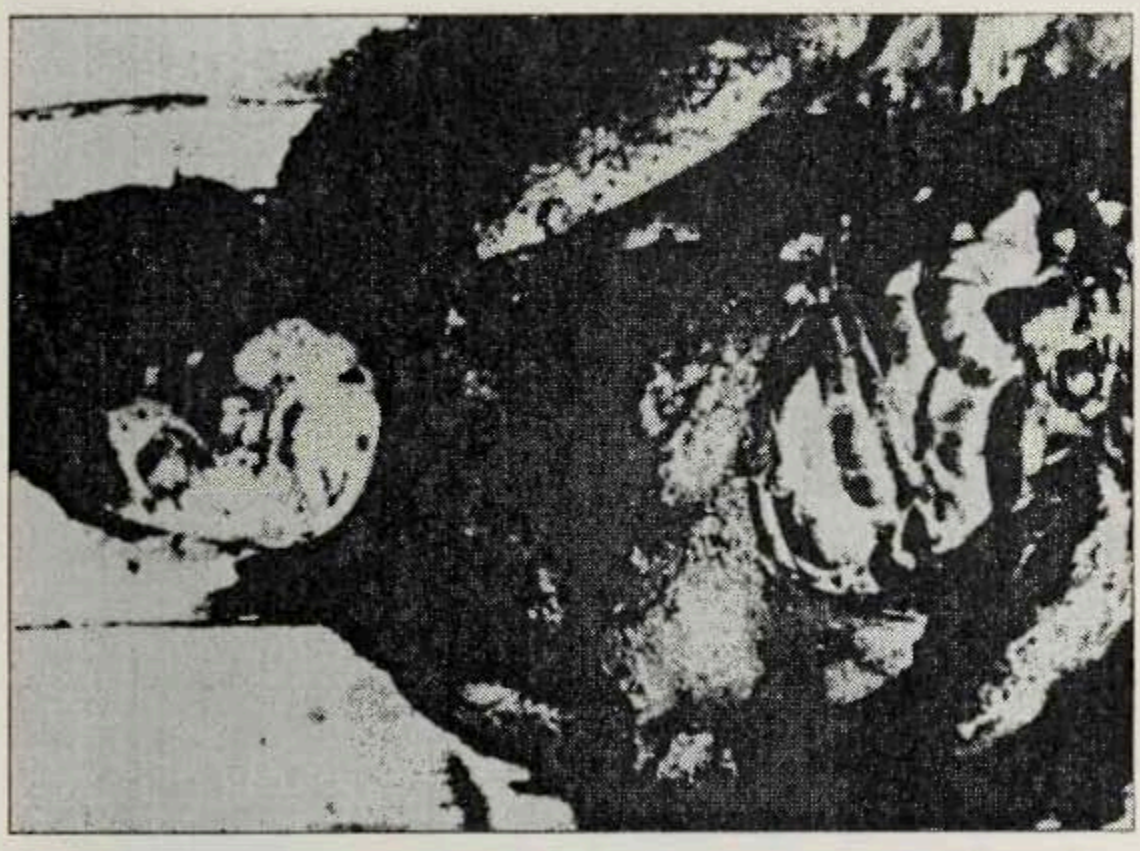


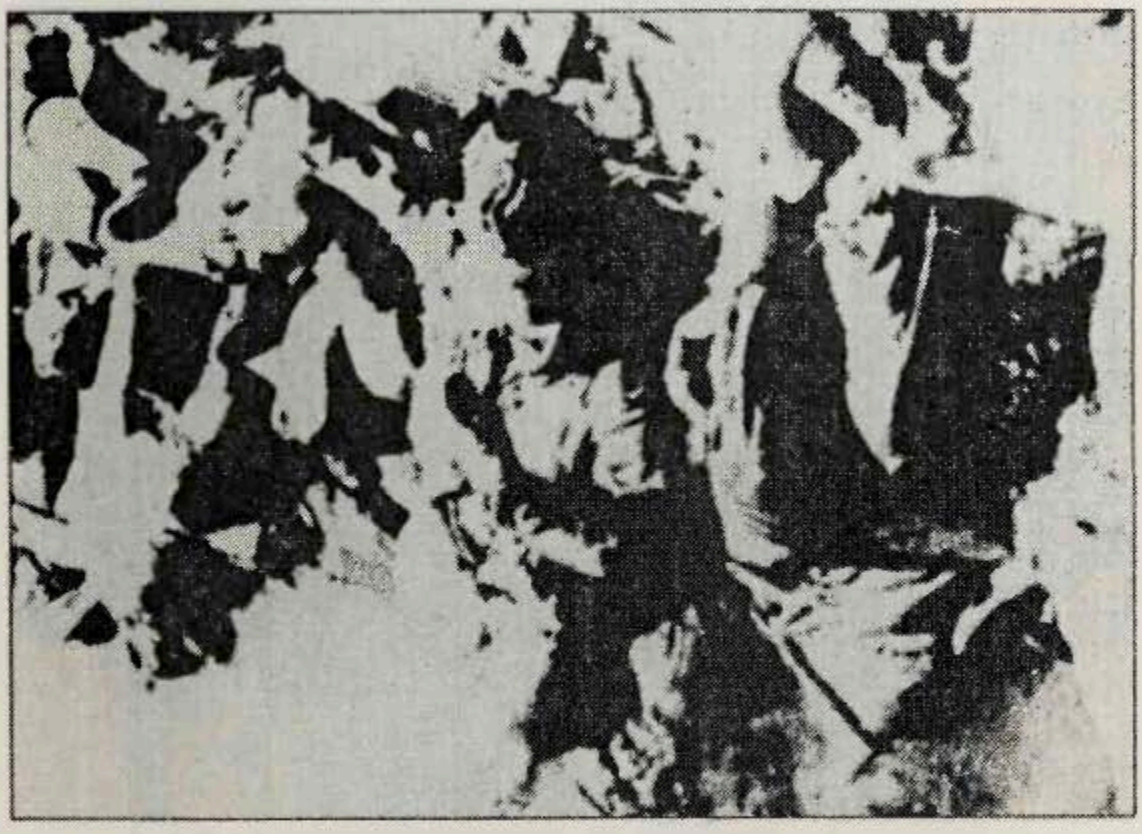


Above left, the eyes of this peasant woman were poked out for Ante Pavelić's eyeball collection.

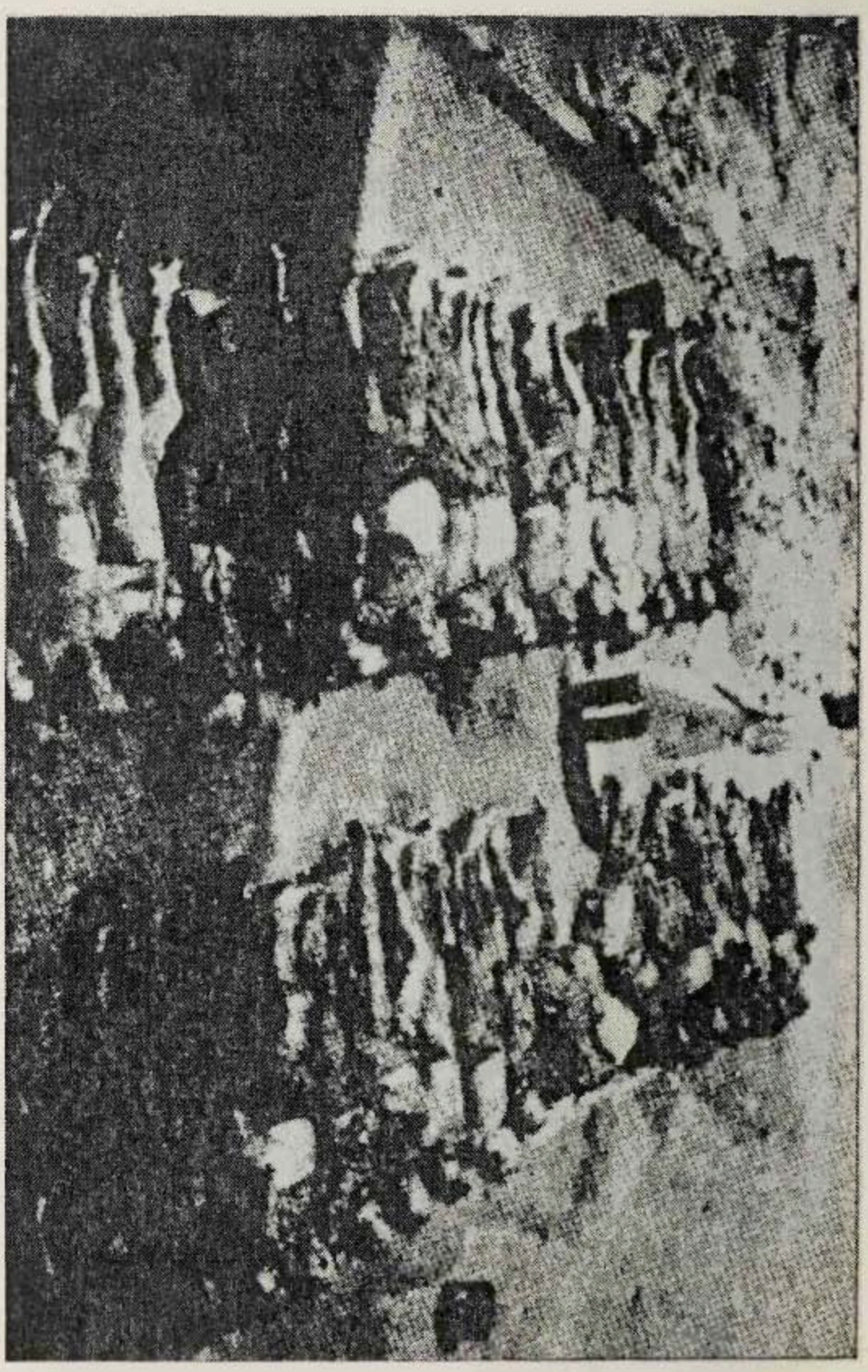
This page and pp. 252–54: After they had bestially murdered their victims, the Ustashe took photographs to document their "heroic deeds" for their supervisors.



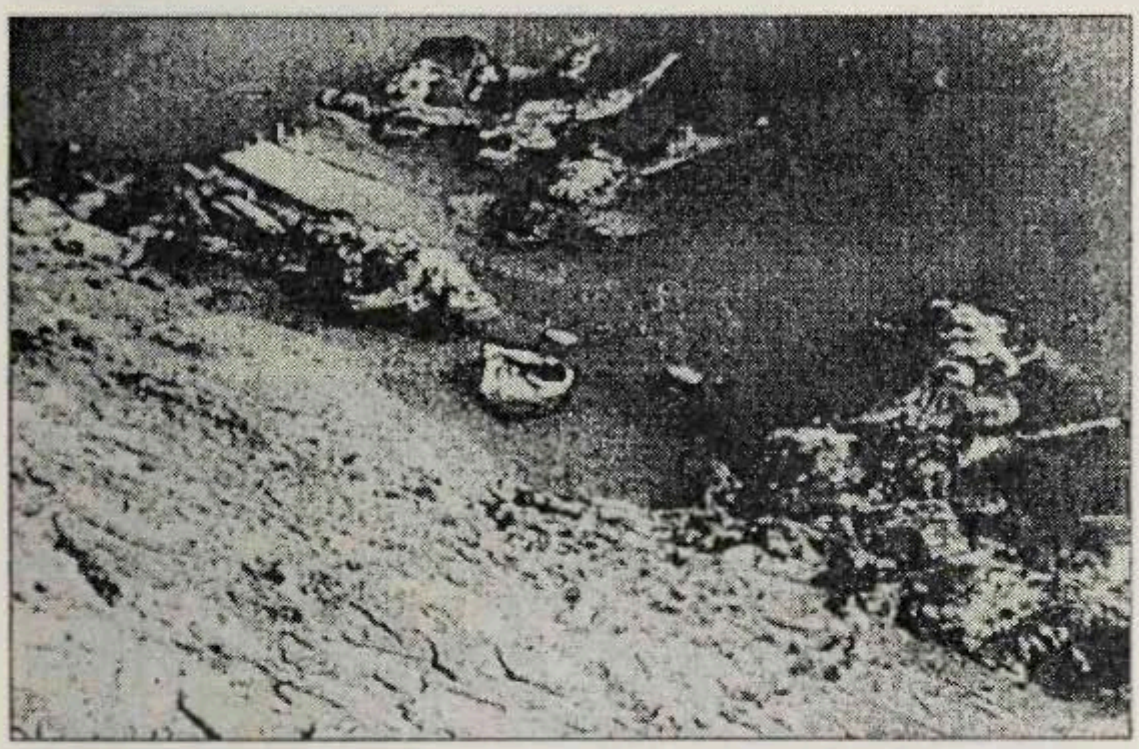




The Serb Milos Teslić, a famous industrialist and philanthropist, was gruesomely tortured and murdered by the Ustashe. His bones were broken, ears and lips cut off, eyes poked out, breast stabbed, and through a big hole bored into his breast, his heart was removed. As the witnesses testified, the attending Ustashe later said that the heart of the tortured Milos continued to beat as one of the Ustashe held it in his hand.



Bodies are lined up for identification (Gudovac, near Bjelovar).



Above, Partisans fetch the remains of murder victims from the Save after the war. (private collection)

Below, Bodies washed up on the shore—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

a thin scrap of tissue at the neck and tossed about in the bumpy box car, like slaughtered animals in meat wagons. The box cars were pushed by the "silent prisoners," who were later themselves slaughtered and burned, to be silent forever.

They burned dead people, live ones, unconscious ones, or even people only slightly wounded.

The great tumult and the confusion at the executions in the tunnel gave the Ustashe trouble. Someone—probably Matkovic—at some time determined that it made no sense at all to slaughter the prisoners first and then burn them, because that, after all, was double the work.

Everything was to be done at once—the killing and getting rid of the people. The door of the oven was big and the fire terrible. Outside, one did not hear the screams. Picili bragged about his oven as an ideal apparatus for annihilating the enemy. His suggestion was heard with enthusiasm.

They began to throw the prisoners into the burning ovens alive, but they didn't predict that there would be an even greater panic and screaming in the tunnel. Several men were needed to overcome the victims and throw them into the oven. There was a clawing and pushing; the prisoners scratched, bit, spit, and screamed. "You cannibals!", "You inquisitors!", "Madmen," "Deceivers," "Sadists," "Devils," "Beasts," "Miserable ones," "Scoundrels," "Cowards," "Traitors," "Slavers," "Servants of Hitler," "Fascist monsters," "Henchmen," etc. The Ustashe had neither anticipated nor wanted this reaction. They were incensed, for they were afraid that this noise would reach the whole camp and outside, and therefore gave up burning the prisoners alive. They returned to their old methods.

Another difficulty for them consisted of the fact that the ovens were not airtight and had no professional ventilation like proper crematoriums built for the burning of bodies. It was impossible to solve this problem technically: something new, more perfect had to be built, and Picili was given this task. He was to build an "ideal extermination factory" in which people would be killed without being able to defend themselves, easily and silently. At the same time there were to be no remains. Picili actually did design a plan for such a factory of total extermination in Gradina: a poison-gas chamber with a modern crematorium in one building.

The smell of burned hair and burned human flesh emanated from Picili's ovens in the tile factory. It spread not only in the camp but also penetrated into the village of Jasenovac and to the train station. In the surrounding villages, the rumor spread that the Ustashe were burning people alive in the tile factory. That was heard by the farmers of Jasenovac, from Grabje, and the vicinity, and spread everywhere. All through Croatia went a wave of shock and protest; therefore, Luburic, a deputy of Pavelić, called a meeting in the village of Jasenovac and threatened the farmers publicly:

> Even among you Croats, we have enemies, as it seems to me. We will tolerate no one near our camp, where we have incarcerated our enemies, who want to bury our state. It is said that we are such criminals that we burn people alive in the oven. Anyone whom we execute has been sentenced by the law and is killed publicly. We don't need to hide that fact; our enemies haven't handled us with kid gloves, either. If anyone tells you that we are burning people alive, then just send him to me and he will have to show me where we are burning them.

This threat shut many mouths.

The people in the village and in the camp became silent, deadly still, and whenever they smelled the stink in the night and looked through the window to see the black smoke rising from the great chimney of the tile factory, they drew together in fear and crawled trembling under the covers.

Every morning the prisoners had to sweep the ashes from Picili's oven. They found burned human bones, jaws, teeth, spines, which were apparently the most resistant to the temperature. Not accustomed to this, the new arrivals drew back in horror and froze.

"What are you staring at, you animal! Get on with it! Clean up, quickly!" screamed the Ustasha at them and a blow with a club on the back followed. These cleaners also had the task of strewing the pools of blood in the tunnel with lime.

Undoubtedly death entered quickly for the victims, who were thrown into the oven at over 200 degrees, because of the pain, the expectation of death, and the shock, which stops the heart. But this moment must have been horrifying; nothing in the world can be more horrible. The faces of these people were seen only by those who pushed them into the oven.

No human is capable of imagining all the terrible torment and feelings in the moment of the worst torture in this fascist camp.

Crematory

Since the Ustasha leaders had already long lost any human, moral attitudes, they were thinking only of how they could install the mechanism of mass liquidation most successfully. They had great difficulties, however, in finding a method suitable for disposing of the corpses of their victims without leaving behind clues. In search of possibilities of disposing of the bodies of the slaughtered and tortured communists and antifascists, the inventive Ustashe finally came upon the "ring oven" in the tile factory of the camp.

At the beginning of January 1942, the Ustasha Ivica Matkovic assumed the command of the camp and along with the engineer Picili discovered

that this oven could be adapted to burn the bodies. One only had to remodel the space in the tunnel into a crematory.

In January 1942, only one oven in the tile factory was converted for the incineration of people; it took about 40 victims. Incarcerated masters rebuilt this crematory in the camp in the conviction that here the bodies of prisoners were to be burned who had died overnight in the barracks of typhus, starvation, or beatings. Therefore, they were not much concerned about building this crematory. The Ustashe also had not revealed their intention, because in the beginning they did not want anyone to know what was actually being built here. They gave orders to tell people that clay figures of some of the prisoners would be fired. Thus the newly built crematory got the name of the "pottery shed."

Matkovic and Picili wanted to exterminate the people like vermin or rats and to simplify the process of mass extermination even more by bringing the heedless prisoners, completely unaware of what would happen to them here, to the door of the oven, to the edge of this truly hellish abyss. Then with a sudden jerk the door would be opened and the prisoners pushed in, and thus plunged alive into the glowing fire.

The first transport of victims came from Stara Gradiska and consisted of women, children, Jews, communists, and partisans. They were to be the guinea pigs for the combined technique of simultaneous mass murder and corpse disposal. But this Gestapo-Ustasha mechanism didn't work at the first attempt. The first group brought to the edge of the oven could not be pushed up to the door, but instead began to scream and cry in horror. The Ustashe plunged with their bayonets into the front of the crowd and pushed them against the oven door of the "pottery shed." When the door suddenly opened and a group of women and children fell into the fire, terrible cries of horror could be heard. Women and children tried to squeeze away from this door in wild panic and hurled themselves onto the Ustasha bayonets. There was an indescribable tumult. Some women fell dead out of horror, others fainted, some were trampled to death, some murdered with the bayonets, others were able to scratch the eyes of the Ustashe with their fingernails in the tumult.

When the Ustashe saw that the women were breaking through the chain of guards in wild panic and would be able to plunge out into the camp, they killed them all on the spot with rapid-fire weapons.

The majority of the Ustashe were no longer in favor of this method of killing after this first failed attempt. They suggested with a certain caution to return to the old method of mass liquidation with all sorts of knives and firearms—and also at the former cite in Gradina.

"You know, Lieutenant, in the forsaken desert, where for miles clear up to the forest there is nary a soul, they can scream as much as they want;

to hell with them. But here directly under the nose of the villagers, it is not so good!" With these words, even the Ustasha officer Marinka Polic, the well known butcher of Jasenovac, suggested returning to the old cite.

"We will make a few more tries because in case we find the right method of eliminating our enemies completely with one blow, it will be a good example for all other fascist countries allied with us, and in any case one of the most reliable methods; because the bodies must not be buried, and there will be no trace of them. They will go up in smoke, in the air in countless invisible little atoms," Picili replied to him, and Matkovic agreed.

Another group of prisoners came from a camp in an unknown area of Slavonia. They, too, were pushed maliciously into the tunnel and forced up to the feared oven of the "pottery shed." Since there was a hefty heat emanating from this "pottery shed," the women, children, and old people from Slavonia would not go near it, but recoiled from the hellish door as if they knew the horror awaiting them there. Then the Ustashe began to yell at them, to curse them, and threaten to shoot them with the machine guns if they didn't go on to the door. But the prisoners did not yield. Then they shot into the front rank and killed several women and children. The prisoners then really became enraged, especially women cursed the poglavnik and the Ustashe as beasts, lackeys of the Germans, and traitors of their own people. The women grabbed the guns and grabbed any fallen Ustasha by the throat.

"What whore gave birth to you!" screamed the women. After the Ustashe had managed to free themselves, they stepped back and in rage killed the women with machine guns. The bodies had to be burned, and the Ustashe looked for people in the camp suitable for this task. They picked 8 men under the command of Dudica Baranon to throw the bodies into the oven. In this time, the infamous Group "D" began their work in the camp.

Although they had succeeded in spite of everything to throw a small group of prisoners, mostly women and children into the glowing oven, after a few failed attempts the Ustashe declined to burn prisoners. They rejected the further use of this "Matkovic-Picili" method, i.e., to kill and burn the bodies at the same time. So they killed the victims first, either behind the "Officers Canteen" or in the tunnel in front of the "pottery shed," with wooden hammers, knives, or with clubs and bludgeons, and turned the bodies over to the grave diggers.

The Group "D" of the grave diggers then stacked up the bodies—especially those of the slaughtered children. They pushed them on train cars into the tile factory and laid them in the oven. Only then did they light the oven.

From January to May 1942, the infamous "pottery shed" worked every

day unceasingly. Black, terribly stifling smoke and an unbearable stink irritated the throats of the prisoners. It was a nightmare.

"But what's the matter with you, for Christ's sake? You have to eat something, at least," Kabilio cajoled his comrade Rafo Musafija. "I can't. I can't breathe because of the stinking, black smoke from the pottery shed. This terrible stink of something burning is driving me crazy . . . I can't, brother, I can't! If I would only die soon! I can't breathe this stifling smoke nor smell it any longer. I also can't stand to know any more what they are doing with the people in this hell. If I would only die soon, brother. Soon, because I can't stand it any more. To know that these are women and children, maybe our sisters, brothers, and mothers, is more terrible than the pain and death. It is hell to bear such torment, to breathe and smell the smoke of the burned bodies of our comrades, our people . . . Is there anything any more terrible?!"

The burning of the bodies of our comrades, of the Ustasha victims killed first with bludgeons and knives, usually slaughtered with knives or their heads smashed with wooden hammers, was continued stubbornly by the Jasenovac Ustashe up to the moment when the stifling, specific stink, which all day long and in the night poured from the tall chimney of the camp crematory at Jasenovac, simply became unbearable. It alarmed the farmers of Jasenovac, who grumbled softly and fearfully that not only dead people but also living people were being burned in the camp. The reaction of the public in Croatia to these rumors was so strong that the Ustashe had to stop this practice.

And thus the "pottery shed" of the Jasenovac camp no longer fulfilled its task after the end of May 1942.

Later the Group "D" of the grave diggers no longer buried the tortured and murdered inmates directly in the camp but in Gradina and in Ustice.

This terrible time of the "pottery shed" of Jasenovac remained an indelible impression in the memory of all of those camp prisoners who by chance remained alive.

Singeing of Sensitive Body Parts

Singeing with hot irons was practiced in the torture chamber of Cividini. Torture with hot irons preceded the death of Dr. Shor and his family. The torments and pain evoked insanity in this doctor before his death in the fall of 1942.

Freezing

In the winter of 1941–42 and of 1942–43, the Ustashe allowed no heat in the barracks, which were built without insulation and without a ceiling. Under the roof was a large empty space, and the barracks stood on posts. Icy wind cooled the thin wooden walls and blew the snow into the rooms. With big frost welts on their feet, their stomachs inflated from hunger, in rags and with any sort of tatters on their feet, the people did not survive long. They died working, even without any "help" from the Ustashe, when the water froze in their legs and in their stomach—a result of hunger.

The extermination machinery used every means to kill as many people as possible. The henchmen did not sleep. In bitter cold, they drove the prisoners to work and to shoveling snow. In doing so, they had to shovel the snow into a pile to the side. When they were finished with that, the Ustashe ordered the snow to be shoveled to the other side, just to expose them, half naked and frozen through, to the cold as long as possible. The number of the frozen climbed quickly, but the train brought more and more new groups from Zagreb, Bjelovar, Sarajevo, and from the vicinity of the camp. Before they started out for Gradina and mass extermination, the Ustashe undressed them down to a shirt and underpants and drove them barefoot and bound through the snow to the ferry in order to get them there under the axe, the knife, or the wooden hammer. The people were so frozen that they could hardly move any more; and that is precisely what the Ustashe wanted. Often the prisoners wished to be executed as soon as possible, for these tortures were no longer bearable.

In the winter, the Ustashe punished prisoners by locking them in a tiny cage in just a shirt and underpants barefoot, for a few hours. On the next day they were dead, of course.

The camp "3C" was designated for the liquidation. This camp consisted of low huts made of reeds and completely open on one side. In this camp were prisoners in winter also but they died soon of the cold and of typhus.

Also in the work on the dam, people were killed by the cold. They were ordered to stand in water up to their hips and to dig. As punishment, they also had to lie on their backs. Often because of the cold they got acute pneumonia or died of heart attack.

The fact that already at moderately low temperatures many signs of freezing showed up, especially on the feet and unprotected body parts, must be ascribed especially to organisms being weakened by hunger, malnutrition, and poor blood.

"Sir, the wounds on your feet are open. You must have enjoyed the pubs." That is how Maricic jeered as he led the prisoners to extermination at night.

The frosted parts stunk terribly, and the victims of gangrene were admitted to the hospital, precisely so that they would suffer as long as possible. "Even you shits should get a little perfume. You stink like skunks."

The frostbite soon became severe, burning blood poisoning or tetanus. Even the slightest cold killed the weakened people and brought them down in masses, even before the Ustashe came with the wooden hammers.

Poison Gas

The first experiments with poison gas were carried out in the veterinary chamber in the work room of the so-called "Economy," where mangy horses were healed. The horses were handled in such a way that the rump was in the chamber and only the head protruded. For the treatment, sulphur dioxide was used. They also tried this poison on people, as well as Zyklon.

In the first experiments, it was discovered, however, that the victims, because of the permeability of the walls and the crude introduction of the gas, did not die so quickly and so easily and that they also revealed the cite of their torture by their terrible screams. In this chamber, other gases were also tried for killing prisoners, but without success.

Suffocating

The Ustashe carried out strangling with the bare hands individually with certain prisoners kept isolated in cells. I heard that some female Ustasha guards such as Maja Buzdan and Milka Pribanic, both from Zagreb, specialized in this in the camp Stara Gradiska. Cividini strangled prisoners in his torture chamber when he was trying to get them to confess. Ustasha officers strangled women whom they had selected for their orgies and had raped. Even babies and small children were strangled by the Ustashe right in Gradina.

Another form of killing consisted of sticking children alive in sacks, tying them up, and throwing them into a big ditch where their slaughtered mothers already lay. Then they covered the sacks with dirt. Babies were also drowned in water.

Starvation

Killing by starvation represents yet another terrible chapter in the extermination camp at Jasenovac. The many killing methods of the Nazi system

were also carried out here according to the models of Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and elsewhere.

The method of killing people through physical debilitation would not have been so successful if it had not been combined with death by starvation. Accordingly, the organism of those whom one wanted to "liquidate easily"—so that it would appear to an outsider that they had died a "natural death"—would be attacked from two sides at the same time: He would be forced into difficult and extensive work, broken psychically by vexation, terror, etc., and the absolute necessary nutrition had to be withheld. The body first draws on its reserves and then consumes its own matter according to the physiological laws of maintaining its functions. Through nutritional deprivation, the organism is exhausted down to the end.

The killing of people through withholding nutrition, combined with heavy work, is based on science. Nazi doctors, German fascist counselors, invented this method and suggested it to Hitler and the German general staff as they inquired about a fast but clandestine and "natural" possibility of mass liquidation. There is no doubt that this plan of extermination stems from Hitler's scientific advisers. Their method was used with great success in the prison camps in Germany, Poland, in the Ukraine, in the west and the north of occupied Europe. The Ustashe adopted this death mechanism from the Nazis and used it in the extermination camps of Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska.

The "lunch" meal in Jasenovac consisted of a completely watery, salty soup with some potato peels. In the evening there was turnip soup, sometimes with five or six beans. The bread was to amount to 65 grams per day. On three to four days in the week, no bread at all was distributed. Accordingly, the calories in the food did not amount to more than 500 per day, which is a deficit of 2000 to 2500 calories for every prisoner.

You can imagine how quickly the prisoners in the concentration camp at Jasenovac lost weight, for the work was precisely calculated and organized.

On the basis of physical exertion, many suffered from acute heart disease and died of paralysis of the heart muscle. Collapsing from heart failure was common. It happened most frequently in the tile factory. About five to eight people died every day of acute heart failure.

The workers on the Jasenovac dam and in the tile factory frequently had swollen legs, so-called Jasenovac beriberi. The appearance of these people was typical: the face was pale, the wrinkles were prominent, the lines had been deeply engraved, the eyes under the eyebrows were sunken, the eyelids pale grey and blood shot. A prisoner suffering from this illness leaned backwards, breathed with difficulty, and dragged his legs—his "columns"—out of the mud with great difficulty; they were either wrapped with rags or were simply bare. Because of the great water pressure, the

legs burst, and a yellowish fluid flowed from the breaks.

"I feel better when the water is flowing, right away. It doesn't draw so much, and it doesn't burn." "Yes, they feel rheumatic, these damned legs, rheumatic, as if they were wrapped with rubber. The vessels burst. My legs twinge and burn just like yours." That is how the conversation of these condemned people ran in this fascist arena.

Of course, the wounds then became infected, turned black; and the infection soon took over the whole leg. Then there was no more salvation, because the victim got neither food nor medication.

"Oh, you don't need a clinic, dear professor. The doctors here can't do anything. Stand up; we will get a better doctor." With these words, the Ustasha picked him up. They brought him to Gradina, "so he won't have to suffer any more."

The swelling of the legs, the so-called Jasenovac beriberi, and secondary complication came quickly, just like the "natural" death, even without the Ustasha knives. The collapse of the organism was inevitable within ten to fourteen days work in the tile factory or on the dam.

The method of chronic starvation, combined with hard forced labor, was used throughout the concentration camps in Yugoslavia, especially in Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska.

In December 1942, the Ustasha doctor, Dr. Jurcev, got instructions to take me to the camp Stara Gradiska, so that I, an epidemiologist, could find out what could be done about typhus in the camp. The Ustashe allowed this access, because they themselves were afraid of typhus, for the louse that spreads this disease did not stop at the cannibalistic letter "U" nor at the Ustasha uniform. At the same time, the Ustashe wanted to give the appearance that they were doing everything they could to cure the prisoners of typhus and that they were innocent of the high death rate from this disease.

I stayed overnight in the camp. Upon this occasion, I examined the blood of many prisoners, and we succeeded in smuggling samples into the health office in Zagreb. I knew that there Dr. Daro Filipovic would inform not only the relatives of the prisoners but also the public about the epidemic in the camps and about the mass mortality of the prisoners from spotted typhus. As we heard in the fall of 1942 in the camp, the health office then offered a whole train load of disinfection tools, so the whole camp could be disinfected. But the Ustashe, of course, refused this totally. The epidemic was killing the prisoners mercilessly and unceasingly.

On the basis of the great protest against their crimes, the Ustashe decided in December 1942 to interrupt the massacre for a while. They did this because the Nazis were facing unexpected difficulties from the extent of the partisan war. The German schoolmasters were accusing the Ustashe

of causing the rebellion by the open liquidation and the poorly hidden bloodthirsty, gruesome activities, which were driving the people to defend themselves out of despair. They did not say this out of humanitarian reasons, but out of fear of a rebellion in Yugoslavia, the neighbor of the Third Reich. The German fascists had been convinced that they could break any resistance in Yugoslavia with their terror. Since they had been mistaken, they now placed the guilt for their failure on their lackeys.

A German officer intervened in Jasenovac. At the office of an Ustasha administrator, he spoke for another, "more humane" treatment of the incarcerated citizens and attacked the gruesomeness of the butchers.

"What do you want? We are doing everything that you told us and taught us to do!" replied the Ustasha and thus shut him up.

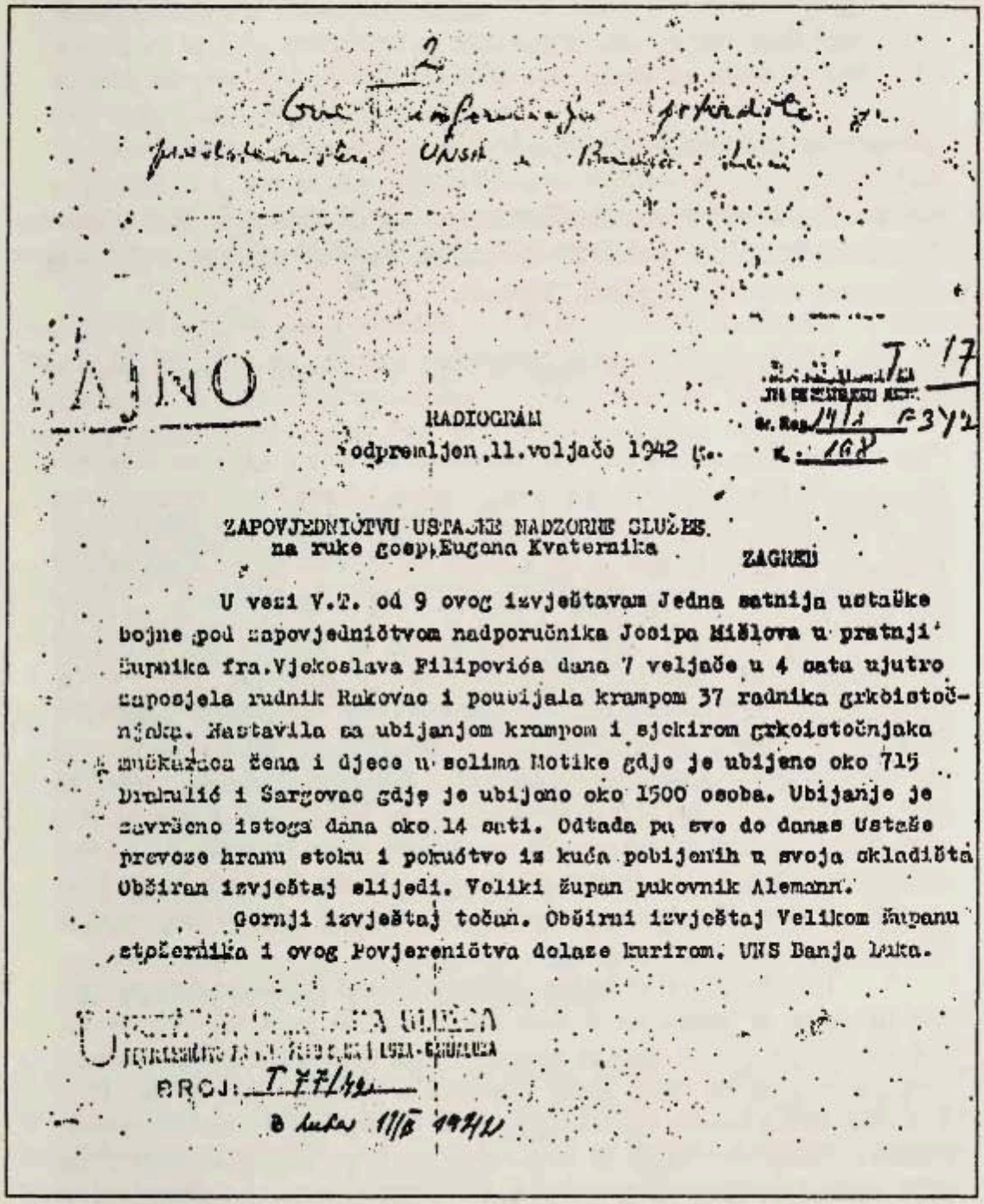
15

The Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic, One of the Commandants of Jasenovac

Several members of the clergy of archbishop Stepinac were involved in the responsible functions in Jasenovac. The Pater Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic, pastor and Ustasha captain, was a clergyman of the Pavelić Brigade and thereafter was director in Jasenovac. Other clergymen in Jasenovac were Zvonimir Brekalo, Ustasha captain and chaplain of the Pavelić Brigade, as well as Lipovac, Culina, Cvitan, and others.

Pater Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic was known for the great massacre around Banja Luka, at which in the beginning of February 1942, about 2,200 Serbs were killed. The district leader in Banja Luka sent the following report to the UNS in Zagreb:

> Secret radio message
>
> To the Directorship for Public Order and Security in Zagreb
>
> In connection with V.T.11 of the 9th of this month, I report: A company of the Ustasha battalion under the command of First Lieutenant Josip Mislov, accompanied by Pater Vjekoslav Filipovic, on 7 February at 4 o'clock in the morning, occupied the mine at Rakovac and killed 37 Greek-Eastern laborers with picks—stop—The liquidation of the Greek-Eastern men, women, and children with picks and axes was continued in the villages of Motika, where about 715 people were killed, Drakulic, and Sargovac, where about 1,500 people were killed.—stop—The killings ended on the same day around 14.00 hours—stop—From then on until today, the Ustashe have been transporting the food, the animals, and the household objects out of the houses of the killed into their camps—stop—a thorough report will follow—stop.



AJNO

RADIOGRAM

Podpremljen 11. veljače 1942 g.

ZAPOVJEDNIŠTVU USTAŠKE NADZORNE SLUŽBE
na ruke gosp. Eugena Kvaternika ZAGREB

U vezi V.T. od 9 ovog izvještavam Jedna satnija ustaške bojne pod zapovjedništvom nadporučnika Josipa Mišlova u pratnji Župnika fra. Vjekoslava Filipovića dana 7 veljače u 4 sata ujutro zaposjela rudnik Rakovac i poubijala krampom 37 radnika grkoistočnjaka. Nastavila sa ubijanjom krampom i sjekirom grkoistočnjaka muškaraca žena i djece u selima Motike gdje je ubijeno oko 715 Drakulić i Sargovac gdje je ubijeno oko 1500 osoba. Ubijanje je završeno istoga dana oko 14 sati. Odtada pa sve do danas Ustaše prevoze hranu stoku i pokućtvo iz kuća pobijenih u svoja skladišta Obširan izvještaj slijedi. Veliki župan pukovnik Alemann.

Gornji izvještaj točan. Obširni izvještaj Velikom županu stići ćemo i ovog Povjereništva dolaze kurirom. UNS Banja Luka.

BROJ: T 77/42

Facsimile of the secret radio message from the district leader Aleman about Pater Filipovic.

The District leader

Aleman

(Archives of Vladimir Dedijer)

The State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers has presented in documents 9164-9170 of 5 June 1945 the following testimony against Filipovic:

> Dr. Josip Riboli from Zagreb, Skrlceva Street 5, enters the following protocol on 28 May 1945:
>
> "The deputy camp commandant in Jasenovac was Frater Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic. When we got to the camp, Luburic left and Majstorovic ordered six people killed, six more to be fettered, and the other five taken to the camp. At that time he was at the rank of an Ustasha First Lieutenant. Of all the butchers, Filipovic-Majstorovic was the most bloodthirsty. . . . Mass murders and liquidations usually began in the evening after he had put on green coveralls. While he was sitting at the lunch table, an Ustasha came and reported something to him. Shortly thereafter he brought a prisoner. Filipovic-Majstorovic put down his knife and fork, pulled a revolver, and shot the prisoner in question. Supposedly he had tried to escape. I saw that with my own eyes. Another time, six Gypsies were caught trying to steal gold. Filipovic, as camp commander, condemned them to death. All six had to kneel before him, and he himself put a bullet into the back of the head of each of them. Because one of them still showed signs of life, Serbean Matijevic cut his throat with a knife.
>
> ". . . In mid-summer of the year 1941, the farmers of Kozara were brought into the camp at Jasenovac. A Serb child about 14 years old tried to flee, but was caught and brought to the priest Miroslav Filipovic, who without even listening to the child, killed him with a hammer blow to the head. Every day young women were brought into the camp, well dressed, apparently students. There were about 10 to 15 of them. They were brought over the Save on the ferry followed by the Ustasha offcers, among them always Frater Filipovic, the Ustasha First Lieutenant. They returned smeared with blood and nervous, while the women never returned.
>
> "In the summer of 1943, nine Slovene priests of the Catholic faith came to the camp and were shot on the orders of Luburic."

Duro Pejnovic, graduate in law, born 1917 in Pracan in Petrinje county, now in Zagreb with the army brigade "Vlado Cetkovic," entered the following protocol before the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers under the document number 9164-9170 on 5 June 1945:

> Once ten to twelve Serbs were brought to the camp. Frater Miroslav Filipovic walked up to them and placed a chain tightly around each one's head. Then he took the pick axe and with the broad side struck the chains so powerfully over their skulls that they all passed out.
>
> Another time twelve Gypsies were brought to the camp and were directed to Division 3 C. On the way, Frater Miroslav Filipovic and the engineer Picili were waiting for them. They ordered the Gypsies to lie on the ground and killed them one after the other by hitting them on the head with wooden hammers.

Slavko Dobrila, 26 years old, born in Pula, residing in Zagreb, Trnjanski Zavoj II Nr. 16, enters the following into protocol before the State Commission for the Determination of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Helpers under document number 9164-9170 on 5 June 1945:

> In December 1942, we, 50 inmates, were at work, I as a mechanic sharpening saws, the others chopping wood. Around 5 o'clock in the afternoon, Frater Filipovic came with First Lieutenant Rostas and had us stand in formation. Then he took a machine gun and shot a bullet into the head of each one by one. I was standing as the ninth in the row. When he tried to shoot at me, First Lieutenant Rostas stopped him and said: "Not this one. He is a trained mechanic." Then he pulled me from the row and with his helpers shot all the others. First Lieutenant Rostas then asked me if I had seen anything, whereupon I replied that I had seen nothing. Therefore, he left me alone. After my group had been killed, I was taken on the same day to Gradiska, where we Catholics all went to midnight mass. Filipovic-Majstorovic offered a pious prayer. At roll call the next morning, Filipovic wished us all happy holidays. To me he said: "Don't worry, my friend, everything will be all right." On the third day after Christmas, Filipovic shot nine Jews and declared: "Justice has been done."

Testimony of 15 February 1946 by Josip Matijevic, born on 5 October 1921 in Donji Andrijevci, Slavonski Brod county, son of Petar and Marija nee Markovac, chauffeur, Croat, residing in Donji Andrijevci, attended public school up to the 4th class and four more classes at the upper school. Active Ustasha since 8 August 1941.

The above-named person was transferred from his position as commander of the watch guarding the camp into service in Jasenovac on 11 November 1941. He entered the following testimony about the activity of the director and individual functionaries in the camp.

The above-named person was warned to tell the truth, with the admonition that false witness and deceit in the investigation would be charged to him as aggravating circumstances.

What do you know about the activity of individual priests in the camp? How did they behave toward prisoners? Did they take part in the murders and in the slaughters of prisoners?

In 1944 I came into service in Jasenovac for the second time as commander of the tank company at the rank of a lieutenant. I found many troops in the camps of Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska. At the time of the NDH, there was also a rather large number of priests in the army, who were to fulfill religious duties in the army. However, they not only did not fulfill these duties conscientiously, but behaved quite to the contrary. If they held pious speeches for the army on one hand, they themselves did the opposite of what they preached and were not even a little bit religious. Especially the Ustasha priest Zvonko Brekalo was prominent among them, who constantly wore an Ustasha uniform, carried a revolver, and wore a cross on his chest in order to make himself known as a priest. Over the cross was the inscription "Everything for the poglavnik," under the cross stood: "Ustasha Defense." He knew the prisoners and took confession from those who wanted it. What he learned from that, he passed on to the Ustasha commanders of the camp. This was frequently repeated, and if a prisoner did not want to confess his "guilt" in regard to the Ustasha authorities, he was persuaded to confess and Brekalo transmitted the confession to the camp commander, who subsequently tortured and liquidated the prisoner.

Furthermore, this Brekalo regularly held drunken orgies and along with his colleagues and with the Ustasha priests Culina and Zvonko Lipovac led an immoral life. One day, when I was the officer on duty and was walking past the room of the priests Brekalo and Culina, I saw the two completely drunk sitting at the table. This was not the first time, but was practically a constant state for the two. They were arguing and cursing each other with nasty, hurtful words. I admonished them personally to stop, because soldiers were listening outside. The priests Brekalo and Lipovac were accustomed to going frequently to Bosanska Dubica, where they had splendid dinners in the company of the Ustasha captain Josip Sudar, and to which they also invited women with whom they enjoyed themselves. The women stayed in their company until late in the night, often until dawn. When the three broke off after such a dinner, one would call to the other: "That was really Christian."

The second priest known for his deeds in the camp was Culina. In the army, people said about him: "He jumps in wherever he can," or: "He forbids us something and speaks of God; but he himself goes whoring around quite nicely. What kind of a priest is that?" Once when he was returning from a liquidation in which he personally had slaughtered people, he bragged about it to the battalion commander Majic and the other offcers and said while pointing to his knife. "Even this little knife has some value," and everybody laughed.

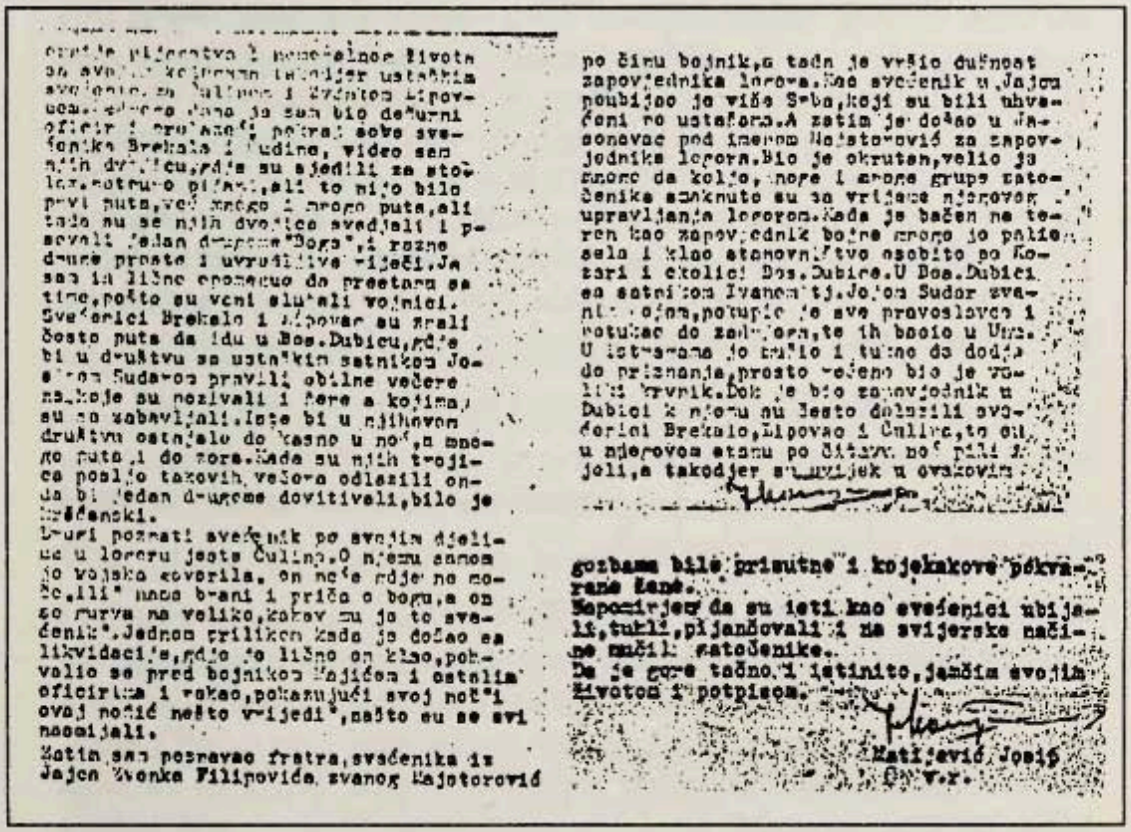
Then I knew Frater Zvonko Filipovic, a priest from Jajce, called Majstorovic, at the rank of a battalion commander. At that time he filled the

function of the camp commander. Already as a priest in Jajce, he had killed several Serbs who had been caught by the Ustashe. After that he came to Jasenovac under the name of Majstorovic as camp commander. He was gruesome and enjoyed killing. A great many prisoners were executed during his time of camp leadership. When he was sent to the front as commander of the battalion, he set many villages afire and slaughtered the residents, especially on the island of Kozara and near Bosanska Dubica. There along with Captain Ivan, i.e., Joja Sera, he captured all the Orthodox people, mowed them down to the last one, and threw them into the Una. In hearings, he forced confessions by torture and beating; he was, quite simply, a big henchman. When he was commander in Dubica, the priests Brekalo, Lipovac, and Culina often came to him and drank and ate all night in his apartment. At such banquets there were also all sorts of loose women.

I draw attention to the fact that all of these killed as priests, beat, plundered, and tortured the prisoners in a bestial manner.

With my life and my signature, I attest to the correctness and truth of the above.

Josip Matijevic



Facsimile of the testimony of the Ustasha Josip Matijevic about the work of individual priests in the Jasenovac camp.

Excerpt from the hearing of the Franciscan Miroslav Majstorovic Filipovic before the Commission to Determine War Crimes, Document number 2006:

Protocol of 25 June 1945

Hearing of Miroslav Filipovic, born on 5 June 1915 in Jajce, father's name Ante, mother's name Marica, nee Radulovic. Diploma from the upper school in Visoko and from the seminary in Sarajevo. In 1939 he was ordained as priest and until the end of 1941 served in Petricevac near Banja Luka. On 1 January 1942, he was called to Banja Luka as chaplain of the brigade P.T.S., where he stayed until the end of June 1942. Then he was accused before a German war court. Maks Luburic arranged for his freedom and brought him to Jasenovac, where he was introduced under the name of Majstorovic.

There he was camp commandant until 27 October 1942, then he served the same function in the camp in Stara Gradiska. He remained there until 20 March 1943 and was then transferred to Mostar as adjutant to Colonel Simic. There he got the name Karlovic and stayed until 20 December 1943; he was subsequently transferred to Zagreb and placed at the disposal of the command of the Ustasha Defense Service. He remained there until 23 April 1944, when he was raised to the rank of an Ustasha battalion commander under his proper name Filipovic. From there he was transferred to Lika as a staff member of the Fourth Ustasha Brigade, where he stayed until 12 September of the same year. Then he was commandant of the Koza area until 2 January 1945. Subsequently he was entrusted with the special assignment of directing the secret service in East Bosnia, which observed the movements and the advances of the Cetniks from Serbia and Montenegro into the NDH. From there he gradually retreated with the army to Zagreb and from there to Slovenia and Austria, where he was turned over to the British. On 31 May, the allies turned him over to the Yugoslav army.

When did you enter the Ustasha movement and what were your duties?

In October 1940, I took the Ustasha oath before Dr. Viktor Gutic. In the Ustasha movement, I exercised no political, but rather only military functions at the rank of a battalion commander.

Who suspended you from the office of priest?

In 1942 when I was a chaplain in the brigade P.T.S. in Banja Luka, the battalion of the Ustasha that I was accompanying as chaplain took up action in the Cetnik village of Drakulic without my knowing what would happen. The battalion liquidated this village completely, and for this reason the papal legate Marcone suspended me. I was taken before the court, and Luburic transferred me to Jasenovac as camp commandant.

How many prisoners came into the camp and how many were liquidated while you were camp commandant?

During my four-month duty as cormmander, about 30,000 prisoners came into the camp. For them, Jasenovac was a transition camp to the nearby prison camps Mlaka, Bosanska, Dubica, Jablanac, Mededa, and Hrvatska Dubica. The prisoners had been captured in the Kozara mountains after the joint offensive of the Germans and the Ustashe. In the course of two weeks, about 40,000 prisoners came through this camp. Most of them were taken to work in Germany or were resettled in Slavonia, while about 3000 were kept in the Jasenovac camp to build the dam. During my time as commandant in the Jasenovac camp, there were primarily groups of Gypsies and Jews there. They were all killed in the course of four months—with the exception of professionals, who were in the central camp of Croatian prisoners. These were killed at the Save with wooden hammers or shot. The killing of prisoners was carried out partially by a specially chosen group of Gypsies, partially by the Ustashe themselves.

How many Serbs were killed in the NDH up until now, in your opinion?

According to reports of Maks Luburic, who probably keeps the lists of killed Serbs, about a half million Serbs were killed in the NDH during these four years. That includes also those Serbs who died in battle.

How many prisoners came through the camp during this time when you were commandant in Gradiska, and how many were liquidated?

I was commandant in Gradiska for five months, and in this time 5,000 political prisoners came to the camp, among them about 1000 Jews. Also at the time of any tenure in Gradiska, about 1000 Serbs came from the German camps. When the orders came from Luburic that they had to be liquidated, they were deported to Mlaka and Jablanac and killed there. In Gradiska, the prisoners were mainly Croats; the liquidations were carried out individually and upon special orders.

Who gave the orders to liquidate the prisoners?

In my opinion, exclusively Maks Luburic gave the orders for the liquidation of the prisoners. He also gave me personally—or indirectly through his deputy Matkovic—orders to liquidate the Serbs.

What did the Church authorities do to prevent the mass murders in the camps?

I know from conversations with Maks Luburic that Stepinac protested against these deeds in the camps while he was at bishops' conferences and at meetings. Publicly, however, as far as I know, no one protested.

What instructions did you receive in regard to your behavior toward the Serb people while you were director of the camp?

Maks Luburic told me personally and also told the other officers and soldiers that we were to make every effort to eliminate without mercy all the Serbs in the NDH. This was the program that had to be carried out.

The protocol has been read to me, everything has been recorded as I said it.

Continuation of the hearing on 29 June 1945.

[. . .]

Through the distribution of leaflets, I was active in the propaganda and took part in secret meetings and in the work in the villages. Following orders, I secretly acquired weapons in the expectation that the day of liberation and of the poglavnik as the rejuvenator of the NDH would soon come.

At the beginning of 1941, this question became real and especially moved the Croatian citizens, the farmers, and especially the young clergy, while the older ones remained reserved regarding the matter.

After the capitulation of the former Yugoslavia and the proclamation of the NDH, Dr. Gutic assumed power, but as decent as he was as a revolutionary and as much as he was behind the thing with body and soul, his reputation was damaged by the errors of his brother Blazo, the former police chief and by the errors of a mine official by the name of Pensa and all his closest circle of acquaintances, who made important administrative decisions and gave orders while drinking and at banquets.

The liquidation of the Serbs began. . . .

Then I was basically against it, because the people were not selected but were simply liquidated one after the other by the hundreds. Several times we tried to protest calmly to Dr. Gutic, but without success. When we pointed out the injustice, we were told that we should pray to God and not bother with it any longer. We priests lodged criticisms here and there, but we remained nationalists without any revolutionary spirit. And when the Cetniks appeared and began to repay in kind (i.e., were the first in the Krajina to begin to burn and raze whole villages), we kept our mouths shut. The old Franciscans, especially the Bishop Garic and the Paters Miron, Jozo Lopar, and Peter Ante Hrvat, became completely passive and estranged to the movement because of these events.

In January 1942, the 1st battalion of the P.T.S. was stationed in Banja Luka, and another company came, whose commander was the captain of the battalion P.T.B., Nikola Zelic, called Ciko. I was engaged right away as chaplain, while Z. Brekalo was already in the 8th battalion of the army in Banja Luka. The 8th battalion fought mainly against the Cetniks, who had appeared in strong groups and were slaughtering and burning everything that was Croatian. Thus at the beginning or middle of February 1942, a company of the 8th battalion was ambushed in busses near Celinac, and there were several wounded and nine disfigured Ustashe. In the village Drakulic, five to six kilometers from Banja Luka, the Cetniks had been organized earlier, and they were not just simple workers from the mine at Rakovic, like the public and the propaganda maintained. The commander, Captain Zelic, led the action. I got to sleep in the barracks without knowing when we would go into action accompanying the battalion as priest, according to orders. Not

until supper time did I learn the goal and purpose of this action. I must mention that a few days earlier we had discussed the danger afforded by the Cetniks and that something had to be done about the organization of this group. The whole public was talking about it then, and Dr. Gutic, Brekalo, myself, Vilko Butorac, and others spoke with Captain Zelic, but I did not know that a complete liquidation was to be carried out.

We started out at 1 o'clock in the morning; the commander was First Lieutenant Jozo Mislov. Since I knew the farmers of the parish where I had served, I brought the leaders there in the belief that there would be only a search and that those who were found with weapons would be punished. But one after the other was hit. Then I saw for the first time people awash in blood like animals. I could do nothing about it and withdrew. Only on the next morning did I realize that I had made a mistake. Since I wanted the dead to be buried, I went with the troop again to the site, but they only fetched the animals and the food. In the villages of Drakulic, Sargovac, and Motike, about 1,500 to 2,000 Serb men, women, and children were killed.

The then traffic minister (Hirnlija) Beslagic raised a complaint, snice he hated the monks because he was involved in a suit with them regarding the land and because the Serbs from the village Drakulic were materially dependant on him, inasmuch as they were farming his lands. He was joined in his complaint by the district director Aleman and almost the whole capitalistic establishment, not out of any moralistic grounds, but simply out of fear of revenge and to disguise their own enrichment. At their side was the Italian consul and the German command. Then from the quarters of the poglavnik, the colonel of the P.T.V Bego Servatzy was sent, who pushed all the guilt for the massacre onto me, so that the Pavelić guard would not be seen as common butchers. Along with the others, he publicly made me look like the spiritual originator of the massacre and the instigator of everything that had happened. I had too little power to fight against these greats and therefore had to accept the burden and the whole guilt.

Captain Zelic and First Lieutenant Milos were simply transferred after a short house arrest; I, however, was tossed in prison in Zagreb in the Savska Cesta (street), where I was treated as a common prisoner. I had only the privilege of getting food and sleeping in a single cell. The people's representatives of the former HSS, Ljubicic, Radman, and Budimirovic, joined forces and also acquired the papal legate Marcone (who was then of a fascist mind), and he, too, depicted me before the Church forum as the instigator of the massacre.

In Savska Cesta, I stayed 105 days. Very often I was visited by Jozo Rukavina, the police chief, and others, who brought me various reports from the responsible places, although the Germans as well as the Italians were demanding my head from the Croatian government of the NDH. These suggestions were so strong that I, too, was soon convinced that I was the guilty one and that I had to accept the punishment, although I had described the whole state of affairs to the responsible authorities. But they did not

reply, but instead consoled me daily that I had nothing to fear, even if they were to turn me over to the Germans or the Italians, since they were covering me and would substitute another person in my place. . . . I became impatient and nervous in the prison, while I was waiting to see what would happen with me and who would be playing with my fate. I lost courage and did not have the situation under control.

On 8 June 1942, the prison in Savska Cesta was informed by telephone that I was to get ready. Ten minutes later, the private car from Maks Luburic arrived and took me to the police offices. I had escaped the prison and got the assignment to report the next morning to the office III of the Defense "Ravsigur" [Directorship of Security, note by A. Miletic] to the officer in charge, Luburic. Before this, I knew him only by sight, and when he came, he explained to me that I had to be taken for a while to Jasenovac for safety's sake; he said he had arranged it with Moskov; it was to be only for a short time. Literally he told me: "Until further notice, you are now Ustasha First Lieutenant Miro Majstorovic." The tone was commanding and serious; already as a small child, I had learned not to ask for reasons and was used to carrying out orders blindly; and this I obeyed this time, too.

On 10 June, I arrived in Jasenovac. The reception was very friendly, and I had the impression that my arrival had already been prepared. I was received by the First Lieutenants Buntic and Ljubo Milos. Contrary to custom, they led me right away to the camp near the tile factory, gave me food and drink, ironed me a uniform, since I had arrived in civvies, and then we spent the time talking during a walk. Yes, I confess, the friendliness and the intimacy upon first meeting surprised me pleasantly. First Lieutenant Milos was the commander of the assembly camps (the camps Jasenovac, Stara Gradiska, and Dakovo), Buntic was his deputy, First Lieutenant Drago Pudic was the commandant of the Jasenovac camp, Oreskovic of Stara Gradiska, and Lieutertant Joso Matijevic of Dakovo. For me, that was all still an incomprehensible and not understandable society and surroundings. Nevertheless, the first days were pleasant for me. I had a decent residence, food in the mess hall, good attendance, and a chauffeur, a car, a mechanic, who was to teach me how to drive a car and a motorcycle (the now partisan Stanko Jacev, whom I also retained later as my chauffeur). I detected an instinctive inclination to this man, whom I looked after and, just like a few others, argued for his release. I liked to go for a ride, and thus the time passed pleasantly. The Gypsies, who came to the camp in large numbers at this time, raised our spirits with monkeys and bears, songs and music.

At that time in the camp, the "gold affairs" of Ljubo, the brother of Matkovic, and others came to light, and additionally the affairs of the Jewish freemen (Bruno) Dijamantstajn, Pajtas, (Herman) Spiler, and other suppressors, who were regular tyrants in the camp. They did more evil and shed more blood than any camp Ustasha. Later I was told that Feldbauer (Jew and head administrator, who died of typhus) and the above-mentioned Bruno Dijamantstajn, Pajtas, Spiler (Begovic, the office manager of the work

detail) and Viner (camp administrator) killed thousands upon thousands of Jews through forced work on the construction of the first dam. My task was to lead these investigations. Finally Ljubo, Matkovic, and two other Ustashe (I don't remember their names) were shot because of mishandling of huge amounts of gold and jewelry. I detected a special satisfaction for having unmasked these violators, and I was so successful in it that I got the assignment of personally executing them. Luboric said to me: "Get at it, Majstorovic, learn something." I cannot describe how I felt in my heart as I shot nine Jews like an automaton before the eyes of the whole camp and saw a human being twitching in his blood, even if this was a thief and violator and it was not just one, but nine. I must emphasize that among the prisoners after the execution of this death sentence, there was great satisfaction and lightening of spirits, because the sentenced ones were so hated for their gruesomeness.

On 27 June, Luburic came to Jasenovac again and called me to him: "From today on, you are the commandant of Camp III, that is, the tile factory." I tried to wriggle out and pointed to the fact that I could not accept this position of authority, because I was only a newcomer to the camp and was perhaps not mature, etc. But he replied. "Now here are Ljubo and Matkovic at your side and will guide you concerning what is to be done and how to begin." He also emphasized that First Lieutenant Pudic was sick and that he had to go have treatment; I, on the other hand, was healthy and strong; I therefore had to carry on for a while in this very difficult position. Really, it is the most diffcult task being commandant of Camp III, the tile factory, and I accepted it in silence this time, too. At the end of June, Pudic was sent to treatment, and he was forbidden to return to Jasenovac. I requested this, because already on the second day, because of some triviality in the camp, he hit a Jew, whom I protected. His nerves were completely ruined, and besides, he had drunk too much alcohol.

Right in the first days, I was told that some Jewish engineer by the name of Danon had escaped. Since I did not know who he was, I accepted this news with indifference and thought that this was neither the first nor the last. Only later did I learn the significance and the danger that his escape meant for the camp, because Danon was initiated into all the secrets of the camp, even those that were still unknown to me. Then Ljubo, Milos, and Buntic came to investigate personally. All work was stopped; the camp was locked up; no one came in or out. I went with them to the spot and familiarized myself with the situation.

Engineer Danon was leader of the group of Jews and Gypsies who had personally carried out the mass liquidation of the camp prisoners. The system of the reciprocal liquidation of prisoners had been introduced. This affected Gypsies and Jews, who arrived in groups, while the central camp, the regular population, was entered into the files and the register. Among the registered prisoners, there were mainly professionals or Croats who were

less dangerous or were less guilty. Except for individual, temporary changes, they were spared. Prisoners of this type in the camp at that time amounted to about 2,500 to 3,000.

In his flight, Danon also took along a large amount of gold and jewelry. It was also not difficult for him to flee, because he was on the Bosnian side of the camp, which was fired upon and attacked every evening by the partisans. The area controlled by the partisans in the forests along the mouth of the Una was hardly 1,000 meters away. With such nightly shooting, there were several times unrest and preparations for resistance, which the planted informers loyally uncovered. Such attempts were nipped in the bud by liquidating whole groups. Luburic held speeches for us and at every one of his visits made it clear that the Serbs had to be exterminated unconditionally. He was accustomed to saying: Pay attention to our Croats, who are less dangerous; they will improve and be useful to the people.

He was just as merciless with the criminals. They were to be liquidated immediately, because human society had only problems and injury from them and no use, while he telephoned a hundred times from Zagreb for the Serbs and arranged liquidations, by name as well as by whole groups. Every time he asked for a brief overview of the groups and their numbers, and then gave instructions in absentia usually through Matkovic or Ljubo and frequently through me. I was much concerned with the establishment of residence buildings, repaired and built several barracks, and looked after discipline, order, and cleanliness among the prisoners and especially among the Ustashe, whom I punished in all possible ways and for all possible infractions; I interfered with any reckless behavior and individual chastisements.

At that time, the action in the Kozara mountains was just ended, and because of the bad reputation of Jasenovac, the Germans and the former Croatian government demanded that the work ministry in conjunction with the Red Cross, the army and the empowered minister Turin organize the camps of prisoners and evacuees and that the Ustasha Defense have nothing more to do with them. But since this involved several tens of thousands of prisoners and since neither an organization was carried out nor food and security for the prisoners provided, the prisoners fled as soon as they were brought to the determined site, so that the whole work was nevertheless entrusted to the Ustasha Defense. There were German commissions there, who constantly were mustering the prisoners, putting them to work, and deporting them to Germany.

Maks gave me orders to take several thousand people secretly to Jasenovac, because at that time we needed labor for the construction of the dam and for other objectives. In doing so, we deported older women, children, old and feeble people and resettled them in Slavonia, to Pakrac, Daruvar, Pozega, etc.

I believe that during my time, 25,000 to 30,000 prisoners were liquidated or died, mainly Gypsies, Jews, and Serbs from the Kozara mountains, who were returning from the German camps or from Slavonia and were returned

to Jasenovac. Sometimes I participated in the liquidations, later (after I was guilty of murders) specifically as supervisor; I can no more deny that than I can deny the fact that I myself killed a few upon these occasions. It must be emphasized that in the numbers mentioned above there are many who died of typhus or exhaustion (spotted typhus raged several times in Jasenovac, stomach typhus constantly, even among the Ustashe).

A few times the Germans demanded access to the camp. But there was a strict order to prevent this, even if it meant a use of weapons; that also applied for anyone who did not belong to camp assignment.

Interference in the camp and any intervention on behalf of prisoners were strictly forbidden and dangerous for anyone. The camp administration had no direct connections, either administratively or officially, that did not go via the command of the assembly camps in Jasenovac nor via its Office III "Ravsigur" in Zagreb, the camp administration; and it was also forbidden to remove any information, or data from the camp. So in the camp we neither knew anything nor were we informed, since these directives from Luburic came either from his own initiative or on orders from above. We were convinced that it was his initiative. At the end of October 1942, the volunteer regiment for Hercegovina was formed from the ranks of the Ustasha Defense. Before their departure, Luburic said: "Jasenovac is exposed, and it appears that we will have to dissolve it, but we must preserve the good reputation of the camp at Stara Gradiska. Therefore, nothing dare happen there, and you, Majstorovic, as a man who observes orders, will assume the command in the camp at Stara Gradiska. . . ."

On 27 October, I was transferred to the Stara Gradiska camp as commandant and maintained this function.

[. . .]

Since the Stara Gradiska camp was organized to a degree right from the beginning and the work program had started, it contained primarily those Croats who according to the administration in Zagreb were not to be liquidated, also those who were needed as skilled workers in the camp shops, as well as those who were politically important for them. The latter were kept in cells and attention was given so that nothing would happen to them. The Stara Gradiska camp was much smaller than the Jasenovac camp, both in regard to the number of prisoners and to the size. The number of prisoners did not vary in this camp on the whole during that entire time, except for minor changes. As I learned, mass liquidations were carried out in the camp a few times. For example, several hundred prisoners, men and women, were locked in the tower under the direction of First Lieutenant Oreskovic and were poisoned with Zyankali after a few days of incarceration.

It happened that the prisoners in Gradiska were killed in the same way as in Jasenovac, but not in such large numbers.

At the end of 1942, strictest instructions came from Luburic a few times that the Stara Gradiska camp was in no way to experience the same things

as in Jasenovac. Directly before my arrival, while First Lieutenant Gacic was in charge for a short time, forty prisoners were incarcerated in the prison who were left to starve. When they tried to break out, this was called a rebellion, so they were captured still in the camp and shot.

At the beginning of 1943, when the Jasenovac camp was dissolved and only Stara Gradiska remained as a reception camp, Luburic gave instructions to liquidate anyone only upon his personal orders. That one was then to be taken to Jasenovac and in no case was to be liquidated in Gradiska. Then the orders came to release individuals from the camp, while at the same time orders were given to undertake secret liquidations and to note in the records that death had come about from disease. This happened several times. The usual execution method was shooting, but it sometimes happened that it was done by other methods, the wooden hammer, the axe, or the knife. The victims were buried in the cemetery directly adjacent to the camp. At the beginning of 1943, a conspiracy of Jews was discovered, who were intending to murder leading personnel in the camp. Nine persons, whose guilt was established in an investigative process, were shot publicly.

On 23 December 1942, three prisoners who were on their way to Bosanska Gradiska to repair the city electric plant and had tools with them killed an Ustasha with a hammer and injured another so severely that he also died of his wounds; they then fled. In an investigative process, possible connections were examined, whereupon several people in the camp were arrested. On the same day, on the farm in Bistrica where a grotto of prisoners were felling trees, a guard on a truck was disarmed and removed, while the guard on another truck was killed. Immediately everyone was convinced that the two cases were related and that a common rebellion was planned. The incidents were investigated, the group from Bistrica was taken to the camp, and it was learned that the whole matter and even the rebellion, which was to be used for an escape, had been organized by the Jews themselves, independent from the other prisoners. Then about sixty prisoners were shot.

As far as I know, except for the starvation of the above-mentioned forty prisoners and the poisoning by Zyankali outside the investigation department, there were neither tortures nor any other mistreatment of prisoners. The investigation department probably threatened beatings during the inquiry or tormented in other ways, but I was personally not present as a witness in any instance.

[. . .]

I was in Jasenovac as an Ustasha offcer and camp director from the end of June 1942 to the end of October 1942. I admit that I personally killed about 100 prisoners in the Jasenovac camp and in Stara Gradiska in public shootings. I admit also that during my directorship of the Jasenovac camp, mass murders were carried out in Gradina in which I did not participate, although I knew of them. I correct myself: I did take part in these mass murders, but did not carry them out. I permitted these mass murders as

the director, because I had oral instructions from Ljubo Milos and more often from Ivica Matkovic, sometimes also from Max Luburic.

In Gradina, killing with wooden hammers took place, specifically by having the victim climb down into the ditch and then hitting him from behind with the hammer. The murders also took place by shooting and slaughtering. I know that in the liquidation of women and girls in Gradina, the younger ones among them were also raped. The decision about this was made by Ivica Matkovic, while, as far as I know, the Gypsies, specifically the grave diggers among them, committed the rapes. I myself committed no rapes. . . .

During my tenure, 20,000 to 30,000 prisoners were liquidated in the Jasenovac camp according to my figures. I especially emphasize that at the beginning of the summer in Jasenovac, the liquidations were carried out in the Dakovo camp. This liquidation was directed by the Ustasha Lieutenant Joso Matijevic. I believe that in this liquidation about 2,000 to 3,000 Jewish women and their children were killed.

At the end of October 1942 up to 27 March 1943 I came from Jasenovac to the Stara Gradiska camp. During this time, mass liquidations were taking place in the Stara Gradiska camp, which were usually carried out outside the camp, e.g., in Mlaca, Jablanac, or in Jasenovac. The big transports to the liquidations were likewise carried out on the orders of Ivica Matkovic. In this manner, about 2,000 to 3,000 people were led off. . . .

On 16 April 1945, I came back to Jasenovac, where I stayed until the end. I know that during this time the bodies of prisoners were removed from Gradina and were burned in order to erase the traces of the former crimes. I did not take part in the liquidation of the last prisoners, only in the exhumations.

[. . .]

16

The "Holy Masses" of Ivica Brkljacic

In the summer of 1943, the former priest Ivica Brkljacic, one of the most despicable personalities, was designated commandant of the Jasenovac camp.

If anyone would claim to be a Croat, Brkljacic would reply the following:

> The Serbs came because they are Serbs, the Jews because they are Jews, and you came only as traitors, as communists, as bitter enemies of the Holy Church and our Independent Croatia. Therefore, you traitorous bastards, you have to suffer the worst hell on earth! Heel!

And then the Ustashe would attack to the point of exhaustion, until they were satisfied and tired of this bestial work.

An active communist back then informed all newcomers that in no case were they to say that they were Croats. When the first group came from Zagreb, the prisoners tried to get this information to the imprisoned communists already along the way. Thus Ivica Skomrak's group was informed in time by the communist engineer Dorde Puhac, and when Ivica was asked his name, he told the commandant: "Svetozar Miskovic."

"I thought you were Svetozar Pribicevic, and I was about to destroy you. Serb?"

"Orthodox."

"Serb. Now out with it, damn it, why are you afraid?!"

"OK, Serb!"

"In any case, you are more decent and better than our Croatian traitor-communists"—and then Brkljacic only ground his teeth.

This malicious fox developed a clever method of getting at the secrets

of the prisoners. He erected an altar in one of the halls of the woodshop. Through the group leader, he arranged that all Catholic Croats without exception had to take part in the holy mass that would be held every Sunday at 10 o'clock in the morning to 1 o'clock in the afternoon. At this opportunity, confession was to be heard from the Catholics and communion given.

This news excited the communist activists in the camp very much. That was a new trap of the clerical Ustashe especially since the group leaders announced that a special food dish would be set for the Catholics.

"Their despicable intentions are obvious. That is a new attempt by the clerical Ustashe to break the solidarity of the camp prisoners and to force the national-chauvinistic division into 'the hungry' and 'the fed.'

"And the confession, ha!? That is the real trap, comrades. He thinks that we are so soft and moralistic from hunger that he can get secrets about the illegal work out of us inmates, maybe even the ties to those who have remained opposed to the occupiers and the Ustasha robbers," whispered Mokosek, the communist worker from Zagreb, barely audible.

Already on the first Sunday, the "church" filled with Croatian "Catholics," of which over 80 percent were communists and atheists.

Brkljacic even managed to get ceremonial vestments for the celebration of the holy mass. In this church, a confessional was also set up for one of the most sinister inquisitors, a master of torture, of slaughter, and murder of all sorts.

All the prisoners had to enter the confessional from which the evil spirit whispered.

"Brother in Christ, where have you sinned against our Holy Church, of which our Independent Croatia is a part, and where have you sinned against our independence? You stand here before God's court, and all your sins will be forgiven you, if you properly rue them and confess them in this holy confessional. This is not an investigation, but a holy confession only through which you can purge yourself. It is your duty to go home to your Christian family and to work for your new state. You need have no fear; only this can help you to get out of the camp."

Most of the prisoners easily recognized what this scoundrel was trying to get out of them and replied accordingly:

"Reverend, I am an anxious person and am afraid of the war and the battle, and, as you know, I am a deserter. I couldn't face being sent to the eastern front, and I fled on the way."

"Have no fear; here you stand before God. This is not the police; it is a part of God's kingdom, in which holy confessional confidentiality reigns," said Pope Brkljacic.

"You know, Reverend, it is sufficient just to have one enemy who

gives you away. I have nothing else on my conscience, and I love my homeland."

"Dominus tecum fili mihi!" Then he whispered something else, made the sign of the cross over him, and released him as one who is prepared for the holy communion.

Most of the prisoners were not fooled, but there were some who actually confessed that they had sinned against the NDH.

"You are honest, and for that we will reward you specially, and the dear Lord will forgive you." The dangerous and refined Pope Brkljacic as commandant of the extermination camp did not send these prisoners to Gradina for execution right away, but transferred them to supposedly better places, where they eventually disappeared. They were all killed in Gradina. When this became known, the prisoners were at the "holy" confession in the church of the Jasenovac camp, which served as a special method for flushing out the prisoners.

After the confession, the pope put on the ceremonial garb and celebrated the holy mass and communion. Meanwhile, he held a "holy" sermon and then ended the "holy liturgy." He designated an incarcerated Catholic priest as mass assistant, who was accused of having connections to the partisans.

When the prisoners returned from the mass, a special kettle of good food was waiting for them, while the other kettle was filled with only hot water and a few beans. By order of the communist prisoners, the kettles were combined, and all the camp prisoners got the same food. Thus this provocation in Gestapo and Ustasha style, which was to lead to fights among the prisoners, was nipped in the bud.

One Sunday, the evening meal was conducted as on an assembly line and with the pope's mechanical adeptness. The holy mass ended quickly. When the prisoners came out of the slaughter church of Jasenovac, they were instructed to go to their cells immediately and not to leave them until they got orders. If anyone was caught outside, he would be killed on the spot. This was no empty threat, but rather in actuality a fervently held wish on the part of the slaughterers.

All the old prisoners knew very well that during their confinement something would happen that was to be kept from the prisoners at any cost. But what? The prisoners wanted to know, because they were sure that it could be some horrendous murder.

In the camp, bands of the slaughterers were running around and looking into the barracks to see whether anyone was peeping out at some secret spot.

The big building of the metal workshop was across from the slaughterers' command post, and in front of it was an open area leading toward the camp gate, from which one could see the mess hall, the bell tower,

the ammunition storehouse, and the watch tower. In front of the Ustasha officers' mess hall, stood a summer pavilion, in which the leaders of the slaughterers often sat and ate their meals.

In the attic of the metal workshop, above the camp hall and the gunsmithy, slept the camp prisoners who worked as metal workers in the workshop. Out of foresight and as preventive measures, they bored a secret hole in the front wall, in which there were neither windows nor any other openings; from this hole they could observe the open area in front of the central command post and the mess hall. Of course, the Ustashe knew nothing of this observation station, the discovery of which would have cost the heads of all the residents of this attic. The camp prisoners took advantage of this observation station and quickly informed the others in the camp about any dangerous happenings and carryings-on of the slaughterers. They noted when Gestapo functionaries and officers from the 55 units or the Ustasha leaders showed up.

An hour after the mass, Drago Luter, Ivica Skomrak, and Puhaca Dorde, who were kept in this attic, ran to the observation station, because they knew that something important was about to happen in the area in front of the slaughterers' command post. Through the observation station, they saw Priest Brkljacic eating lunch and being served by the Ustashe, because the prisoners who usually worked as waiters were locked up. Suddenly an Ustasha came, reported something to him, and left quickly. After a minute, the same Ustasha brought prisoners who were rather well dressed. They were intellectuals. Later we learned that it was the group from Sarajevo.

Once he had brought the prisoners, Brkjiacic lunged into them and began to stab them with a knife. The screams and calls for help were indescribable. The dead bodies lay there motionless while the Ustashe wiped their bloody knives on their suits. Brkljacic laughed and continued his lunch. Thus ended the last part of the holy mass.

(from Dr. N. Nikolic, *The Camp of the Village Jasenovac*, pp. 382-85)

17

The Mass Murder of Children

The mass murder of children in the Independent State of Croatia, especially in the concentration camps of the Ustashe between 1941 and 1945 [. . .]

The events from the past of a people fade in time and are forgotten if no one writes them down. Therefore, it is properly said: Anything that isn't written down didn't happen.

The question arises whether, after decades have passed, one can portray faithfully and as objectively as possible with the help of documents the collective fate of more than 20,000 children, Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, Croats, Moslems—the fate of children who were chopped into pieces and burned in Pavelić's collaborator state. Although it is difficult to describe adequately in words the extent of the inhumanity and the number of the committed crimes, I nevertheless consider it possible to depict the painful and bloody truth, which never dare be forgotten nor repeated as long as the earth still turns and people live on it.

The fate of children, especially in great tragedies, has always stirred the world. The fascist invasion and occupation in our country after 1941 turned their fate, especially in the territory of the so-called NDH, into a severe national misfortune. The evil, the sickness, the criminal behavior, i.e., the typical signs of fascism, reached their high point in the mass murder of children, of a sort that the history of our country never saw before. As soon as the so-called NDH was set up under the protection of German weapons on 10 April 1941, the propaganda lies of the Nazi regime began, which was to be based throughout the whole war on the group of fanaticized and chauvinistically hate-filled Ustasha terrorists. The regime of the occupiers and collaborators first of all targeted the destruction of

the national unity on religious and national levels, and signs of the catastrophe of a civil war began to show.

The Germans, the Ustashe, the Cetniks, the Italians, and the Hungarians, on the basis of our current state of investigation and on the basis of confirmed numbers, killed 16,137 children, from babies up to fourteen-year-olds. In doing so, they used methods that are not comprehensible to a healthy mind. The children were shot and slaughtered with knives, axes, and hatchets, burned at home or in crematoriums, boiled in kettles, tied up in sacks and thrown into rivers and wells, put alive into caves and grottos, poisoned with Zyankali and caustic soda, or eliminated by hunger, cold, and thirst.

When the Ustasha ministers—Mile Budak, Milovan Zanic, and Mirko Puk—in May 1941 publicly declared: We will kill a third of the Serbs, deport a third, and convert a third to Catholicism and thus eliminate the bums from the NDH, this declaration was much like a law. Viktor Gutic, too, staff chief and one of the most prominent representatives of Ustasha terrorism, threatened: "We will send these Serb Gypsies to Serbia, some by train, some on the Save, but without a ship. We will rout the unwanted elements so that no trace of them will remain, and the only thing that will remain of them will be the bad memory of them. All this Serb trash over 15 years old we will kill; we will put their children in cloisters and make good Catholics of them."

The Catholic Church authorities gave their blessing to the mass murder of children right after the establishment of the NDH. How much hatred was used in the preparation of this great crime is made clear by the statement by Dionizije Juricevic, an Ustasha and priest in Pavelić's and Artokovic's special department for religion: "In this country, no one but the Croats can live, and anyone who does not accept conversion, we know what to do with him, where to send him. Today it is not a sin to kill even a small child who stands in the way of the Ustasha movement. You need not think that I, because I am a priest, could not take a machine gun in hand and wipe out everything, right down to a baby, that is opposed to the Ustasha rule and the Ustasha state."

In the village of Mistra near Cazin, the Ustashe killed 60 women and 90 children; they locked 100 women and children in the house of Ilija Trbojevic and burned them. In the villages in the vicinity of Bosanski Petrovac, Krnjeus, Vrtoc, and Bravsko, they murdered 260 women and children. In the village of Tuk Dzevera, they burned 52 mothers with their children in one house.

In the summer days of the year 1941, a battalion of Pavelić killed about 6,000 men and women and 668 children in Bosanska Krajina.

[. . .]

The 17th of February 1942 went into the annals of the most startling crimes which took place in the area below the Kozara mountains: On this day, members of the Pavelić battalion killed 2,300 inhabitants of Drakulic, Sargovac, and Motike, villages near Banja Luka. The high point of the Ustasha barbarism was the massacre of 538 children. Miroslav Filipovic, who was known as Pater Majstorovic, the chaplain of the cloister in Pitricevac and one of the worst slaughterers in the Jasenovac camp, killed as the first the child of Duro Glamocanin and in doing so called out: "Herewith I baptize these offspring in the name of God and assume all sins unto myself."

The crimes at the Kozara mountains multiplied. The witnesses gave such gruesome reports that it is difficult to believe them.

In the house of Mikan Jandric, they chopped up a child. While her mother, Dara Banovic was holding her to her breast, the four-year-old Radoslavka and the two-year-old Bosko were stabbed; Grozda Adzic was tied to the threshold and had to watch her baby burning in its crib, while the Ustashe smothered her second child in a ditch with calcium hydroxide; the six-year-old Miodrag Kecman was forced to watch the death of his grandmother Staka and his mother Radojka, then an Ustasha took an axe and cut off the child's right hand on a block used for chopping wood, so that he would never be able to shoot when he got older; in the village of Koturevi, the Ustashe killed two children of Sima and Kovilika Kondic. Blagoja was three years old and Mara six months when the criminal impaled them on his bayonet and carried them through the village.

After the well-known offensive in the Kozara mountains in the summer of 1942, because of the military failures, the enemy released his entire rage on the population of the Potkozarje area.

In the last order of General Friedrich Stahl, who commanded the operation in the Kozara mountains on 18 June 1942, he says literally:

> Today the undertaking of the battle group "West Bosnia" in the area of Kozara and Prosara was ended. The entire population of the encompassed area was resettled and thus a thorough purge was carried out.

Stahl was absolutely right.

One hundred forty villages of Potkozarje were depopulated and razed, and the inhabitants were taken to assembly camps and concentration camps: Cerovljani near Hrvatska Dubica, Jasenovac, Mlaka, Jablanac, Stara Gradiska, Novska, Prijedor, and Zemun. In all, there were 68,600 people from

the Kozara area, among them 23,858 children, from babies to fourteen-year-olds.

What the children had to experience in the Ustasha camps is a singular example of human suffering in the history of war. The Ustasha criminals' method of handling the children was terrible. In the camps of Jadovno near Gospic, Lobograd, Jasenovac, Stara Gradiska, Dakovo, Kruscica, Tenje, and Sajmiste near Belgrade, they left behind a terrifying witness to their existence. The ingenious plan of the fascists decided the fate of over 20,000 children.

I cannot help reporting at least three examples from the countless numbers of terrifying testimony about the mass misery of the children in the camps. First Lieutenant Schmidt Zabijerov, the German representative for the recruiting of labor for the Third Reich from the Stara Gradiska camp, noted on 12 July 1942:

> The prisoners there are recruited from the Orthodox; there are several thousand, primarily women and children, since the men have already been transported to the Reich. Since only families with older children can still be taken, the youngest are left to the welfare of the Croatian state. The necessary result is the dividing of families. I have seen several hundred children in one yard, already separated from their mothers, awaiting their further fate. They were lying in the yard under the open sky crying and begging for food and water.

Marijana Amulic, prisoner in the women's camp in Stara Gradiska, remembers the following:

> The children were lying there helpless, even too weak to cry. They were dying slowly and quietly. About 20 female prisoners, themselves as helpless as the children, were taking care of them. Once we were ordered to fetch all the sick children and to house them in the attic rooms of the infamous tower. Then Ante Vrban, the commandant of the camp, had poison gas injected into the rooms. Then there was an eerie silence in the camp, as if life itself had been extinguished.

In the whole territory of the NDH—22 districts, 142 counties, and 102 communities—the total extermination of the Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, and later even other opponents of the Ustasha movement was carried out. In doing so, not even the children were spared. The purges of individual areas in Lika, Banija, Kordun, Slavonia, Srem, Bosnia, and in Hercegovina—the resettlements, the arrests, the internments in camps, the conversions, and the physical annihilations—increased to a horrifying extent.

In one of the first documents, the Memorandum Nr. 1 from the Directory for Reconstruction, it says:

> The resettling of the Serbs is to be carried out unsparingly, the arrests and internments must be carried out day and night without interruption. The arrested person is obligated to get ready within 30 minutes. His property is to be confiscated and the Directory for Reconstruction will dispose of it. If possible, whole families are to be arrested. Older people, women, and children cannot be spared.

This was only the beginning.

The first bullets rained on the Serbs from Gudovac, Brezovica, and from several villages near Bjelovar on 28 April 1941: 243 people were killed and thrown into a mass grave.

According to incomplete accounts, just in June, July, and August 1941, over 60,000 people from the vicinity of Glina, Dvor on the Una, Lapic, Gospic, Vrgin-Most, Bihac, Krupa, Cazin, Kulen-Vakuf, Kladusa, Bosanski Petrovac, Mrkonjic-Grad, Kljuc, Sanski Most, Banja Luka, Prijedor, Bosanski Novi, Bosanska Gradiska, Sarajevo, Vlasenica, Srebrenica, Rogatica, Cajnic, Foca, Visegrad, Mostar, Gacko, Nevesinje, Trebinje, Bileca, and Stolac were killed. How many children were among them cannot yet be determined with certainty, because research is still in progress.

Men, women, and children were killed en masse in the most gruesome ways. They were nailed to house doors, burned along with their families, tossed alive into mountain crevasses, caves, and grottos. The ravines in Lika, Bosanska Krajina, and in Hercegovina filled with bodies. Eight hundred sixty men, women, and children were plunged into the ravine of Delica Jama. This is a natural cave, which was later covered and cemented by the Italians. Also the ravine Vucja Jama near Cazin became a grave for several thousand people. In the 47-meter-deep ravine of Ravni Dolac near Livno, 220 women and children were tossed. The Ustasha police in Bileca reported to their superiors that the 75 caves and ravines in their territory offered room for over 8,000 people.

Recently I read the following document:

> In the Dakovo camp, the Ustashe tormented children before the eyes of their mothers by throwing bread crumbs among the starving children and setting police dogs on them as soon as they approached the bread. When a child had been bitten by a raging dog, they locked the child and the dog in some corner of the camp, before the eyes of the horrified mothers. While one could hear the screaming of the child that was struggling with the incited dog, the Ustashe played the harmonica.

With the founding of the three special camps for "re-education" of children of the partisans in Gornja Rijeka near Krizevci, Jastrebarsko, and Sisak on 12 July 1942, which took place upon the decision of Ante Pavelić, the leader of the NDH, and Andrija Artukovic, the interior minister, the high point of the extermination action against children was reached. These were the only camps in Europe, perhaps even in the whole world, that were established for prisoners in diapers.

In the Gornja Rijeka camp, which was set up in a Jewish castle, 400 young Janicares were held, of which more than half died in a short time.

The children's camp in Jastrebarsko was organized the best and was under the directorship of the sisters of the "Saint Vinko Paulski" congregation with Barto Pulheri as their leader, who especially distinguished herself by her gruesome activity against the children. Three thousand two hundred thirty-six children went through the camp in Jastrebarsko, of which according to official figures of the work ministry 449 died, and according to the diary of Franjo Ilovar, the attendant of the village cemetery in Jastrebarsko, 768 died.

The third and largest children's camp was in Sisak and was under the protectorship of the Ustasha movement "Women's Tendril" and the Ustasha Security Service. In this camp there were 6,693 children, of which 1,631 died in four months. Most of them were identified with a number on their neck.

[. . .]

How Many Children were Murdered in Jasenvoac?

Still today it is not possible to give a decisive answer to this question. In order to clarify thoroughly the tragic fate of thousands of children in the hell of Jasenovac, professional conferences would be necessary.

But Anton Miletic, the author of the book *The Concentration Camp Jasenovac 1941-1945,* which has appeared in three volumes, has contributed much to the answer. It represents a singular collection of documentary testimonies on more than 2,000 pages and comprises 627 documents and 25 contributions. These volumes, a great and especially exhaustive accomplishment, have contributed the most to the research of the mass murder at Jasenovac.

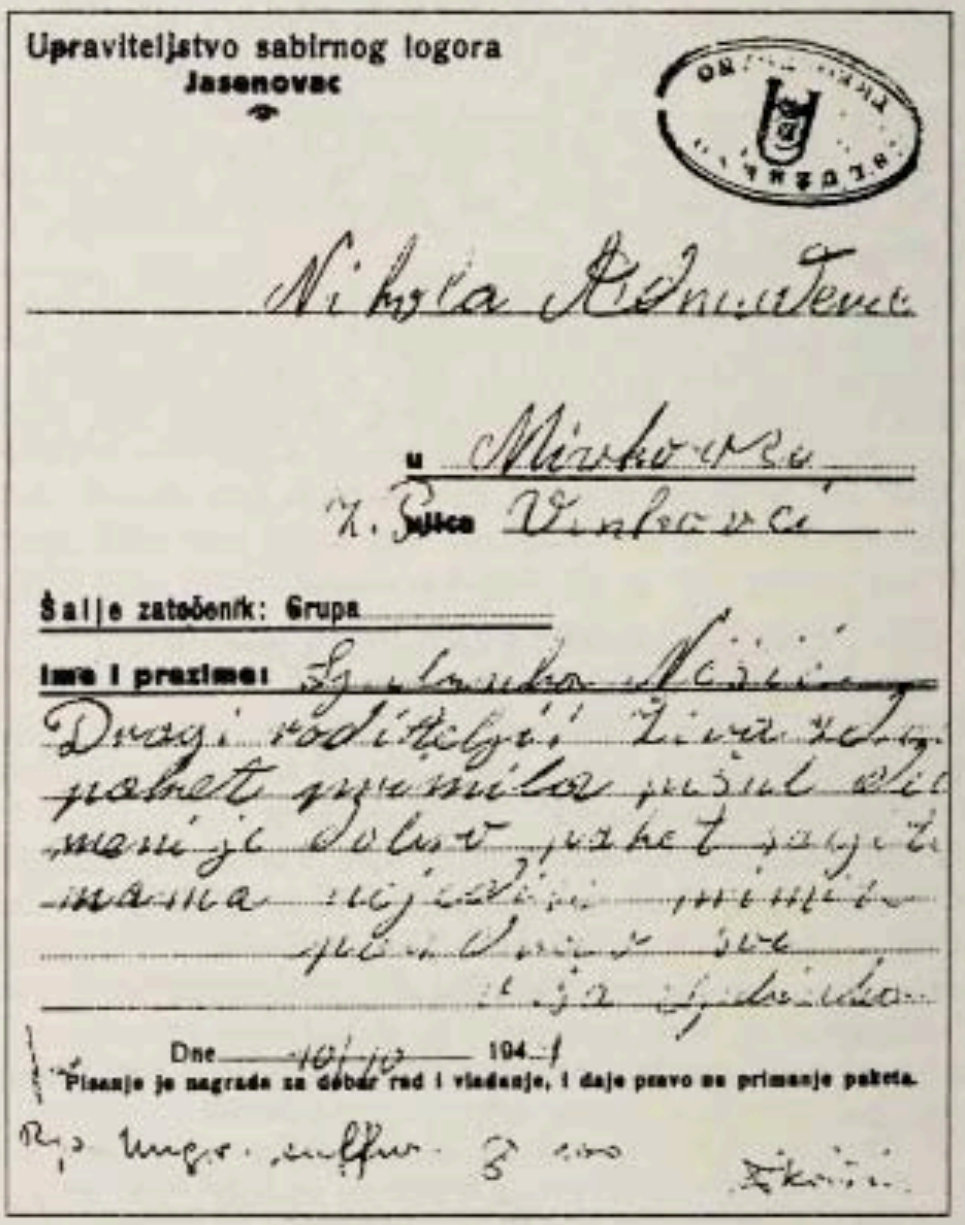
[. . .]

After Miletic had counted the names of the children who were entered into the documents he published, he arrived at the number of 7,886 mur-

dered children in Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska. But even this is not the final number. If one adds the undocumented children from the groups of the 29,000 Jews and 40,000 Gypsies who were liquidated in Jasenovac, the result becomes so terrible that it could rob a person of his or her mind.

These children were killed by Pavelić and Artukovic's henchmen, and that says everything about them. We have the reports of those who were not murdered.

(Report of Dragoje Lukic—who as a child himself experienced the horror of Jasenovac—from 14 and 15 November 1986 at the conference in Jasenovac)


Upraviteljstvo sabirnog logora
Jasenovac

Nikola Adamović

u Mirkovac

k. Pošta Vinkovci

Šalje zatočenik: Grupa

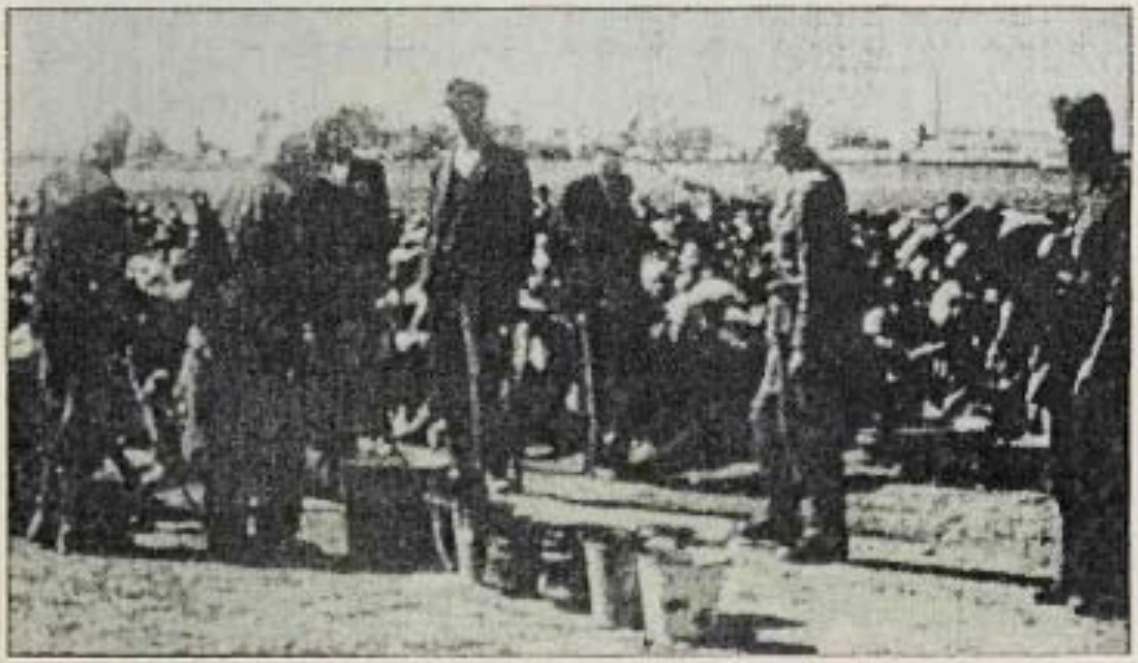
Ime i prezime: Ljubinka Nešić

Drugi roditelji živi zbog
rabota premila pušil dil
manji dolut rabet sagi
masna nijedini primit
pušil Vinkovci sve
ćeja ljubinka

Dne 10/10 1941

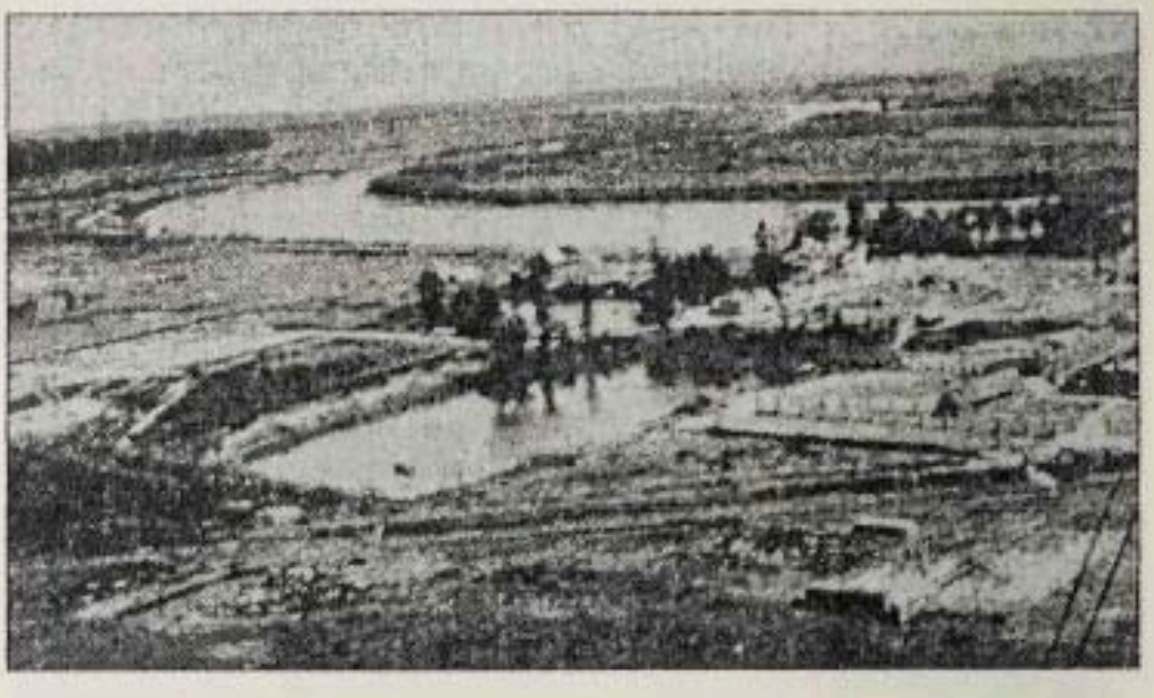
Pisanje je nagrada za dobar red i vladanje, i daje pravo na primanje paketa.

Facsimile of the postcard from Ljubinka Nesic, who sent it from the Jasenovac camp to his parents in October 1944. It contains a medical prescription for medicine that Ljubinka needed urgently (from a private collection).

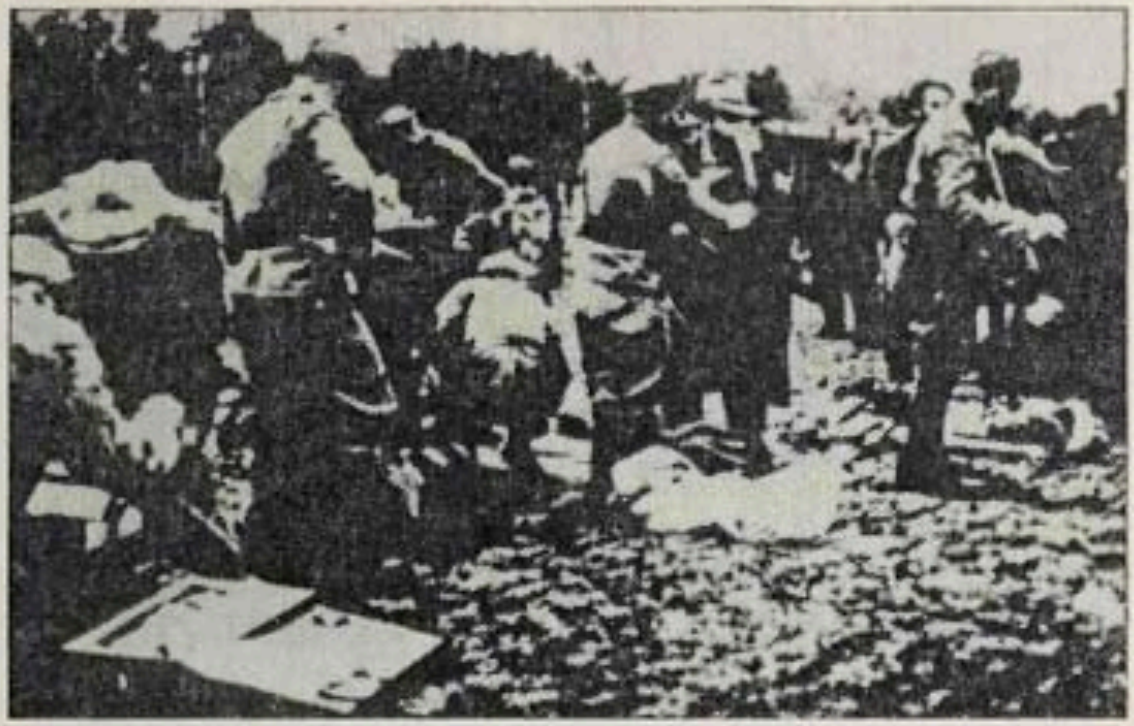


Above, One of the entrances to the Jasenovac camp. The sign reads, "Work service of the Ustasha Defense Assembly Camp Nr. III."

Below, Prisoners in Jasenovac. *Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 3083.

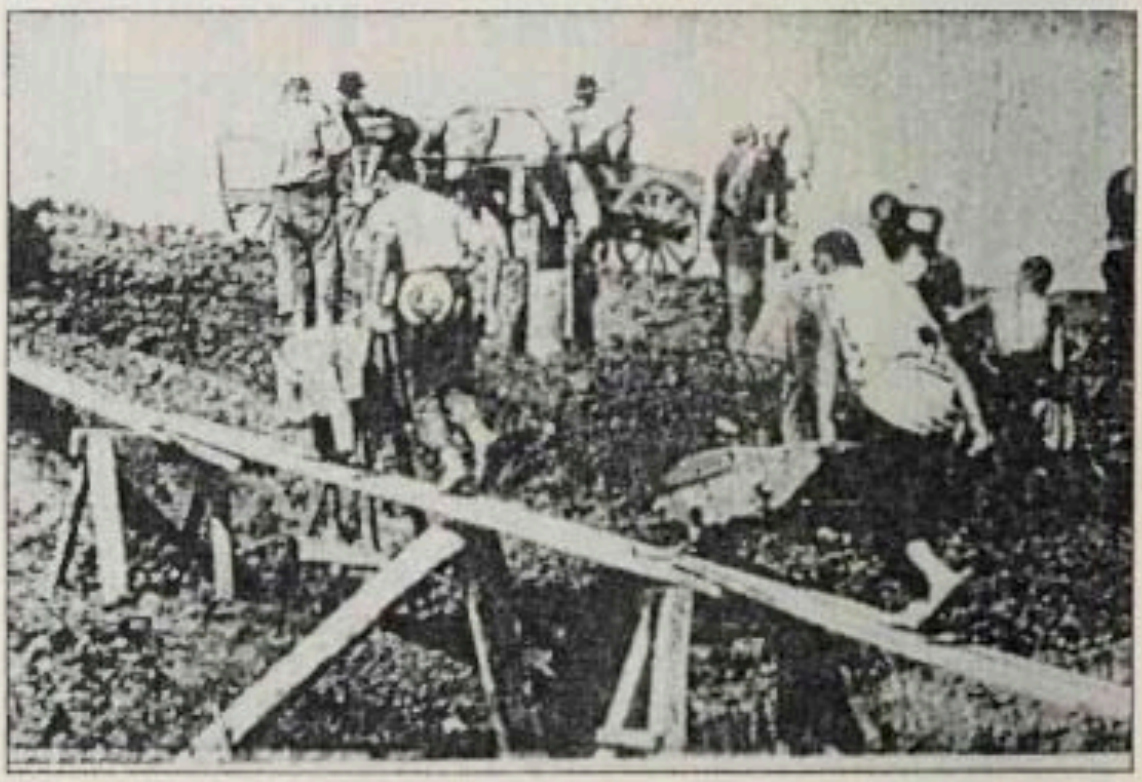


Two aerial photographs of the Jasenovac camp during the last days of World War II—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 3080/Nr. 3083.



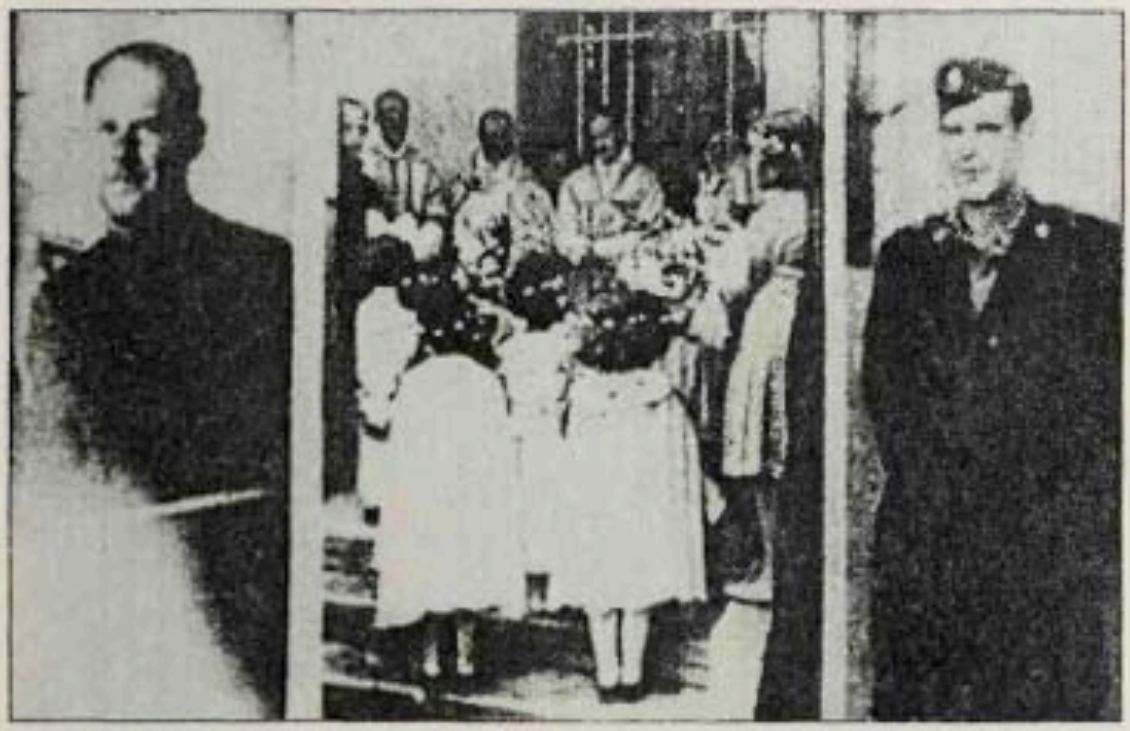
Upon entry into the camp, the Ustashe searched every camp prisoner and confiscated the rings, bracelets, money, and other valuables—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

The Ustashe force a camp prisoner to give away his ring upon entry into the Jasenovac camp—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.



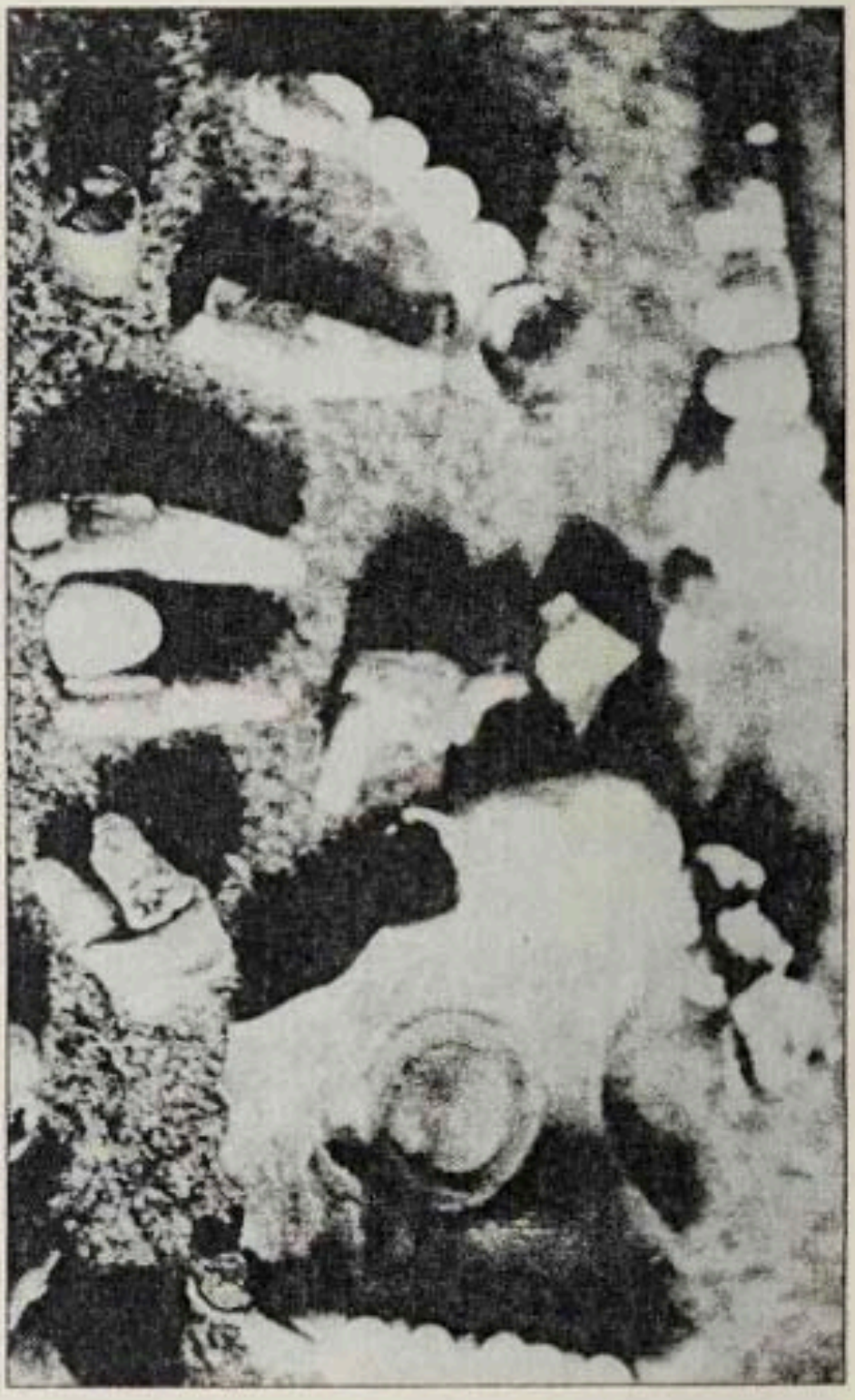
Above, Prisoners of Jasenovac camp on their way to forced labor. As Dr. Nikola Nikolić cited, the heavy physical work was one of the methods of killing people in the Jasenovac camp.

Below, Camp prisoners from Jasenovac constructing a dam. The Ustasha propaganda published this photograph with the claim that the camp prisoners were being "retrained" by the "work." *Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik,* Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 3083.

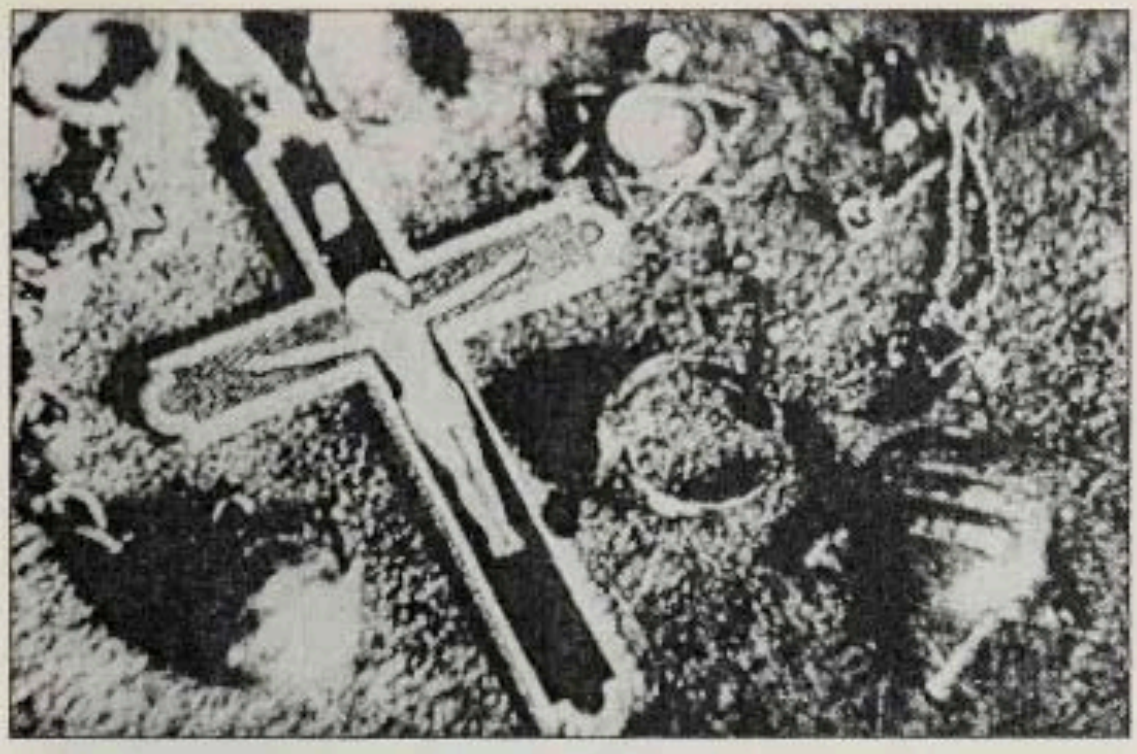


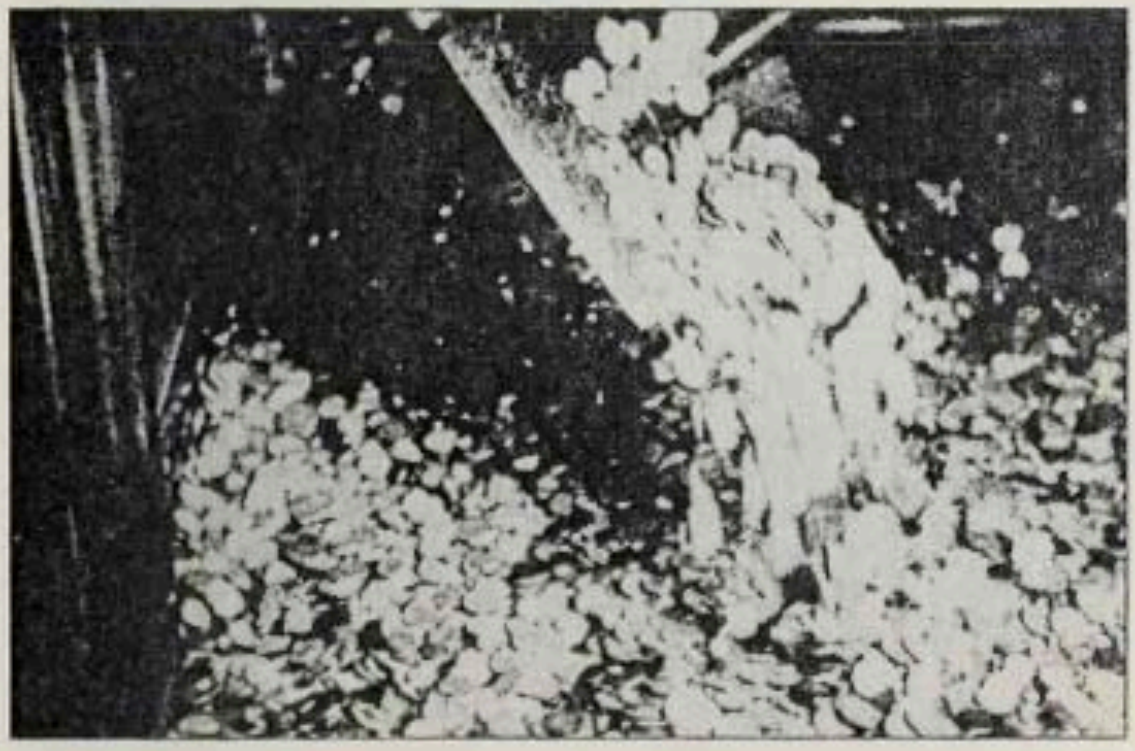
Above, The Ustasha monk Rendic, one of the directors of the Jasenovac camp—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

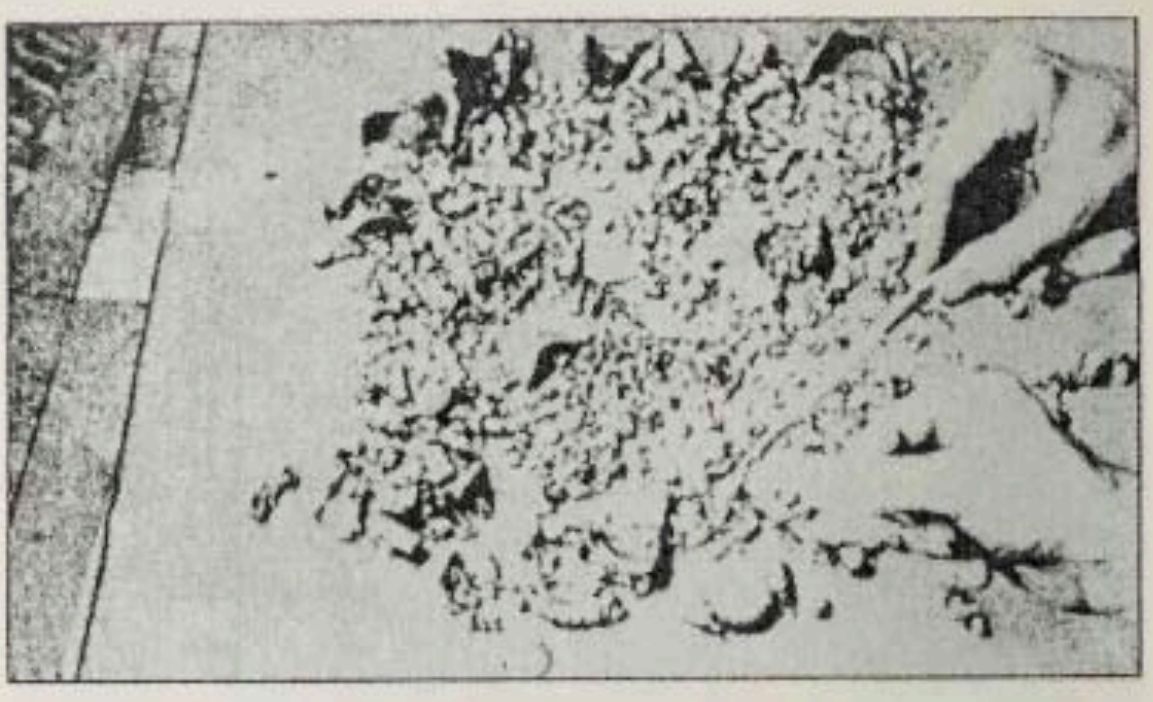
Below, The Franciscan monk Filipovic, known as "Brother Satan," became the camp commandant in Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska and received a high Ustasha rank.

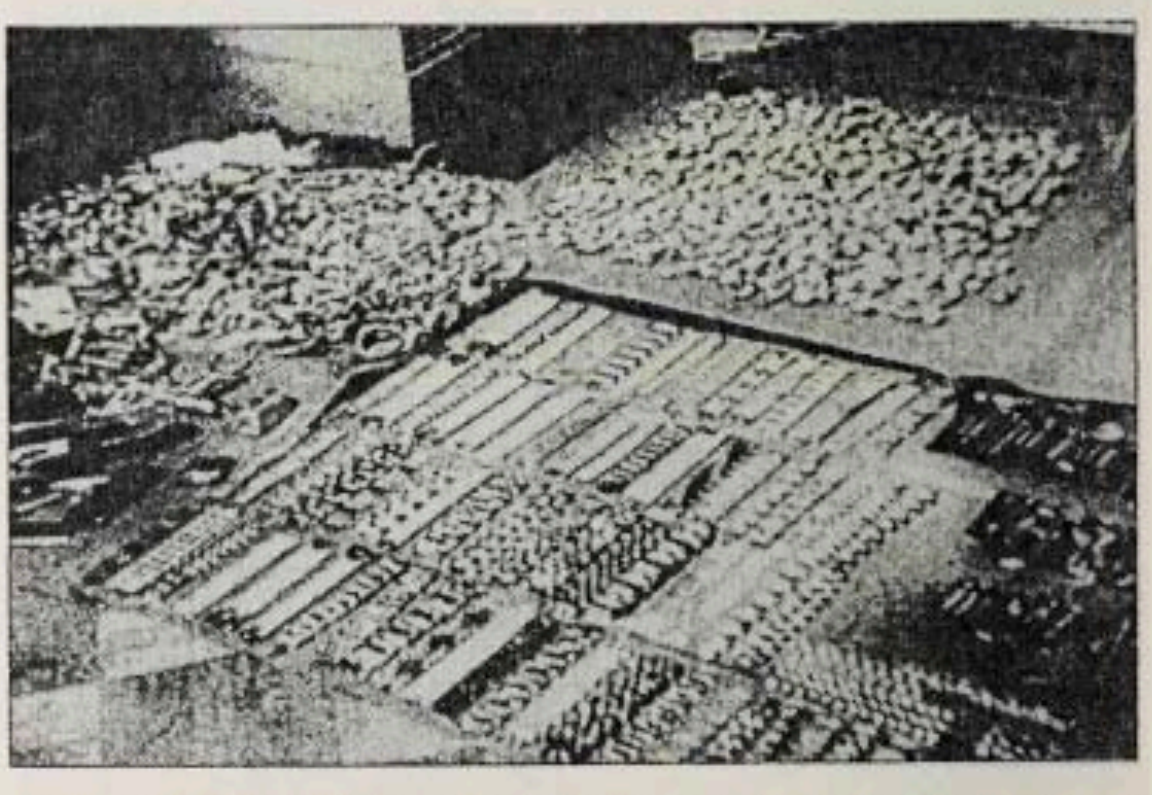


In Jasenovac and other camps, the Ustashe broke the jaws of the victims and removed the gold crowns, took away their medallions, and took the hidden gold from the richer prisoners (see next page). Through the system of plundering and of terror, the camp prisoners were relieved of their valuables. At the end of the war, a part of this gold was hidden in the Capitol in Zagreb—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047. (The Capitol is the Church-owned part of the upper city of Zagreb, translator's note.)





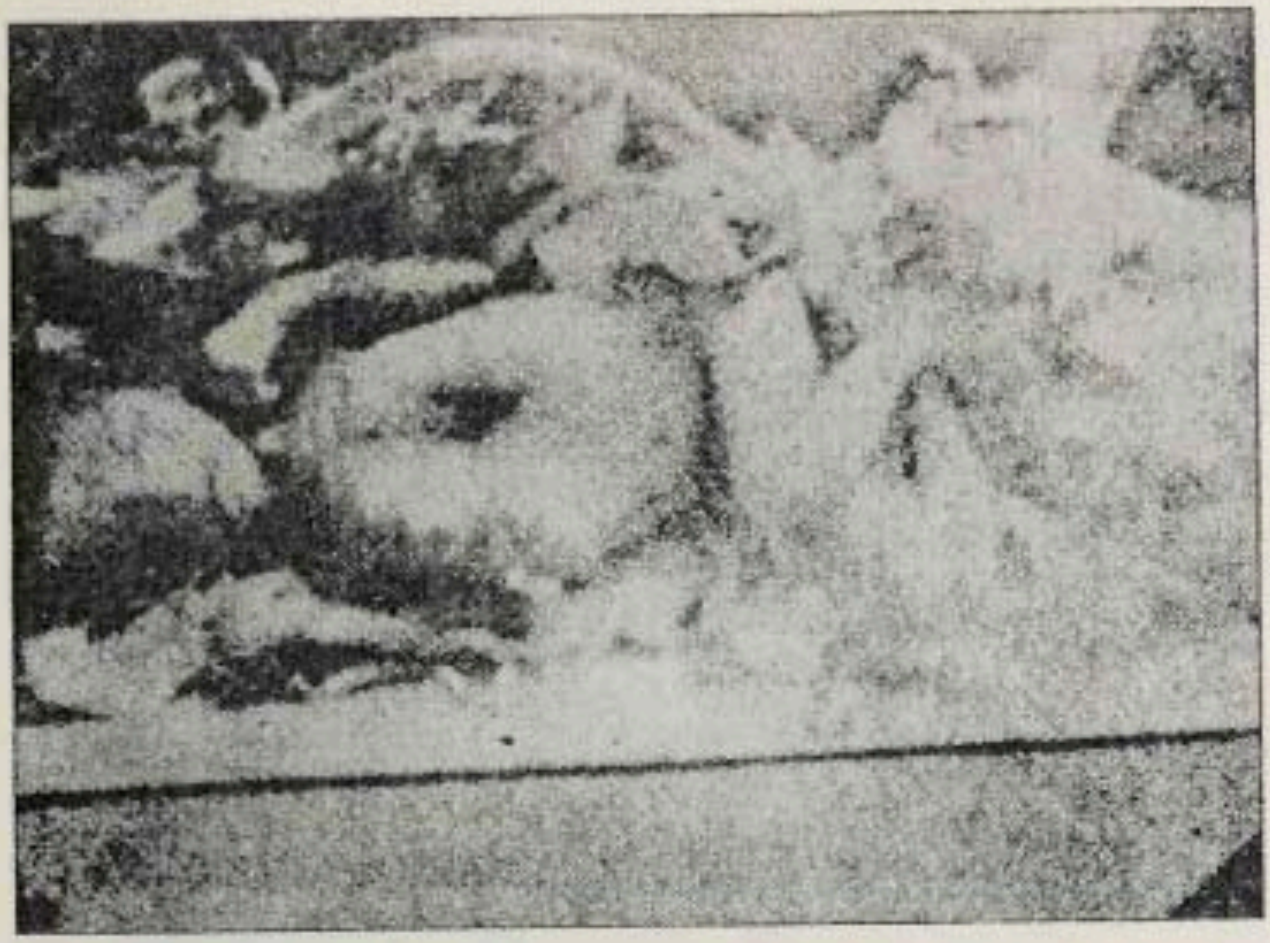


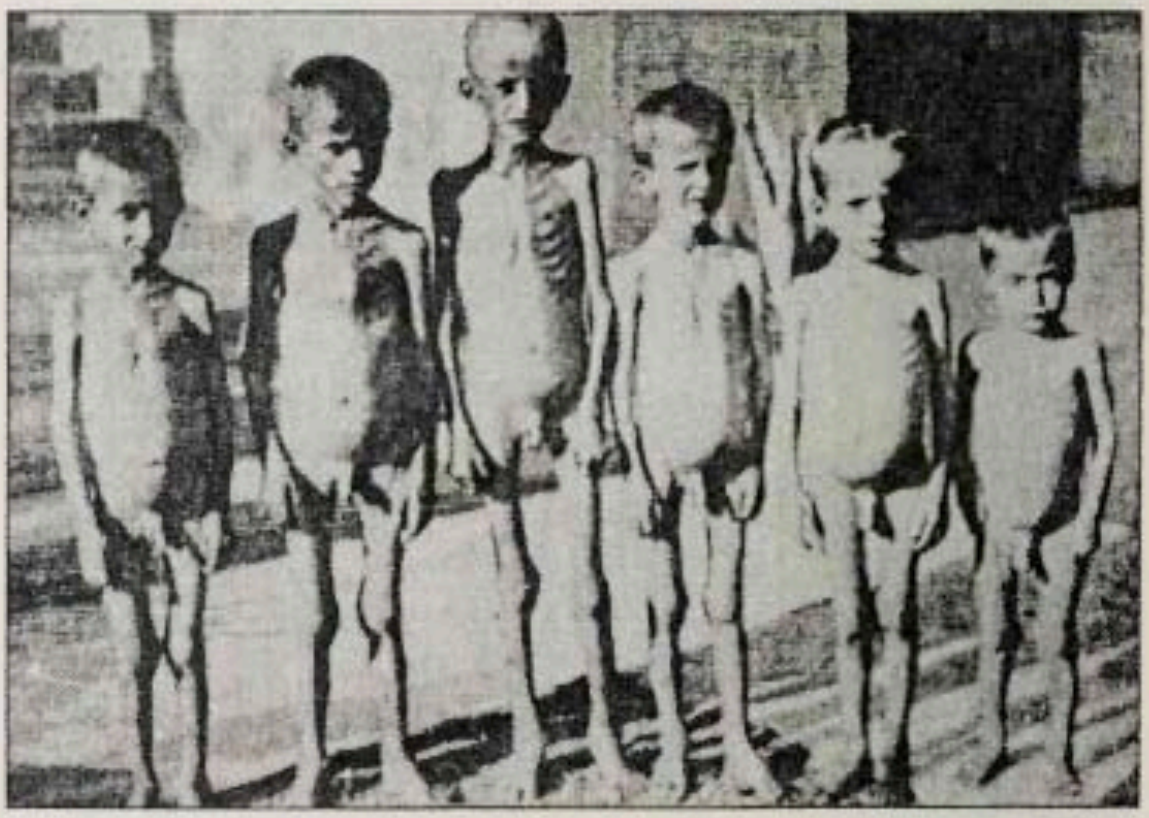


Gold watches taken from Serb and Jewish victims and hidden in the residence of the archbishop of Zagreb, where they were found after the retreat of the Ustashe.

In the camps of Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska, about 8,000 children died—*Hrvatski sikopisni tjednik*, Nr 40, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 11 045.

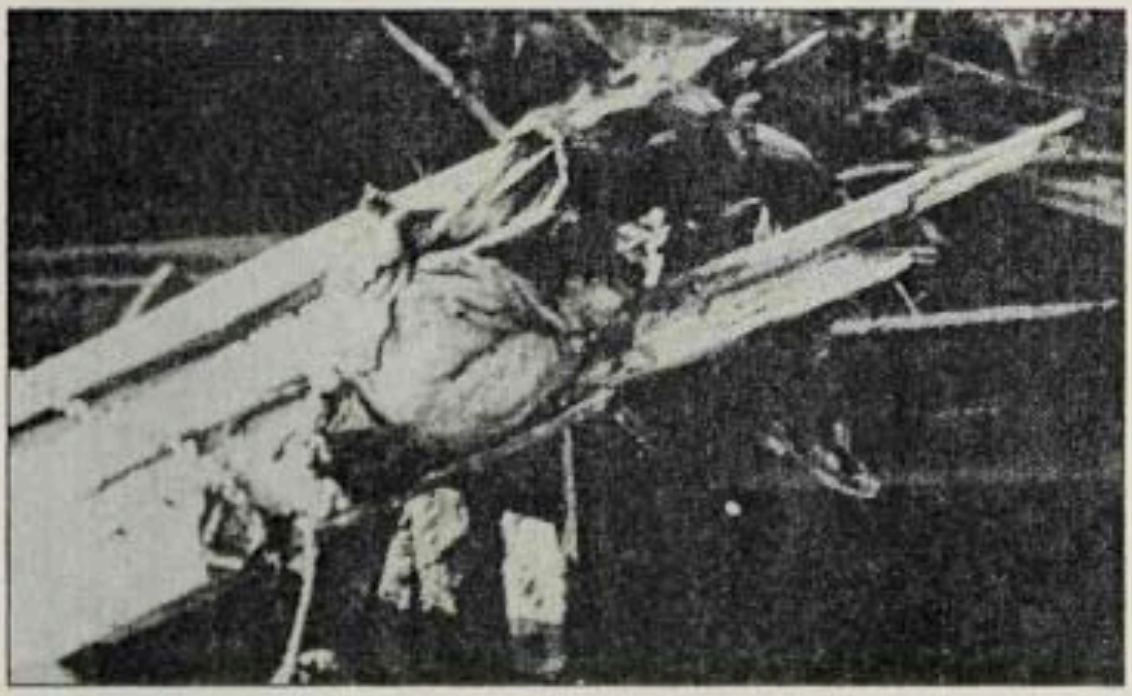
1941: Children in the Stara Gradiska concentration camp, dying of slow starvation. The government of the satellite state of Croatia (Interior Minister Andrija Artukovic) ordered caustic soda to be added to their food in order to eliminate them.





Above, Before the inspection by the International Red Cross, the Croatian government (Artukovic) ordered the burning of people alive in Jasenovac. Charred bodies were thrown into the courtyard in Jasenovac in order to make room for more people who were to be burned in specially built ovens.

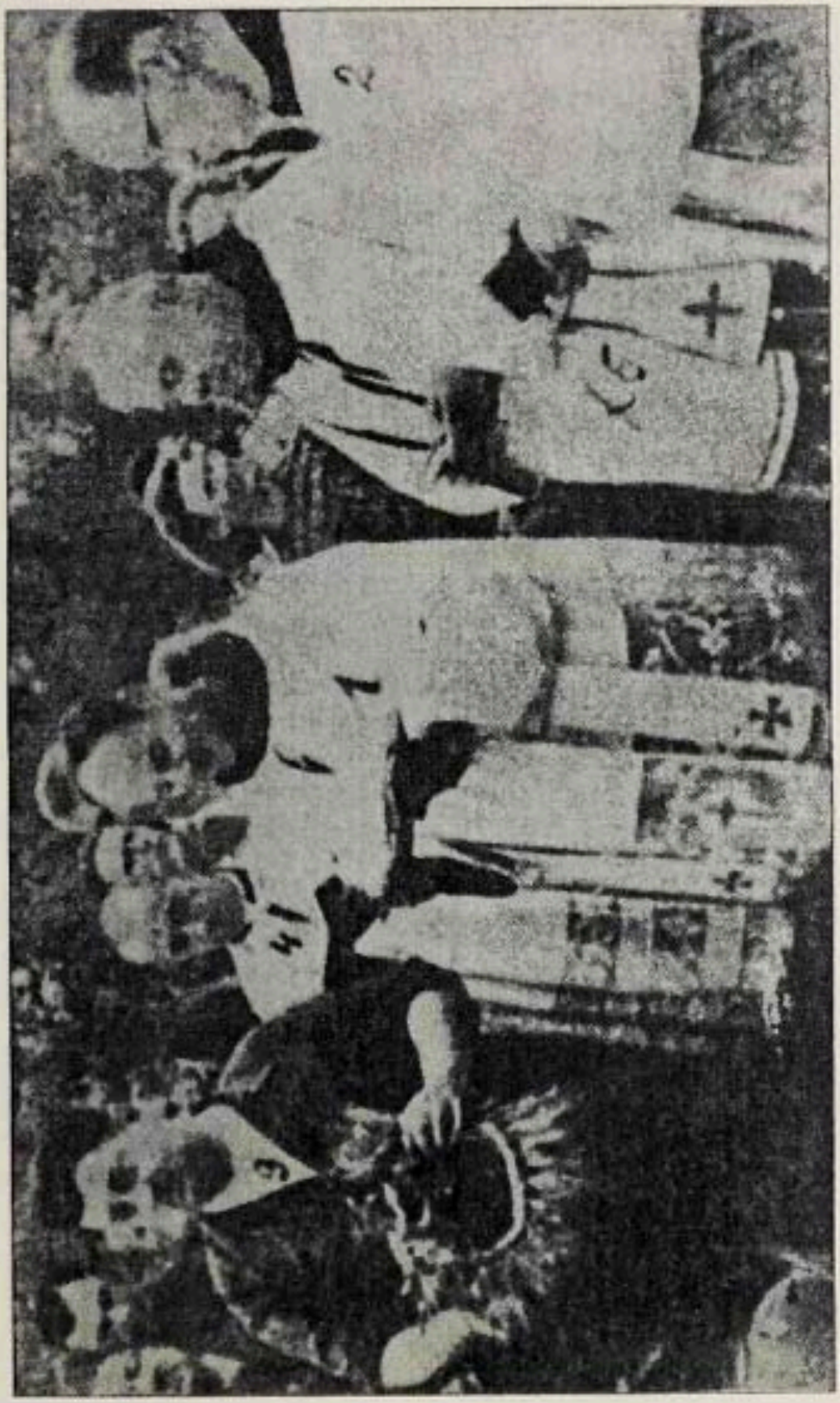
Below, Serb children after their rescue from the Ustasha camp.



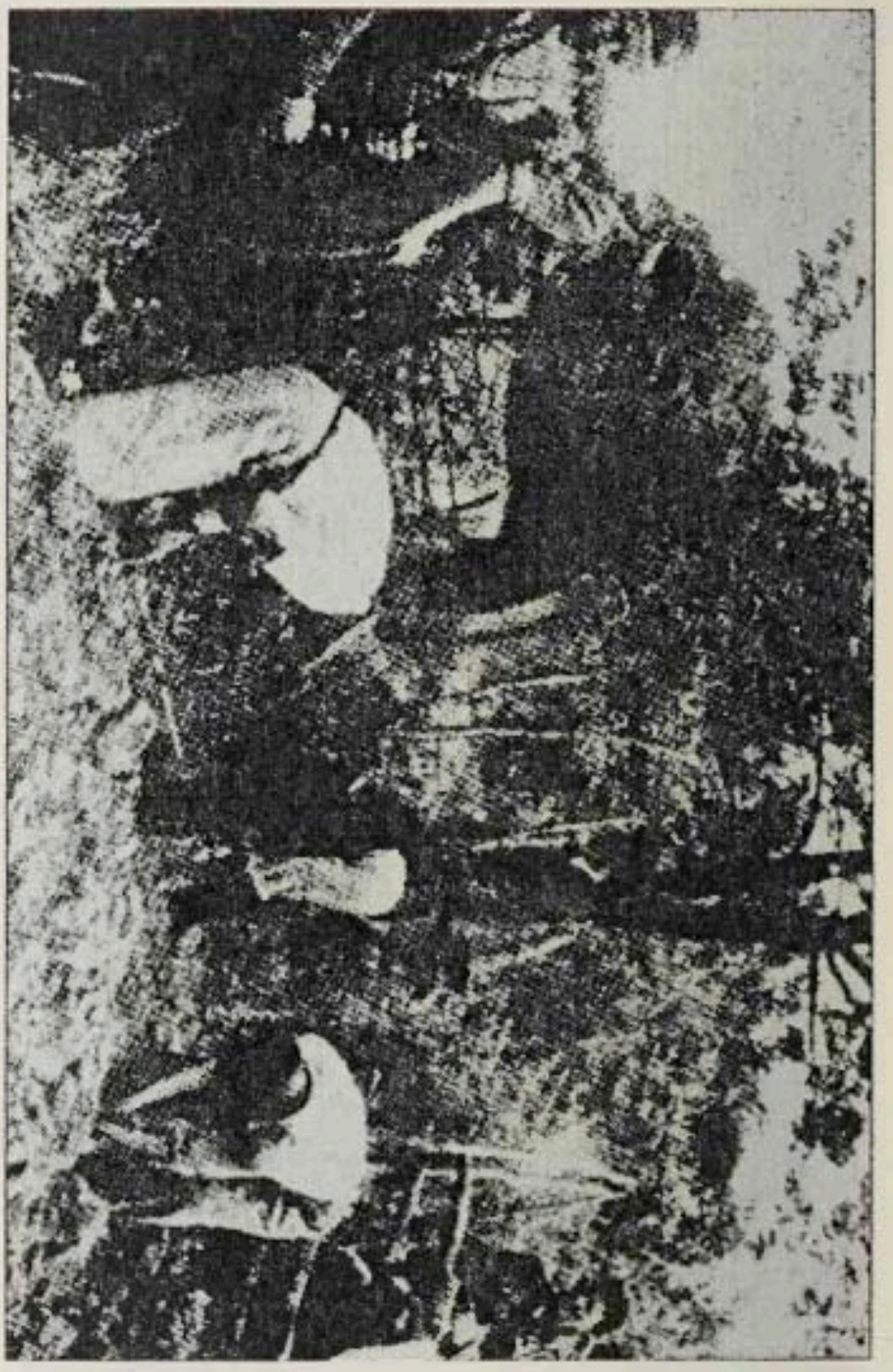
The troops of General von Stahl from the "West Bosnia" group hang the people of Potkozarje. In the staff of General von Stahl was Lieutenant Kurt Waldheim, charged with the work of the secret service—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 3209.

At the end of April 1945, the Germans and the Ustashe abandoned Jasenovac, after they first had killed all the remaining camp prisoners. In the picture is the body of a massacred camp prisoner which the Save had washed up.—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 3083.

Before they left Stara Gradiska, Jasenovac, and Sisak, the Ustashe killed all the remaining camp prisoners, as one of the mass graves in the picture shows—private collection.



The Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic reads a mass during a celebration in Banja Luka. At his right stands the Ustasha Veliki Zhupan, governor of Banja Luka, holding a wreath of wheat.



The Serb farmers dig their own grave under the guard of armed Croatian Ustashe.

PART FOUR

THE POPE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE MASSACRES

18

Reports about the Intimate Conversations with the Pope and His Closest Collaborators

On 17 January 1940, Archbishop Stepinac made the following entry in his diary (Volume III, p. 413):

> For no other reason than the interest of the Catholic Church, we must undertake everything so that the Croatian people will continue to be strong in health and culture. These qualities, which they have preserved in the last twenty years, will also serve them in the future in the struggle to survive. It would be best if the Serbs would return to the faith of their fathers, i.e., if they would bow before Christ's representative—the Holy Father. Then we could finally breathe easily even in this part of Europe, in whose history Byzantinism and the Turks have played a terrible role.
>
> (Archives of the Office of the Interior [SUPS] of the Socialist Republic of Croatia)

The attitude of the NDH in regard to the Orthodox Serbs was manifested already in April 1941 after the occupation in several drastic measures, such as, for example, the banning of Cyrillic script by an order of the Interior Ministry on 25 April 1941, as well as in the order that the Orthodox had to wear a blue band with the letter "P" (i.e., Orthodox) on their sleeve, etc. Almost all employees who were of the Orthodox faith were fired, and a large wave of arrests began. At first, Orthodox priests were arrested, who very often were subjected to sadistic horrors. In the villages, the massa-

cres of the Orthodox population began, which often took place in Orthodox churches. Some churches were blown up with dynamite, others burned, and the others plundered. In an agreement with the German occupational forces in Serbia, great parts of the Orthodox population were driven into Serbian territory. In the camps, there were not only Jews but especially Serbs. Already in the first months of the occupation, the Orthodox Serbs there were slaughtered in masses.

In order to be able to carry out the extermination of the Serbs systematically, a special "Department of Religion" was established in the "State Direction for Renewal"; its task was to destroy Orthodox communities and houses of religion as well as to convert the Serbs who had remained in Croatia. At the head of this office was the Priest Dionizije Juricev. He was an Ustasha officer and a close colleague and confidant of Pavelić. Later he was his house chaplain and the tutor of his children. The task of this special department of religion is obvious from the decree that it issued on 7 July 1941 to the county authorities:

> In the spirit of the instructions found in the memo from the Direction P.T.K. Nr. 26/41 on 2 July 1941, all the people in the list are to be arrested along with their next of kin (wives, children, and all members of the family that live in the same household). They are to be brought under armed guard to an assembly site and from there transported to the camp in Sisak.

This decree, which was "top secret, urgent, and nonpostponable" and in which it was emphasized that these were concerns of a "matter of great state interest," was in reference to the arrest and internment of all Orthodox priests of Ilok county.

In this office arose the plans for compulsory conversion; here directives were formulated that the Catholic Church hierarchy converted into fact through their lower departments, and all this happened on a legal basis:

Already on 3 May 1941, Pavelić issued a "legal decree for a change in religion," with which all previously legal measures were declared void. The minister of religion and education Dr. Mile Budak sent this decree to all bishop's ordinariates.

At the same time, the chancery of the archbishop's see in Zagreb issued special decrees directed via the responsible bishop's ordinariates in the NDH to the entire priesthood of all bishoprics and published in their organ *Katolicki list* on 15 May 1941 (under Nr. 4104). The decrees of the archbishopric in Zagreb were summarized in seven points and indicated who could become a member of the Catholic Church and who could not.

All this made clear that the most highly respected members of the Catholic Church in the NDH were supportive of the Ustasha's plans. By means of terrorist methods, the Orthodoxy in Croatia was to be liquidated, and all Serbs who were not killed or driven from the land were forced into the Catholic faith in a very short time and thereby automatically made "Croats."

[. . .]

What the highest Catholic authority in Croatia understood by this conversion and the intent with which it supported it, is seen the most clearly in the articles that appeared in *Katolicki list*, the organ of the Zagreb archbishopric. These are articles designed to incite violence against the Serbs and Orthodoxy.

[. . .]

There are two texts from the Pavelić ministries that prove the intentions and the means of force with which these compulsory conversions were carried out.

On 30 June 1941, the Ustasha regime published a document under the number 48468/41, which deals with the question of transfer from Orthodox faith to Catholicism. It states among other things that the transfer from Orthodox to Greek-Catholic faith (which is closer to Orthodoxy) is undesirable and that one should insist that the Orthodox transfer only to the Roman Catholic faith. The people to be rebaptized must show official certificates that confirm their "personal integrity." These certificates were issued "in consent with the Ustasha camps and the field camps." In addition to that, the Justice Ministry and the Ministry for Religious Matters had to be informed. Furthermore, it was stated that certificates would be issued "to Orthodox priests, merchants, rich tradesmen, farmers, and intellectuals" only by exception.

The authorities thus determined in advance which persons could convert to the Catholic faith and which were to be deported or liquidated. The decisive criteria were the possessions of the people in concern; especially rich people were to be liquidated or deported, so that their possessions could be confiscated. In addition, the intellectuals were to be murdered.

A second document was directed by the Justice Ministry on 14 July 1941 (Nr. 42687-B. 1941) to the bishop's ordinariates of the NDH:

> We ask the reverend ordinariate in confidence to instruct all parishes regarding the acceptance of Orthodox people into the Catholic Church. In

> no instance may the Orthodox people be allowed to assume Greek-Catholic faith. It is the intention of the Croatian government to prevent Orthodox clergy, teachers, and other intellectuals, as well as the wealthy layer of merchants, craftsmen, and farmers, to be taken into the Catholic Church. . . . In regard to this circle of people, decrees will possibly be issued at a later date; also, we must prevent difficulties from arising for the Catholic faith and the respect of the Catholic Church. The lower and poorer level of the Orthodox population may be accepted after previous instruction about Catholic tenets. If the above-mentioned people should insist on being accepted, they are to be rejected deftly or removed in other ways.

The tone of this text makes clear the close cooperation between the episcopate and the Ustasha regime. There was a strictly confidential discussion of how the Orthodoxy was to be liquidated, and the Ustasha regime determined the guidelines for the conversion, which the episcopate observed. Herewith, the execution of further massacres and all measures for the brutal liquidation of the Serbs in Croatia was to be made easier for the Ustashe. The episcopate was asked to accept no persons belonging to the named population circles and trying to become Catholics out of sheer fear of death. For these, there were other measures planned: they were to be liquidated!

The fact that the conversion was carried out under the greatest terror and that the Catholic episcopate exploited this terror to increase the number of faithful is evident from a memo from the bishop's press in Dakovo. In it, the Orthodox are admonished "to report as soon as possible to the Catholic Church," since they allegedly could "remain in their homes" and "unimpeded" could dedicate themselves to the education of their children, "as soon as they would become Catholics."

This appeal caused fear among the Orthodox, because it aroused the suspicion of what would await them if they did not convert to the Catholic faith.

We already mentioned the State Direction for Renewal, in which there was a special department of religious matters. In the sphere of influence of this department were all matters relating to the questions of conversion from "Greek-Eastern" faith to Catholic, Lutheran, or Islamic faith. Here plans were laid that were given the authority of law by the government ministries.

Up until November 1941, the priest and Ustasha captain Dionizije Juricev was at the head of this department. He was the sole and highest leader of the conversion effort and stood "in close relationship with the spiritual authorities." His office sent "missionaries" into foreign service, who were to agitate for conversion to the Catholic faith. These were priests who were charged with preparing the highest possible number of Serbs

for the new faith. Their tactics were clear from the office's exchange of letters and memos. Thus the Department of Religion of the Direction for Renewal of the community offices in Staza issued the following:

> We therefore wish to inform you that the entire action of the instruction and conversion (two missionaries) must be ended by next Sunday, so that the entire community can convert to the Catholic faith on this day. . . . This takes place with the agreement of Mr. Kotarski, who also desires that everything be ended before the big celebration on 11 October 1941.

From a letter to the community commission in Crkveni Bok of 22 October 1941, one can see the directive of the Department of Religion that says that the Orthodox congregation "is to be reorganized immediately into a Roman Catholic congregation according to the plan." This directive is in the same letter in which it is also announced that a missionary is being sent in preparation for the conversion. That is, everything was planned in advance and in the greatest haste, and one was thoroughly expecting to be able to convert every inhabitant of the town. This expectation does not seem to be unjustified when you know the kind of sermons the missionaries gave the Orthodox.

Dionizije Juricev himself worked in the foreign service and organized mass conversions in various towns. In Staza he gave the already quoted speech:

> In this country, only Croats may live from now on, because it is a Croatian country. We know precisely what we will do with the people who do not convert. I have purged the whole surrounding area, from babies to seniors. If it is necessary, I will do that here, too, because today it is not a sin to kill even a seven-year-old child, if it is standing in the way of our Ustasha movement.
>
> Today we must all be Croats. We must extend our land, and if we are big and strong enough, we will also take land from others if necessary. Do not believe that I could not take a machine gun in hand just because I wear priests vestments. If it is necessary, I will eradicate everyone who is against the Ustasha state and its rule—right down to babies!

Thus did many Ustasha priests talk and act who were carrying out mass murders and compulsory conversions at the order of the Ustasha government and with no protest from the highest ecclesiastical courts—and lived up to this task quite fanatically.

The archbishopric see in Zagreb already right at the beginning, on 15 May 1941, issued the first decrees that were to ease the execution of the Ustasha plan. It has furthermore been proven that one of the highest

Ustasha corporations, the Ministry of Religion, was in touch with the bishopric ordinariuses and issued directives on how and under what conditions and goals the compulsory conversion was to be carried out.

And how did the Vatican react?

The pope and the entire curia knew very well what was going on in the so-called NDH with the Orthodox Serbs. They knew about the great conversion actions, supported the Ustasha, and allowed the Croatian Episcopate to cooperate.

There are many examples of proof.

On 17 July 1941 (Prot. N. 2116), the Holy Vatican Congregation for the Eastern Church gave instructions to the Zagreb administrator of the bishops conference, Dr. Stepinac, regarding the conversion of the Orthodox:

> The Holy Congregation for the Eastern Church directs the attention of His Excellency to the fact that the Roman Catholic priests in Croatia are to be encouraged by their revered bishops to make it possible for non-members (recreants) to return naturally to the eastern Catholic liturgy, whenever it is a matter of former members of the Catholic community of the Eastern Church who left the Catholic faith because of threats and pressures on the part of the Orthodox.
>
> When His Excellency makes this necessity known to His worthy bishops in Croatia, He will earn new honors by this contribution to the furthering of Catholicism. For there are great hopes for the conversion of the recreants. I would like to take the opportunity to express to His Excellency my respect and remain
>
> Cardinal Eugene Tisserant, Secretary
>
> Ant. Arata, Archbishop Sarda, Assessor

In this hypocritical document, he is saying that only those people may be accepted into the Catholic faith who allegedly had been members of the Catholic Church but had strayed from the Catholic faith in the past under outside pressure and threats. That, by the way, is also how the Ustasha formulated it. The Catholic bishops stuck to this edict and preached that in the past in Croatia there were no Orthodox people and that those there today were just invaders or were Catholics whom these had converted by force.

In the above-cited resolution, it speaks only of the conversion to the Greek-Catholic liturgy and not yet to Roman-Catholic liturgy. But soon the Vatican also approved this in a second resolution.

In the resolution directed at Pavelić, which was delivered at the bishops' conference in Zagreb on 17 November 1941, the mentioned note of the Holy Congregation was quoted word for word with the notation:

> The Croatian Catholic episcopate completely agrees with the decree of the Holy Congregation for the Eastern Church of 17 July 1941.

Subsequent to the repeating of this decree, it says in the resolution:

> Likewise, the Croatian Catholic Episcopate accepts the decree of the Holy Apostolic See of 18 October 1941, which says:
>
> "Where there are already organized Greek Catholic parishes, the non-members who wish to convert are to be directed to these parishes. In case, however, that the segregated non-members do not wish to maintain their Eastern liturgy or cannot, they are to be given the freedom to accept the Latin liturgy."

In the quoted resolution, the Croatian episcopate further maintains that it "agrees . . . with these two decrees all the more since they basically agree with the decrees of the memo from the government of the NDH of 30 July Nr. 46448–41."

The cynicism is unmistakable: there is talk of a "freedom to accept" the Latin liturgy, as if the Vatican had not been aware of how and why the Orthodox were converting in masses to Catholicism!

In order to better illuminate the role of the Croatian episcopate, it is worth quoting parts of the resolution with which the episcopate addresses Pavelic and demands jurisdiction of the conversion of the Serbs exclusively for itself. The bishops with this action did not wish to be subject to the state Direction for Renewal any longer. Their letter to Pavelić is as follows:

> Our Poglavnik!
>
> The Croatian Catholic Episcopate, gathered for the plenary conferences of 17 and 18 November of this year (1941) came to the following conclusions about the conversion of the Greek-Eastern people to the Catholic faith:
>
> 1. It considers it as a dogmatic principle that the dissolution of all questions concerning the crossover of the Greek-Eastern people to the Catholic faith fall exclusively in the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church hierarchy, which alone according to divine right and according to canonical decrees is empowered to issue directives for this crossover. Every action circumventing the Church's authority must be strictly excluded.
>
> 2. Therefore, no one but the Catholic Church hierarchy has the right to establish missionaries to carry out the conversion of the Greek-Easterners to the Catholic faith. Every such missionary must receive the assignment and the legal power for his spiritual work from his local ordinariate. Consequently, it is antidogmatic and anticanonic for the missionaries to receive their assignment from community authorities or from administrators, from

Ustasha functionaries, from the Department of Religion of the state Direction for Renewal, or from any other secular office instead of from their ordinariate bishops.

3. Any missionary may be dependent on only the local ordinarius in his spiritual work, directly or indirectly via the local pastor.

4. The Catholic Church can recognize only such conversions that have been or will be carried out according to these dogmatic principles.

5. The secular authorities cannot declare conversions invalid that have been carried out ecclesiastically, and that complying not only with Church but also with civil law.

6. The Croatian Catholic Episcopate therefore is selecting a committee of three persons from its midst consisting of: the head of the bishops conference, Bishop from Senj, Monsignore Dr. Viktor Buric and the Apostolic Administrator of the Bishopric of Krizevci, Dr. Janko Simrak. This committee is to solve and debate all problems regarding the conversion of the Greek-Easterners. Regarding the decrees concerning the conversions, the committee shall cooperate with the Minister of Justice and Religion.

7. The Croatian Catholic Episcopate selected as a committee to carry out the work of the problem of conversion of the Greek-Easterners to the Catholic faith the following persons: Dr. Franjo Herman, Professor in the Theology Department in Zagreb; Dr. Augustin Juretic, advisor of the bishops conferences; Dr. Janko Kalaj, instructor of religion at the middle schools and teacher of Glagolica [Old Slavic script, translator's note] in the Theology Department; Nikola Boric, Chancery Director of the Zagreb Archbishopric; and Dr. Krunoslav Dragutinovic, Professor in the Theology Department. Under the supervision of the Committee of Bishops for Conversion, this committee will solve all matters concerning the problem of conversion of the Greek-Easterners to the Catholic faith.

[. . .]

On the subject of the terrorizing of the Serbs itself, this resolution hypocritically says the following:

Our Poglavnik!

This decision of the Croatian episcopate was directed with great love and concern for the Croatian people, for the independent State of Croatia, and for the Catholic faith, which is the faith of the vast majority of the Croatian people.

At this point, we must speak of errors that have prevented the conversion of the Greek-Easterners to take place to its full extent and with the success that could have happened if these errors had not been made. We

> do not lay the blame on the government of the Independent State of Croatia. We also do not wish to depict these errors as a system, but as actions of nonresponsible individuals who were not aware of their great responsibility and the results. We know that these actions are reactions to the policy of the past twenty years, to the crimes of the Cetniks, and of the communists, who have committed so many bloodthirsty horrors against our peaceful Croatian people. We thank God, the Almighty, that by your intervention, oh Poglavnik, the conditions slowly are being regulated.
>
> Therefore, the Croatian Catholic Episcopate presents to you the following not for the sake of incrimination but so that in the future all actions of nonresponsible elements will be thwarted completely. From the following, it can be seen why the conversion has not succeeded and what one should do so that this work may be directed without vain efforts onto the track of thought-out endeavors.

The Croatian episcopate explains the crimes committed in the compulsory conversion as errors made by some sort of nonresponsible individuals and even justifies these errors with alleged provocations on the part of the victims! The Ustasha government is in no way to blame! The Church leadership does not judge the crimes. It only regrets that these "errors" have reduced the results of the mass conversions.

[. . .]

The Vatican had enough other possibilities to learn of the horrors.

The legate of the Vatican in Zagreb, Marcone, who had insights into everything, often traveled to Rome and there gave his reports. It can be considered sure, according to the present information, that he—as well as various other Croatian bishops—represented the views and interests of the Ustasha in the Vatican. The Vatican not only did not lift a finger to improve matters, but it to the contrary showed in all its actions that it was concerned with the pacification of the Ustasha and with the furthering of Catholicism in the Croatian part of the Balkan.

In this sense, the Vatican also issued more decisive and more far-reaching directives than are included in the quoted resolution of the Congregation of the Eastern Church. Pater Radoslav Glavas, administrator of the Department of Religion of the Ustasha Ministry of Justice and Religion, spoke thereof in his testimony before the commission after the liberation of Zagreb. Glavas was not only a priest but also a high Ustasha functionary, for which reason this important department was entrusted to him in the ministry. He was the connecting link between the Ustasha government and the episcopate. The entire Church policy in Croatia was in his hands. In his testimony, however, he rejected the responsibility for the mass con-

version and maintained that this was a matter that was carried out according to directives from the Vatican exclusively by the Direction for Renewal—in cooperation with the episcopate, of course. In the report given by Glavas in his own handwriting it says:

> As I already reported, the people converted to Catholicism out of fear of a massacre. Some were thus able to save their heads and later returned to their former faith. Others died in spite of or precisely because of the conversion. . . .
>
> "Renewal" did all the work itself: the technical preparations as well as the execution and the final conversion of the Orthodox people. In my opinion, matters happened as follows:
>
> In some areas, the Ustasha units operated in the most bloody manner. This evoked a panic fear among the Orthodox, and they reported for conversion. "Renewal" immediately sent pastors to these towns and made the town pastor carry out the conversion as far as possible, which also happened. Special attention was given to the children, but also to adults. I know that Juricev gathered a group of young women from Slavonia—most already converted—, took them to Zagreb, and kept them in Sljeme in order to educate them in the Ustasha spirit, which they were to convey to the town inhabitants. I do not know what success this had; I only remember that some were killed as soon as they returned to their villages.
>
> In order to intensify the conversion, a deputation of converters was received by the poglavnik and was admonished by him himself with penetrating words about their Croatian origin. I remember having read that in the newspaper.
>
> Of course the bishops knew of these conversions and approved them. Simrak, the bishop of Krizevci, tried with all his power to convert as many Orthodox as possible. He accepted them without any order and method. With some bishops, suspicion may have been aroused that these conversions could be invalid and inadmissible, because they happened out of fear. They presented this question to the papal legate Marcone, for him to inquire in Rome.
>
> As far as I remember, the answer came from Rome that conversion caused by fear of armed violence was allowed. I know this from the stories from Juricev. I myself never saw the document. . . . Now the mass conversions began, in which Dr. Simrak was especially prominent, about whom Juricev and Medic lodged complaints with me because he formerly was accepting Orthodox people without any regulation.
>
> I believe that Juricev and Medic had that letter or those instructions from the Vatican. . . . Now that they and the bishops were covered by the Vatican's instructions, the conversion work progressed at a hastening speed and was not stopped or stemmed until 1942, when the partisan movement strengthened. I presume that Rome again sent a prescription regarding the Orthodox churches in which religious services were to be held—this, too,

> was the object of discussion—because suddenly they began to use Orthodox churches; they removed from them only the Orthodox altars and blessed them then. This prescription was presumably in the same letter from Rome that was already mentioned above. . . .
>
> As I already said, it would be of the greatest urgency to find the letters from Rome concerning the religious conversions. I am sure that they exist. At least I have heard about them and about the fact that the bishops issued instructions to the priesthood regarding the conversions and that they quite surely followed the prescriptions from Rome. That was especially true for Simrak, who had good relationships with the legate Marcone and presumably had the authority from him to confiscate the property of the Orthodox such as the cloister Lepavina near Krizevci, for example, which he took over right from the "Renewal." As you can see, the connection between the "Renewal" and the Catholic bishops is proven by this. The guidelines came from the Vatican through the papal legate.

Judging from the testimony by Glavas, who was initiated much more thoroughly in the matters than one can conclude from these words, then there existed a precise directive from the Vatican concerning the conversions and not just that decision by the Congregation for the Eastern Church and its later expansion. It is also quite improbable that the whole Croatian episcopate took part in this criminal action so cold-bloodedly and without scruples without the existence of a concrete directive from the Vatican and without the legate Marcone having de facto authority.

In the reports of the Ustasha deputies in the Vatican, Rusinovic and Lobkowicz, to the foreign ministry in Zagreb, there are many statements that illuminate the true position of the Vatican regarding the compulsory conversions.

Rusinovic reports to Lorkovic on 26 February 1942 about his visit with Cardinal Maglione, the Vatican state secretary. He says there was mention of news that was published in a Turkish paper, *La Republique*, about the massacre of the Serbs in Croatia and about a protest allegedly directed at the Vatican by Serb-Orthodox patriarchs. Maglione had denied that such a protest had been lodged in the Vatican. Then Rusinovic had presented to Maglione the development of the situation in Croatia as follows:

> I described the situation to him approximately as follows: The state of Croatia was formed on 10 April. The war of the axis powers against the former Yugoslavia lasted exactly one week. The whole Croatian population, however, arose to shake off the Serbian yoke. In a short time, the Serb army was defeated, but as a result of modern war tactics and the strategic conditions,

the Serbs were driven from all sides toward the center. Therefore, they had chosen Bosnia, a mountainous, hardly accessible area unsuitable for operations on a grand scale, as their retreat area. And thus a great part of the Serb army remained in Bosnia, well equipped with modern weapons and all the necessities for waging war—and especially for guerilla war, the only type of war possible in this area.

So there were the Cetniks from Bosnia and the Serbs from Serbia. The former are known from the history of the Serbian people as criminals who massacred their kings in the most brutal manner—To portray them in a clearer light, I also spoke of the sad murder of Alexander, the last king from the Obrenovic line, in the year 1901.—These criminals wanted to give Croatia the death blow while it was not yet in a position to gather its army. They began to burn the villages and slaughter old men, women, and innocent children. Plunderings were common with them. These attacks also cost the lives of many Catholic priests—I mentioned the case of the pastor whom the Cetniks first robbed then burned in the parsonage.

The people defended themselves as well as they could. Surely they also conducted retaliation measures of the most crude kind. When the Croatian government sent their troops, it was, however, intent upon honoring the law and punishing all guilty persons for the transgressions; and they succeeded in this.

Enemy propaganda—I added—speaks of terrible deeds that actually have been committed by the Cetniks against the Croatian population and represents them as deeds by the Croats against the Serbs. We reject this and we can prove the truth, although we could not find the time to collect all details about the crimes of the Cetniks against our people. While the Cetniks were still raging, the war between Germany and the Soviet Union broke out. Then the communists also rose and joined the Cetniks. We can only thank providence, the wise policy of the poglavnik, and the unanimity of the Croatian people that we succeeded in conquering all difficulties and to save the thing that the Croatian people have longed for for centuries and for which it rendered bloody offerings: its own state. Every Croat will defend it to the fullest extent.

In such a deceitful and audacious manner, the Ustasha deputy portrayed the massacre of the Serbs to the man who is second only to the pope in the Vatican. Cardinal Maglione must have known how very much Rusinovic was lying and contorting the facts. But he liked this interpretation and he was very much satisfied. Rusinovic adds:

He listened attentively to my portrayal and expressed his satisfaction. He said he had not yet had the opportunity to hear such a portrayal, only the enemy propaganda.

So Maglione was well informed in advance about the Ustasha crimes, but, as we see called this precise news "propaganda." This "propaganda" could not please him, since it was a black spot against his beloved NDH. And therefore he expressed his satisfaction when Rusinovic depicted the blood letting of the Ustasha as a deed of "wild" Serbs and communists.

Rusinovic writes the following about the conversion of the Orthodox masses to the Catholic faith:

> We came to speak of the question of the converted people, about which the enemy propaganda maintained that they relinquished their faith only under heavy pressure from the government and switched over to the Catholic faith to save their lives. It seemed that this interested him most of all. I immediately emphasized that this was not actually a matter of conversions but of return, because up to the arrival of the Turks, there were no Orthodox people in Croatia. How great the pressure was on the Croatian part of the population was best retrieved from historical documents, which showed that the Turks eased the Serbs' infiltration into Croatia and to both of them, any means was justified to persuade the Croats away from their faith and therewith to weaken their national strength.
>
> I further mentioned that in the past twenty years 250,000 people had left the Catholic Church. In regard to the returnees, I emphasized that the Croatian government was leaving them to the Church and that the Church was completely free to act in the matter. His Eminence Stepinac had confirmed this with me before my departure for Rome as he said that he could have converted up to 400,000 Orthodox but had converted only 100,000, because he did not want to accept them without thorough preparation. The Orthodox element, he said, was so retarded that they did not even know the basic principles of the holy faith.

Then Rusinovic reported to Cardinal Maglione how "eminently Catholic" the Ustasha regime was and that Pavelić as a God-fearing man and "practicing Catholic" had a small chapel in his compound. Cardinal Maglione accepted all that with the words:

> I am very grateful to you for these pleasant statements and ask you to visit me again when you have more pleasant things to tell me.

Historical falsifications were spread, such as how the Turks brought the Serbs to Croatia and together with them "forced" the Croats to become Orthodox, such as how 250,00 Croats allegedly were rebaptized by force at the time of Yugoslavia, etc. It is clear that the first papal representative —and accordingly the pope himself—saw the mass conversions by the Ustasha with satisfaction: You cannot explain any other way the fact that

Maglione did not criticize with a single word the brutality of the Ustashe in the attacks on the Serbs, that he did not express the slightest aversion nor the least scruples regarding the violent, inhuman mass conversions. This satisfaction is a further proof that the directives for the compulsory conversions indeed came from the Vatican. For the curia, an old goal was becoming reality here: to liquidate the Orthodox Church at least in a part of the Balkan, the west, and to extend Catholicism up to the Drina. Ustashadom and the occupiers created the conditions for the realization of this plan. In a letter of February 1942 to Lorkovic, Rusinovic writes:

> On Saturday, I visited Monsignore Sigesmondi [actually Sigismondi, author's note], who is the chief of the office for Croatia in the Vatican. He was extraordinarily kind and cordial. He was interested in the conditions in Croatia and told me that enemy propaganda against us was rather active. In the conversation, we came to speak about the question of the conversions in Croatia. He said the Holy See was pleased about this. The American and English press, however, was attacking us, he said, because all these conversions were being carried out under great pressure on the part of the government. The Holy See did not believe this, he said, but it is advisable to carry out the conversions with less attention in order to avoid objections and wrongful accusations as well as unpleasantness for the Holy See.
>
> He mentioned that sometimes even in the Italian press there was news about the mass conversions of the Orthodox to Catholicism. I explained to him the process in appropriate words and based it on the fact that all the converted people had already once been Catholics, but had given up their faith under the worst violence and must be recreant. I told him that I would work out the historical depiction of this matter under the guidance of documents in the form of a memorandum, which he accepted happily. He recommended delivering it to Cardinal Maglione when I met with him.

This document is very important. Sigismondi was the chief of the Vatican's Office for Croatia and was responsible in the Vatican for all matters concerning the NDH. He spoke quite matter-of-factly about the fact that the "Holy See was pleased about this." He, too, is well informed about the true character of these mass conversions, i.e., about the acts of violence, and was pursuing critical American and English reports. And he, too, like the Ustasha, depicts these reports as "enemy propaganda." He does not criticize the Ustasha methods, but only recommends not provoking the "enemies" in the world too much and to carry out the matter "with less attention." As far as terrorizing the "converted ones" is concerned, Sigismondi says that "the Holy See does not believe this"! And he listens in satisfaction as the Ustasha deputy interprets the matter "in appropriate words" and suggests working out a text to be delivered to Cardinal Maglione. The

Ustasha's propaganda lies are thus to be formulated in such a way as to make the Holy See irreproachable in the question of the mass conversion of the Serbs.

By the way, Cardinal Maglione in the conversation with Rusinovic also said that the Holy See was pleased about the mass conversions:

> In the end, he said to me, . . . concerning the conversions, the Holy See was pleased about them. Croatia could of course exploit this politically, but one should avoid anything that could give the enemy cause to make wrongful accusations.
>
> (Letter from Rusinovic to Lorkovic on 26 February 1942)

Cardinal Maglione himself thus points out that the Ustasha criminals were to have the opportunity to exploit the mass conversions politically to their own advantage as well as to the Vatican's advantage, since the partnership was useful to both sides. It just had to be worked out with caution. Therefore, Maglione advises avoiding anything that "could give the enemy cause to make wrongful accusations."

Even Maglione thus sees as enemies all those who brand the Ustashe because of their crimes against the Serbs and depicts the protests and complaints as "wrongful accusations"! All this is further proof of the close cooperation of the Vatican in the mass conversions and of expressed Vatican directives (of which even the above-quoted Pater Glavas speaks).

From Rusinovic's report to Lorkovic on 9 May 1942, we see how Stepinac acted as go-between between the Vatican and the Ustasha and how he intervened for their interests with the Vatican. Rusinovic writes that Stepinac was in Rome for twelve days, enjoyed great respect there, "and fought like a lion against all possible enemies of our state." About the work of Stepinac in Rome, Rusinovic writes the following:

> He delivered to the Holy Father a report of nine typed pages. For the most part, he had shown it to me in advance, and I can assure you that he is absolutely positive from our viewpoint.
>
> He had found material, of which I knew nothing, supposedly portraying the Cetniks and the communists as the originators of all evil taking place in Croatia. I will not list the various crimes that he cites, but you should know that it is an extremely valuable contribution for my own work on this theme. He judges the situation in the country as favorable and praises the work and the efforts of the government. He speaks in the most agreeable terms about the efforts and the concern of the poglavnik to reestablish order as soon as possible and about his religious orientation and his association with the Church. He says that in regard to the fate of the Croatian people and his state he is more confident than ever, because the leadership

and the people have shown the willingness and the mood to preserve what we have achieved. He is disturbed by certain shortcomings of certain people, but he said he has convinced himself that those are really shortcomings of individuals and that the leadership has nothing to do with it but is trying to prevent the ills that they cause. One cannot and dare not allow anyone to attack the NDH and sully the Croatian people with filth.

Therefore, he went to Rome to fight the lies that have come to the desk of the Holy See. After he had made his report, he was received by the Holy Father and conversed with him for an hour. Thereafter he visited Maglione and several other cardinals and Vatican dignitaries. He discussed several questions—especially the ones concerning the Orthodox people. He will inform the poglavnik about everything, and we talked of him also meeting with you. I recommended this heartily and advise you of this, because it is good that he hear a word from our side and not just from those who are in favor of everything except our matters. I was very friendly and accommodatiag so that he would be in a good mood. I put a car at his disposal and prepared a dinner for him yesterday evening in my new home. He came accompanied by several of our priests and the former nuncio Felici and Monsignore Prettner-Cippico from the state secretariat. The evening progressed in extraordinarily good mood. I saluted him whereupon he made a nice toast. Saric reported his visit, which is awaited soon. In any case, Dr. Draganovic should come with him.

Upon his visit in Rome, Stepinac—as one can see from this letter—worked completely in the spirit of the Ustasha regime. As Rusinovic—who had insight into the nine-page, typed report by Stepinac—testifies, everything that he presented personally to the Holy See and to the pope in the course of a one-hour audience completely followed the Ustasha line. From the viewpoint of the Ustashe, everything was "absolutely positive." Stepinac portrays Pavelić's terror as an effort "to reestablish order as soon as possible." He portrays the poglavnik himself as a God-fearing man serving the Church. Stepinac was of the opinion that attacks on the NDH dare not be allowed—"Therefore, he went to Rome to fight the lies that have come to the desk of the Holy See"!

He also spoke personally with the pope about the Serbs in Croatia. The pope condoned Stepinac's intention to report personally to Pavelić after his return about the good impression that Ustashadom had made on the Holy See. There is no doubt that in the Vatican there was a great inclination toward Ustashadom, which again confirmed Stepinac's attitude. If Stepinac had encountered in the Vatican a critical or disapproving attitude toward the Ustashe, he would not have distinguished himself at the banquet with his "very nice" table conversation, especially not in the company of Felici, the nuncio with the Yugoslav government (which the Vatican still

recognized formally!) and Monsignore Prettner-Cippico from the Vatican state secretariat. Stepinac's attitude is explainable only by the fact that in the Vatican at this time the mass conversions of the Orthodox and the tragedy of the Serbs were seen with approbation and were condoned, and he therefore had no reason to be hesitant.

The fact that Stepinac always represented the Ustasha ideology in the Vatican—and even in his conversations with the pope—can also be proved through another source. In the course of the occupation, he sent to the pope a series of reports and in them always referred to the question of the mass conversions. In his special report to the pope on 18 May 1943, Stepinac writes the following:

> The Turks had brought in many Orthodox people of Wallachian and Serbian blood, whom they settled ia Croatian territories. In many places in old documents, we find reference to these immigrants, who fought as Turkish border guards against the Christians. . . .
>
> The Catholics were persecuted in Serbia; in originally purely Catholic areas, schismatic bishoprics and cloisters were founded. . . . Ultimately Catholicism disappeared in these lands completely. The destruction of Catholicism in the Balkan was also successfully continued in the Turkish era, as the poor Croatian Catholic herd found themselves facing a superior power. The matter ended with the conversion of whole Catholic areas into the Oriental Schism—of the bishoprics in Trebinje, in Boka Kotorska, in parts of Bosnia, in Srijem, in Dalmatia, etc.—and thus Serbian Orthodoxy finally came to power, which it still possesses.
>
> Of the events at the time of Yugoslavia, we surely do not need to report, since the Holy Father knows this from his own observation. In order to ease his memory, I will mention only a few details. With the financial support of the state, the Orthodox Church organized its propaganda for the transfer of Catholics to Orthodoxy within and outside of the borders. . . . Certain professionals are of the opinion that the Catholic Church thus and with the practice of mixed marriages has lost about 200,000 members.
>
> No matter what, it is certain that after the state census, the portion of Catholics just in the ten years from 1921 to 1931 sank from 39.4% to 37.4% and in the next ten years sank another 3%. This means that the Catholic Church has lost an eighth of its members.
>
> The Orthodox committed more injustice by applying the state budget of Yugoslavia to the disadvantage of the Catholics: for the construction of Orthodox churches in purely Catholic areas, for the suppression and banning of the St. Mary Congregation and of the United Catholic Action, for the support and organization of old-Catholic heresy, for the poisoning of the youth with anti-Catholic school books, for the spread of pernicious literature from the Tyrs-Sokol-Federation.
>
> At this point, I would like to mention just one more proof of the attitude

of the Serbs and their Church regarding Catholicism: the infamous and destructive struggle against the concordat that had already been signed by the Holy See and by the Belgrade parliament in 1935. Through the fanatical fight of the united Grand Serbs, the Freemasons, the communists, and the Serb hierarchy, the concordat was to perish in order to prove that the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia could never achieve religious unity and that united Serbdom would always show hatred and resistance to the Holy See. . . .

The spread of the eastern Schism in the Catholic ranks today is indeed assuming threatening size. The victory of the Greater-Serbian idea means the destruction of Catholicism in the northwest Balkan, in the state of Croatia. The cited documents allow no doubt. Surely such a fateful event would have repercussions far beyond the borders of Croatia. The waves of offensive Orthodox Byzantinism would strike the borders of Italy while they are now breaking on the Croatian Bulwark.

With such mendacious arguments and historical falsifications, Stepinac advocated to the pope personally the eradication of the Serbs and of Orthodoxy by the Ustashe; thus he worked for their mass conversion or liquidation. That was the lie that the pope and the whole Vatican curia recognized and condoned. Especially significant is Stepinac's statement that Ustasha Croatia was defending papal Italy from Orthodoxy!

From the Vatican decrees and reactions that are expressed in the diplomatic correspondence quoted here, as well as from the attitude of the Zagreb archbishop, we can see that a common goal linked the Vatican and the Ustashe: a border for the Catholic Church on the Drina as strong as possible! This goal justified everything, even a sea of blood and tears, hundreds, thousands of victims.

(from *Secret Documents about the Relationship between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH*, pp. 90–106)

19

The Role of the Papal Legate Marcone

The papal legate Ramiro Marcone arrived in Zagreb on 3 August 1941. At that time, Stepinac made the following entry in his diary: "Therewith, the Holy See recognized de facto the independent State of Croatia. . . ." Marcone stayed to the end of the Ustasha rule in Zagreb. He fulfilled his task to the satisfaction of the Vatican and to the enthusiasm of the Ustasha. He enjoyed all honors and privileges and was considered an important diplomat. At all parades, he held a place of honor. There are many photographs that prove this. On some photos, one sees him with a raised hand giving the fascist salute.

His portly figure in the white cowl of the Benedictines immediately caught everyone's eye. He resembled a fascist general in monk's clothing more than a brother of an order. He liked to give speeches to the public whose content very well characterize him and his role at that time.

In a letter to Lorkovic on 5 June 1942, Rusinovic shares something about the motives that caused the pope to send Marcone to Zagreb. "He did not come to Zagreb because of his special diplomatic abilities but because he is a Benedictine. With that, the Holy See wanted to demonstrate that he respected the traditions in Croatia, because it was back then a Benedictine (the abbot Martin) who was appointed the first papal legate to the Croatian royal court.

From this it is clear that the pope considered the NDH a continuation of the medieval Croatian kingdom.

When Pius XII on 14 May 1942 celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his consecration as bishop, Radio Zagreb broadcast a speech about the relationship of the pope to Ustasha Croatia. First was mentioned as usual

the historical connection of Croatia with the pope and the "great love" of all popes for Croatia and then it was emphasized that the pope had supported the Ustasha NDH from the first moment:

> The Holy Father harbors a fervent love for our homeland Croatia. Already on 12 May of last year (1941) Pope Pius XII received the poglavnik and the entire delegation of Ustasha Croatia, which was in Rome at that time. In August of last year, the Holy See sent its legate, his excellency Abbot Josip Ramiro Marcone, to Croatia. In a letter of recommendation, the Holy Father expressed himself as follows:
>
> "The Holy Father harbors a special inclination toward noble Catholic Croatia and sends it his representative to handle the special religious and political needs of the Croatian people so dear to him, and this especially in a time in which the whole world seems to be bent under the burden of great need."

In the above-mentioned broadcast from Radio Zagreb, which the Zagreb paper *Katolicki tjednik* printed completely on 24 May 1942, it was reported that Marcone brought along 11,000 dollars and that one "can see just in recent times the cordiality which the present pope feels toward the Croats in his chambers." This then, says the article, is likewise a great service performed by Marcone, who depicts Croatia in Rome in a way that is its due. Also it was reported that the pope in 1942 in addition to the already-mentioned Ustasha delegations received students, youth, members of the Croatian State Opera, and various prominent representatives of Ustasha Croatia. This all took place upon Marcone's initiative.

Marcone's tasks were thus apparently of not only a religious nature but also, as is mentioned in the already-quoted papal letter of recommendation, especially of a political nature.

The Ustasha press took the twenty-fifth-year anniversary of his appointment as abbot as an occasion to report with great enthusiasm on the service that the papal legate Marcone rendered to Ustashadom. *Katolicki list* (Nr. 22/1943) writes:

> Divine providence after several centuries has allowed the Croatian state of Zvonimir to be revived. Here the Croat is his own man; from the Drau to the sea, lord of his land and of his herd. Into this revived Croatia has come—as once did Gebizon, abbot of the Benedictine order—His Excellency, the legate of the Holy See, Dr. Josip Ramiro Marcone.
>
> The Holy See has sent him as its representative, as the transmitter of paternal feelings from the pope to the Croatian people, and as testimony of Croatian love for the Holy See as befits a son. In the popes, the Croats

> have always had the best friends and helpers, and it is quite natural that the present pope, too, embraces our people with his paternal love and wishes them well.
>
> It is equally true that the Croats in various difficult periods of tribulation have remained true to the Catholic Church, and they choose to persevere in this loyalty even today. The close relationship with the Holy See in the past has brought the Croats help and strength in the battle against various enemies of the faith and of the homeland, and thus we firmly hope that divine assistance and the papal blessing will prevail also in the future among the Croats. In the moment when need was upon the whole world, enemies of the faith and of national freedom rose against the Croats. But even this burden will pass as all have passed heretofore, and the Croats will remain firm and strong, because God and the representative of God on earth—the pope—are with them.

So with the help of the pope the Croatian people were supposed to be captured in the slavery of the Ustashe and Nazi fascists. He and God himself were to help prevent the liberation of the Croatian people from the Ustasha terror. This was the reason for the presence of the papal legate in Zagreb.

How Marcone was thinking and acting, can be seen also from his suggestion to the episcopate in Croatia that propaganda prayers "for the early end of the war of the crusade" be said. This meant the victory of Nazi fascism and of Ustashadom over the partisans, the liberators. In a letter circulated by Bishop Dakovo (*Glasnik* Nr. 18/1941), in which it is expressly emphasized that the pope wishes these prayers, one reads:

> We take this news from the highly esteemed letter from His Excellency, the legate of the Holy Father in Zagreb, J. R. Marcone. Our great poglavnik, hero of the Croatian people, saviour of our freedom in the most difficult times, when we feared our thousand-year state of Croatia could be wiped from the map along with Yugoslavia, right in the beginning of his rule, through unbending power, developed a really supernatural wisdom.
>
> The Holy Catholic Church pursues the events with the greatest concern and love for the soldiers at the front and the fallen ones in the land. Therefore, the Holy Father by his message unites our souls in this joint prayer action.

In the year 1943, Marcone was in Bosnia. In Sarajevo, he visited the highest representatives of the Ustasha government. At that time the organ of the local archbishop Saric published an article in which it brings up the significance of the visit in Bosnia and Sarajevo and points to Marcone's attitude, who:

> . . . is of a very friendly mind and sincerely concerned about the welfare of the Croatian people [i.e., of the Ustasha, author's note]. This attitude of Marcone is, however, nothing other than the expression of the thoughts and the feelings of Pius XII, and we have long known that the popes are the greatest friends of the Croats and of Croatia.
>
> (*Katolicki tjednik* of 2 May 1943)

On the way to Bosnia and into Hercegovina, Marcone also stopped over in Mostar, where he visited various religious establishments. There he conferred also with several functionaries of the Ustasha and of the Italian fascists. This was at the time of the partisan battles. He was interested in the course of the battle and incited the Ustasha fascists to action against the people in Bosnia and in Hercegovina. In *Katolicki tjednik* of 20 May 1943, Marcone's statements about the relationship of the pope to the Ustasha Croats are printed: It states that he said,

> . . . that the Holy Father is pursuing with great love and support the developments and the progress of this small, but loyally obedient, Croatian people, causing him to be moved precisely by the desire for the closest possible cooperation and reciprocal support to send his representative to Croatia in order to thus learn about the life of the people, their cares, and their needs.
>
> He had an especially long conversation with our political representatives, delivered to them the heartiest greetings from the Holy Father, and wished to learn from them everything that was a concern to the Croatian people. He emphasized that the Holy Father was very much interested in the conditions and the life of the Croats.

It says further in this report that the abbot Marcone also visited Siroki Brijeg in Ljubosko and Cabljina and there conferred at length "with Croatian statesmen, Catholic priests, and the population."

All this casts an especially bright light on the relationship of the pope to Ustashadom, on his attitude regarding the horrors of the Ustasha criminals, who at this time, precisely in those areas where the abbot Marcone was traveling, were practicing horrifying massacres on the Orthodox population and on that part of the Croatians who opposed the Ustasha terror, in which women and children were not spared. And to these murderers, Marcone, by trade the papal legate, conveyed "the heartiest greetings from the Holy Father." His visit was like a papal encouragement to continue these bloody mass murders. The papal legate also probably fortified the monks on Siroki Brijeg, from whose ranks a great number of slaughterers came. He undoubtedly sent the pope a detailed report on what he saw in Bosnia and Hercegovina. The pope, however, did not chastise either Marcone nor

the Croatian bishops and those priests who had taken part in the massacres. On the contrary, he supported them with his moral authority. He sent "hearty greetings" and his blessing.

For the cordial relationship between the legate Marcone and Ustashadom, there is further proof. In 1943, Marcone visited the bishopric Dakovo. Here, too, he had an opportunity to see the terrorist deeds and murders by the Ustashe. And here, too, as earlier in Bosnia and in Hercegovina, he supported them.

Marcone's attitude was evident in public declarations and in his directives to the Croatian bishops:

On the occasion of the inauguration of Brother Petar Cule as bishop of Mostar, Marcone held a speech in which he expressed his admiration for the faith of the Croatian people and admonished the people to be loyal to the "Holy See which for centuries has supported them against the eastern barbarism." He expressed the desire that "Croatia might overcome momentary difficulties and flourish under the leadership of its Poglavnik, Dr. Pavelić." Even the new bishop did not have to be challenged to confess at the banquet that "during the inauguration, his thoughts in his prayers had been with the poglavnik and the persecuted Croats."

From all this, it is clear that Marcone had a great part in the crimes in Croatia, Bosnia, and Hercegovina. The Croatian episcopate and all of the Croatian priesthood oriented itself to his attitude.

Marcone often traveled to the Vatican to deliver reports personally. Between these visits, he transmitted reports to the pope in writing.

In a telegram that the Vatican state secretary Maglione sent to Marcone in an extremely cordial tone, he says about Marcone's report to the pope, which describes the festivities of the Ustasha on the occasion of the anniversary of the papal coronation in March 1943:

> The High Priest is grateful to you for the news from the consoling festivity with which the happy anniversary of his coronation was celebrated in Zagreb. This news pleases the Holy See because it sees in Croatia's living devotion a happy future for Croatia.
>
> (*Katolicki list*)

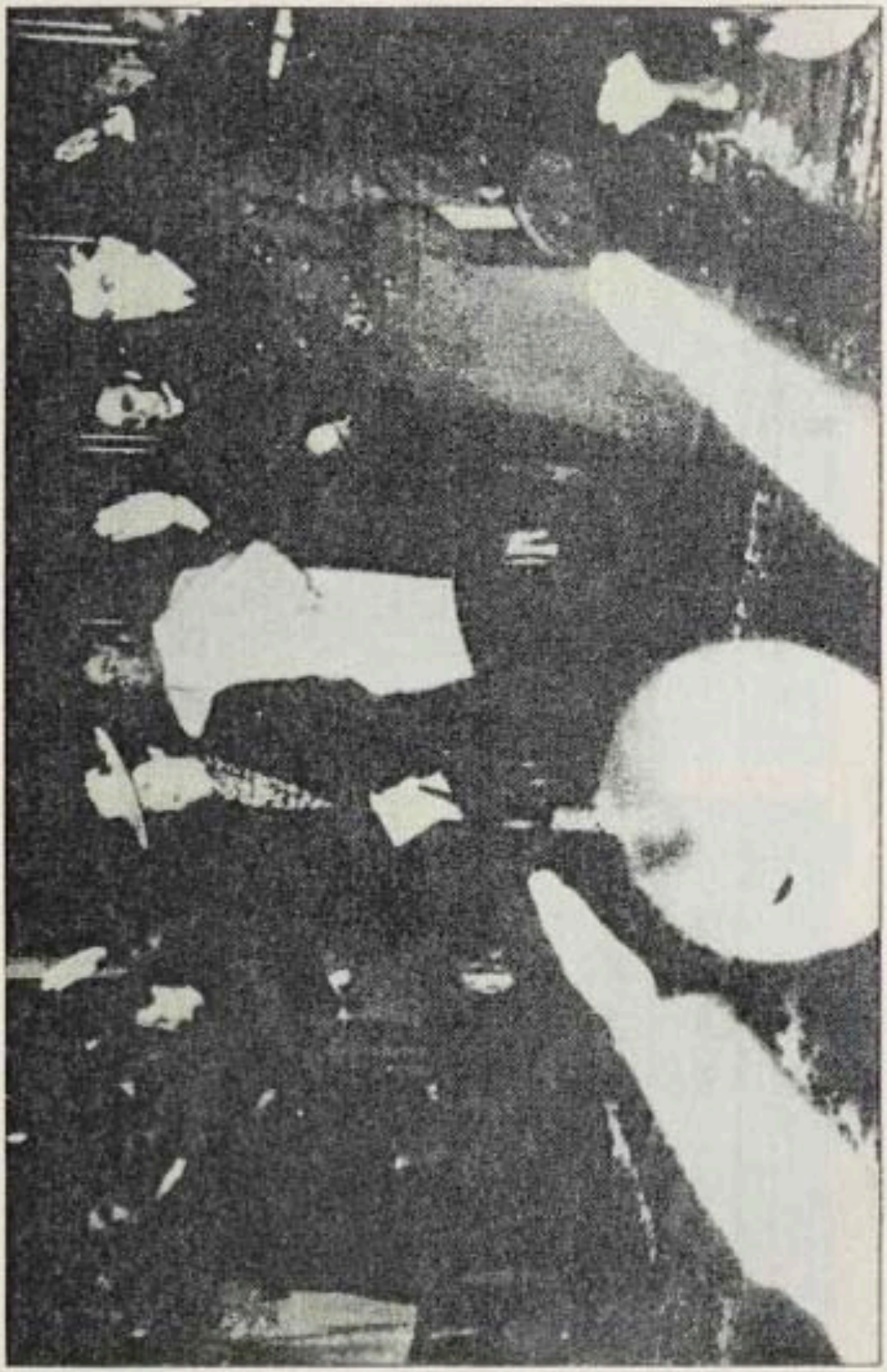
Marcone also revealed his great sympathies toward Ustashadom by the fact that in 1944 he personally awarded confirmation to the Ustasha Youth organization. When in November at the Zagreb cemetery Mirogoj for the fallen Ustasha slaughterers a memorial was being prepared, the abbot Marcone was also present to announce as papal representative the solidarity of the pope with these Ustashe.

In January 1944, when the Ustasha foreign ministry published the "grey

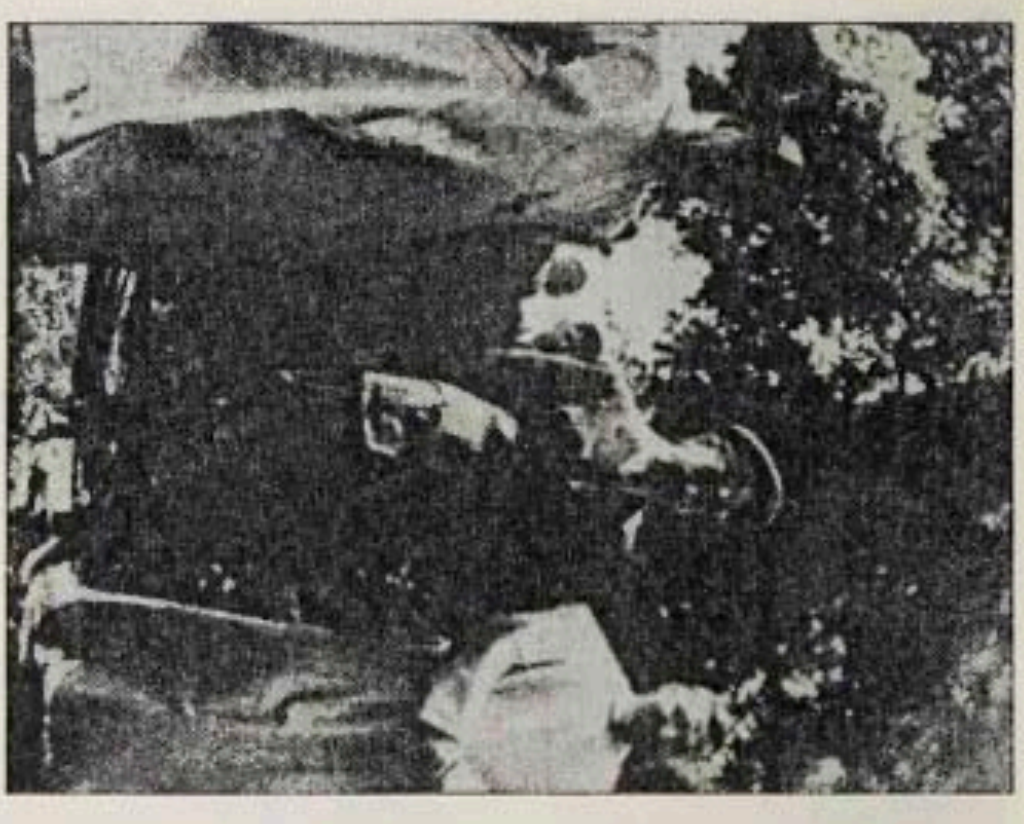
book," an unscrupulous falsification of history with which all the massacres by the Ustasha were to be attributed to the partisans, Minister Lorkovic, in the absence of the papal legate Marcone, ceremoniously presented this book to the diplomats of the axis powers. Upon this occasion, Marcone was sitting in parliament in the diplomatic loge. The "grey book" was also sent to Rome—without Marcone pointing out with even a single word the lies contained in it. Since then, the cardinals always referred to this book with great enthusiasm.

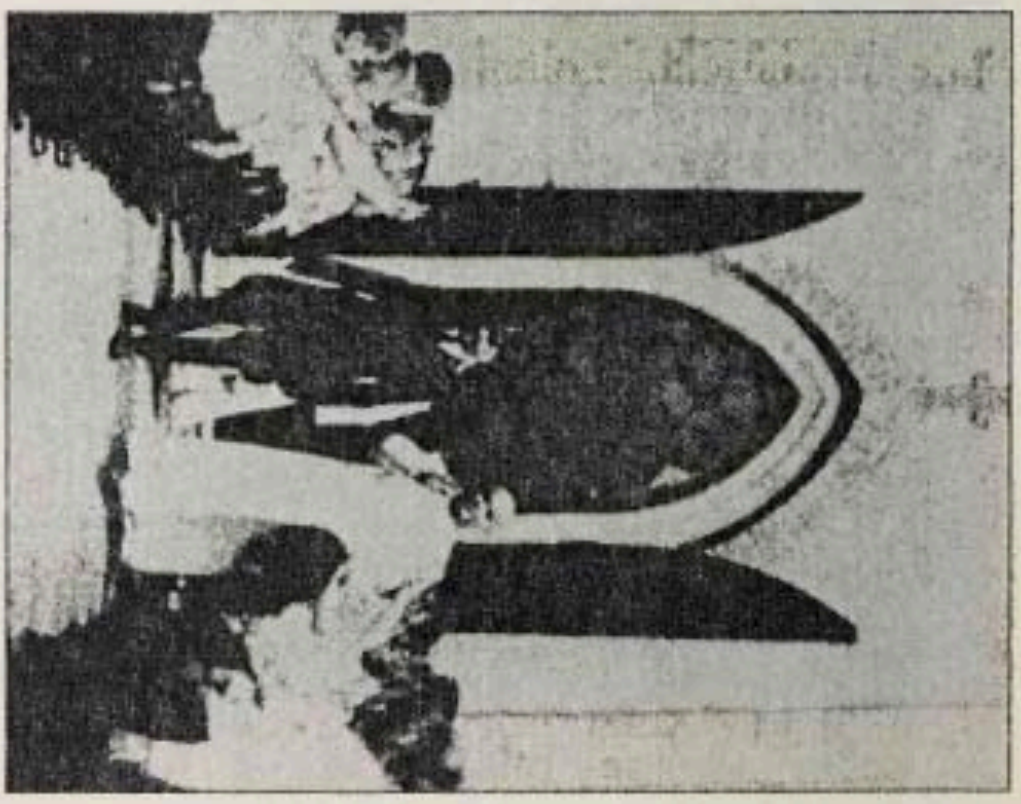
We have here presented only a selection from the multitude of documents about Marcone and his role. In addition, his name and his deeds are mentioned many times in the letters that Lorkovic received from Rusinovic and Lobkowicz. From all the documents published here and especially from the material about the conversion of the Serbs, the conclusion can be drawn without any doubt that this man, papal deputy in the NDH, was one of the main figures in the terrible history of Yugoslavia in the Second World War.

(*Secret Documents about the Relationship between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH*, pp. 75–80)



Pavelić accompanied by his wife with the papal nuncio Marcone (in white) and Archbishop Stepinac (private collection).



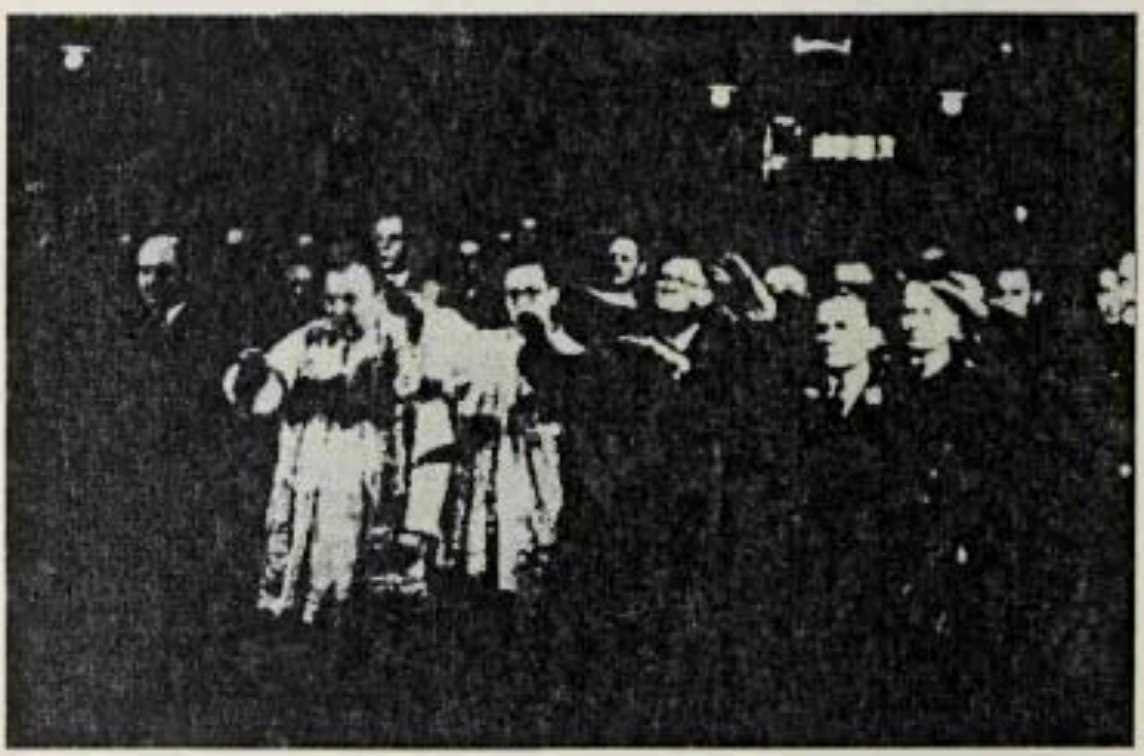


Left, Ante Pavelić in the company of the apostolic legate Marcone (*left*) and his secretary Massucci (*right*)—private collection.

Right, Ustasha youth greet Abbot Marcone and Pavelić with the fascist salute, as they leave Pavelić's private chapel, where he received confession every day (1944)—private collection.

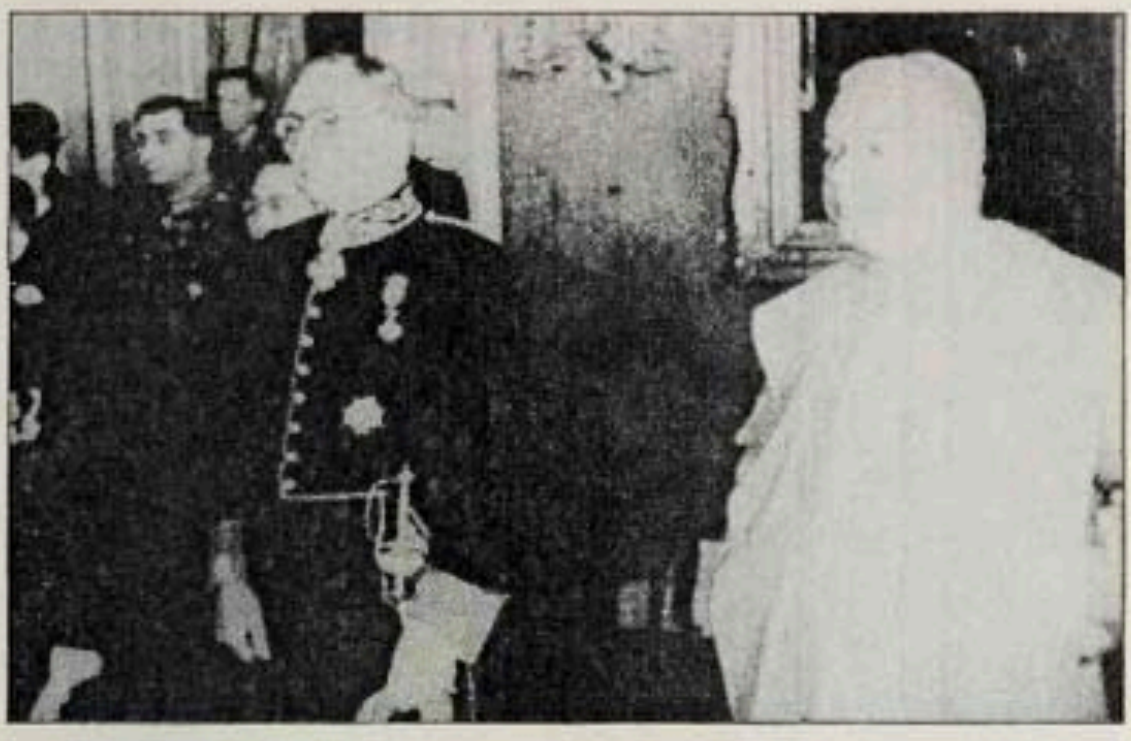
Left, Massucci, Pavelić, Marcone—private collection.

Right, Archbishop Stepinac and Abbot Marcone leave a celebration; behind them is a German general—private collection.



Above, Massucci, Marcone, Pavelić.

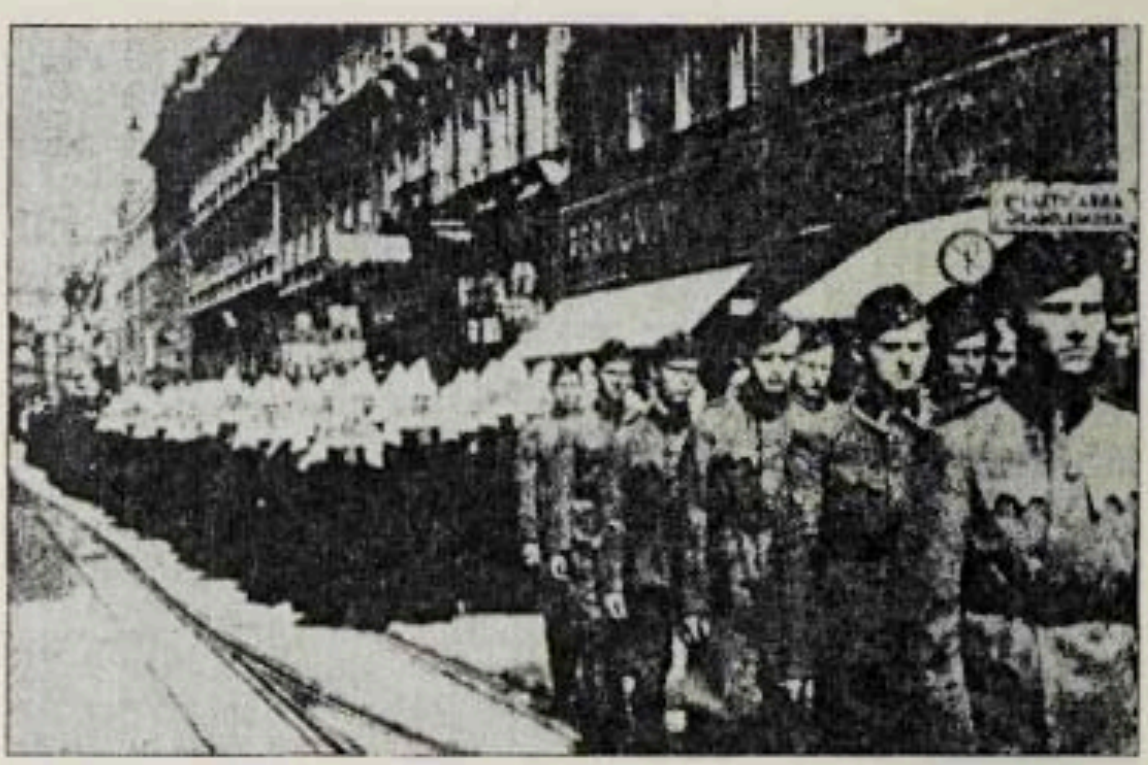
Below, At a dedication ceremony of the Ustasha headquarters in Zagreb. The cleric Sipe Nucetić and his deputy greet the honor bearers of the Ustashe in a fascist manner.

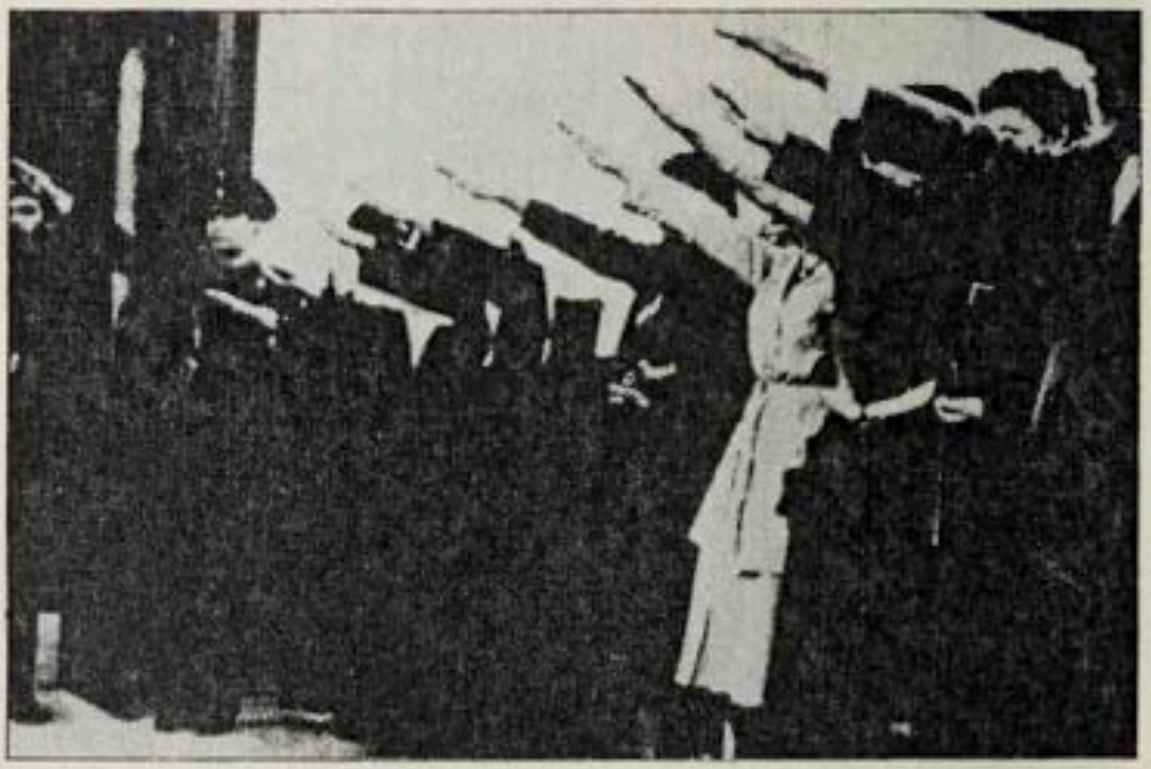


The apostolic legate Marcone was in the NDH from 1941 and left Zagreb at the end of 1945. Below we see him at the reception with Pavelić (*far left*) on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the NDH on 10 April 1945, a month before the end of the war—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik* Nr. 163, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. Z 514.

Above, The apostolic legate, Abbot Marcone (in white); at his right Andrije Artukovic, Interior Minister of the NDH and at his left Alojzije Stepinac—private collection.

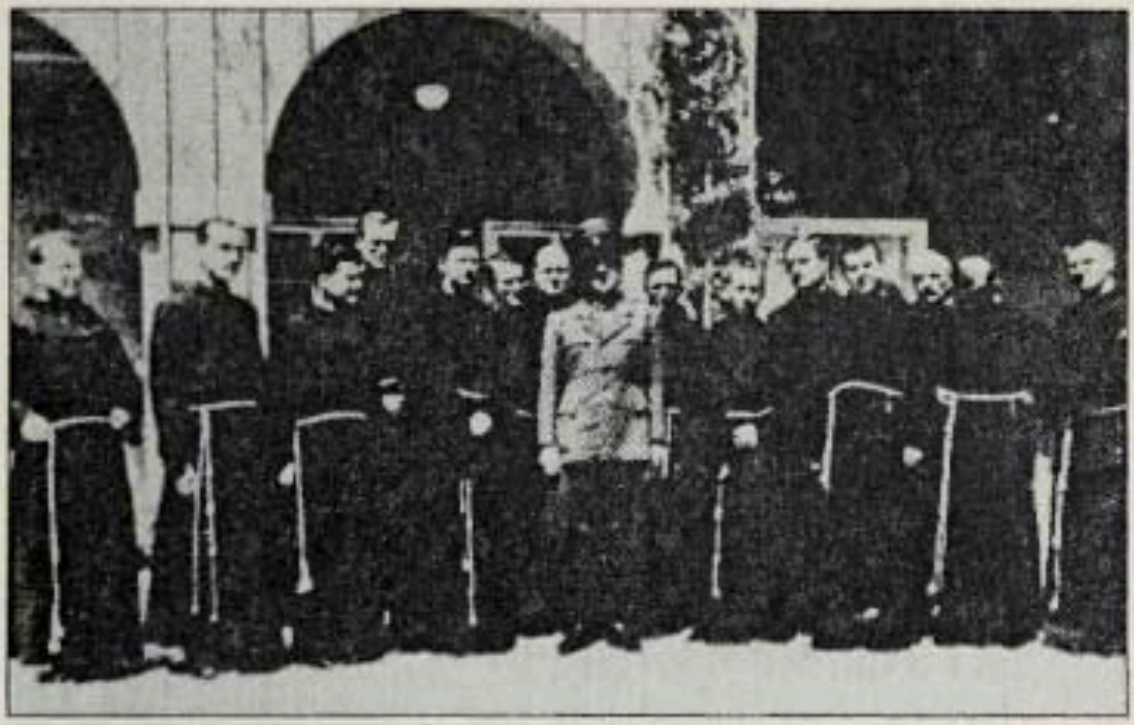
Below, The apostolic legate Marcone (in the white robes of the Dominican order), Archbishop Stepinac (next to him), and around them sit leading military representatives of Germany and the NDH—private collection.

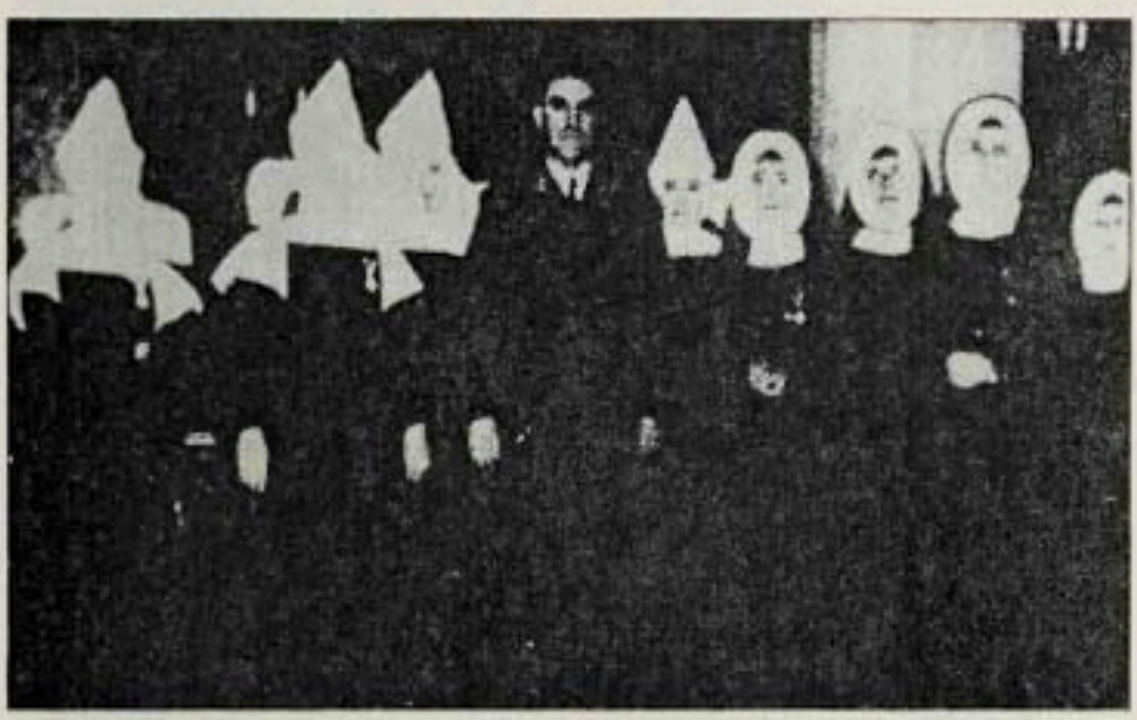




Above, Nuns marching with Croation Nazi legionaires (Ustashe).

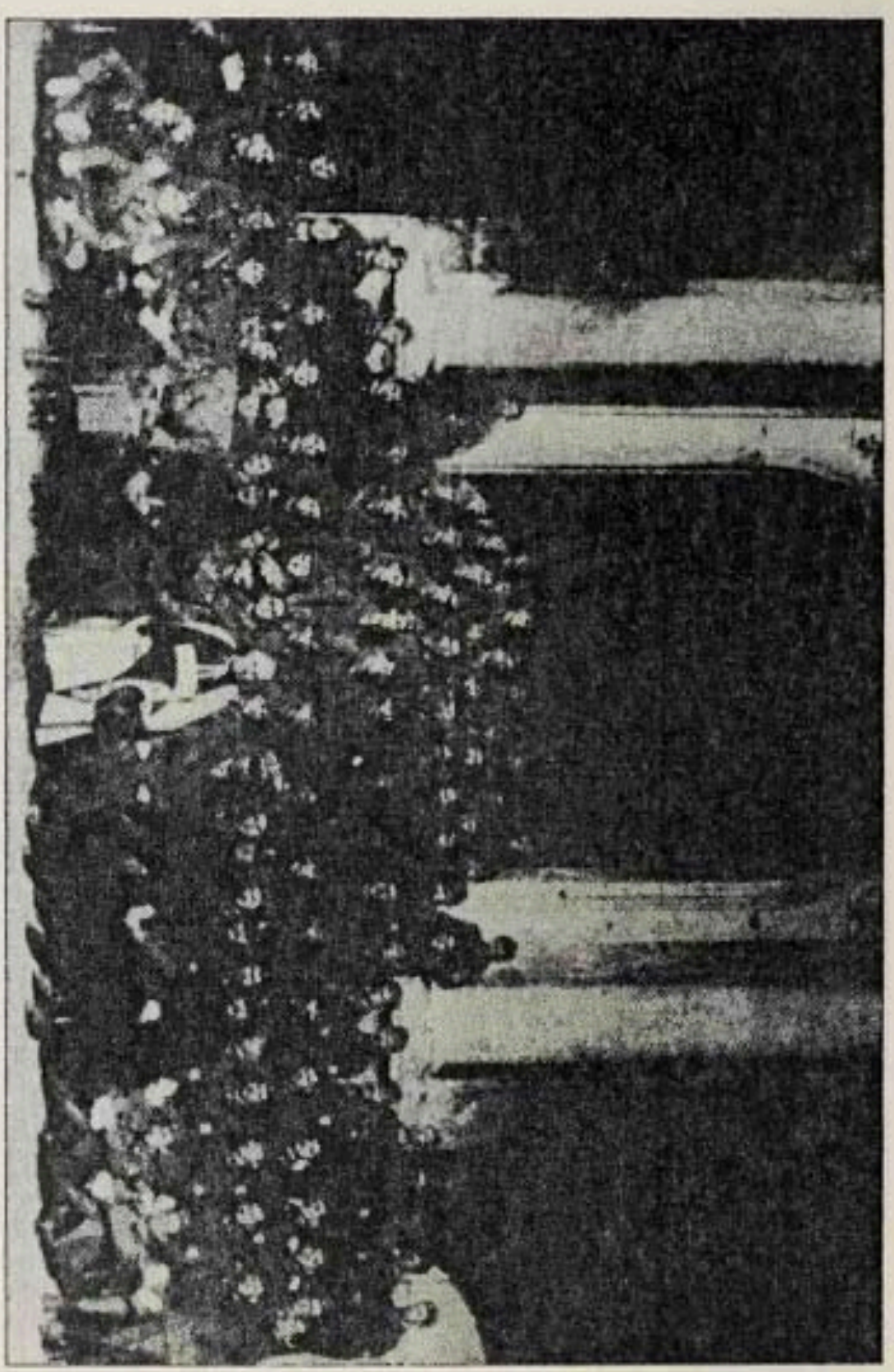
Below, Nuns saluting with the fascist salute.





Above, Pope Pius XII named Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac the highest military vicar. The vicars attended to the morale of the troops in all the Ustasha and national army units. Ante Pavelić receives a group of Franciscan clergy from Bosnia and Hercegovina—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

Below, Ante Pavelić with nuns from Duvno and Livno—*Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik*, Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.



Reception of the Ustasha police special unit at the Vatican in September 1943.

Propaganda for the Ustasha regime in the Croatian Catholic press.

20

Eyewitness Testimonies about the Compulsory Conversions

The testimony of witness Josip Valentic, farmhand from Sunj, about the activity of the pastor *Josip Orlic* in the conversion of Serbs:

> About the conversion of Serbs I do not know so much. Before the collapse of Yugoslavia, organizations were founded by pastor Josip Orlic that had not existed before. These were the organizations "Catholic Men," "Catholic Women," and "The Crusaders." Those who did not care to join these organizations were labeled as communists and miscreants.
>
> After the occupation of our country, the leaders of the Crusaders and of the Catholic Men immediately got a military title and armed themselves. Milan Majevic, for example, got the title of a major. Ivan Valentic, who at the time of Yugoslavia was leader of the Crusaders, later became a murderer: On 24 April 1941, they brought all the Serb men from the surrounding villages into the courtyard of the military camp and there. . . . There were Orthodox clerics and teachers here, whom they beat terribly. Afterwards they left the Serbs alone for a while. But a short time later, the Ustasha brought the student Micun to Sisak and tortured him there for four days; on 2 August 1941 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, he was killed in a bestial manner. When his mother came to bring him food, she was arrested, and in the evening all Serbs were fetched who lived in Sunj—they were good people; they lived in harmony with us and even voted for the Croatian Farmers Party (HSS) and the Serbian Voluntary Corps (SDK). All the men and three women were brought. Bound with wire, they were led in two directions to the Save. Twenty of them were killed and tossed into the Save.
>
> On Seliste, the same thing happened. The murdering lasted eight days,

to the 8th of August 1941. At this time, about 350 people were killed and buried on Mrtviste. On 2 August 1941, a bloody company—as they called themselves—came under the command of Rudolf Blazevic. They killed, as it was said, several thousand Serbs. And when they encountered two transports at the train station in Kostajnica headed for Germany, they opened them up, plundered them, and shot all the prisoners.

On 9 August 1941, I went to the pastor and told him we should send a deputation to Pavelić to see what was going on. For these were all upright and innocent people. He turned that down and said: "I won't go now, perhaps later." Later he actually went, but with the Ustasha lieutenant Stjepan Stjepanovic. Dionizije Juricev came and took up quarters in the parsonage. The conversions were prepared. A woman from Sunj with the name of Desanka Pavlovic came to him and asked him to rebaptize her. He promised her this, but when she told him that she was not married and had three children, he replied: "Such people will not be rebaptized, but it makes no difference whether you are baptized or not, because no more of you will survive than drops in a sieve."

Then the conversions were carried out and up until January 1943 the Serbs were finally left alone. On 15 January, Dionizije came and prepared an action on Svinjica. Together with the Ustashe, he drove the Serbs together in one spot. The Ustashe told him, "You baptized them." And he replied: "Yes, I baptized them and I will also kill them." They went to Svinjica, and Dionizije ordered certain houses to be burned. He himself beat several women whose men had fled into the woods.

Then they came back to the village Vinjacka, where everyone had already been rebaptized. They surrounded the village and drove the inhabitants to Jasenovac. On the way, a few were able to flee. Of 200 people, however, there is no trace. This terrorist action was carried out under the direction of Ivan Orlic and other Crusaders. Today these murderers are hiding in the forests.

Duro Malovic, born in Hrvatski Cuntic, railroader by trade, gave testimony about the activity of the 5th Column in the *cloister at Cuntic:*

At the time of Yugoslavia, a priest by the name of Stjepan Holevacki came to us. He wanted to organize the Croatian farmers in the "Brotherhood and Sisterhood of Crusaders." Young people under 20 were young Crusaders, and in the "Crusader Brotherhood" were those who were around 40. They conducted several gatherings, and Holevacki explained to them how the Croats were supposed to organize and told how the blessed Nikola Tavelic had led the battle against the Turks and against the opponents of the priests. Also he told them that those who would fight in the ranks of the Crusaders would be blessed.

Then came the Franciscan monks. Three of them held services; the others were laymen. They came with a truck and became members of the organi-

zation of the Croatian Farmers Party. They wanted to unite with the politicians and hold meetings with them.

In 1939, Dionizije Andrasec was cloister administrator in our village. Then came Herman Kenavija and he became administrator of the cloister of Cuntic.

One Sunday I was in the church. He ordered the people and the young men to come into the chancery of the church office to follow up on a notice. About 20 showed up and put their names on a list. I didn't know what it was about, but later I found out. They held meetings regularly and after a month, they declared to the people that this was a Catholic organization that was carrying out a "Catholic action." As early as 1940 people from that organization urged our youths to join them. They called themselves Ustashe. Until then, I had heard nothing about the Ustashe and about Pavelić. I learned that Brother Kenavija had talked with them about these things and had also told them that Pavelić was in Italy and one day—he said he heard it himself on his radio—would come and together with the Ustashe would seize power in Croatia.

Shortly before the war, these meetings became more frequent. One month before the collapse in 1941, the cloister administrator invited the so-called Ustashe every evening to listen to the radio news, because Ante Pavelić was speaking from Italy. Of course, people from other villages also came to learn what was up and how the war would end. Once I also went. Around midnight, I heard a speech by Ante Pavelić, who, as the cloister administrator explained, was praising Germany and Italy and announced that Yugoslavia one day would come to ruin and that he would leave exile and come to power.

That was in the night of 9 April—I was not yet a soldier and was too young for the army.

When I got up the next morning, I heard: Overthrow. The "Independent State of Croatia" has been founded and proclaimed, and Ante Pavelić was coming back from Italy. He was to be the poglavnik.

I went into the town. All the monks and all the young men had disappeared. Where were they? They had gone to Petrinja, where the Ustashe were expecting the former Yugoslav army. They were disarming soldiers and were removing their uniform coats and shirts.

Around noon a fancy car came into town. And who got out? It was the cloister administrator Herman Kenavija. In the car were about 20 carbines. The cloister administrator ran into the cloister and said that everyone who was still without a gun was to fetch one, because the Yugoslav army was to be disarmed at various spots. The double-barrel guns were distributed to the Ustashe.

After the collapse, the cloister administrator met with Rumler in Petrinja, who later became general and as far as I know came from this town. Rumler was the mayor of Petrinja, and Herman became the community administrator of Jabukovac, where he himself then made Marko Lovrekovic the community secretary and Josip Tomazinic his deputy. As community administrator,

Herman issued a call to arms and ordered the police to announce in the town that all Orthodox people had to convert to the Catholic faith.

When the people saw that the Ustashe were terrorizing the Orthodox, robbing them, stealing their clothes and shoes, and making them stand barefoot in the snow, they went to the Catholic church St. Antun and brought all sorts of gifts: chickens, sheep, pigs, calves, wine, liquor, etc. Everything was taken into the Franciscan cloister.

Of course, the cloister administrator was directing the entire action against the Orthodox people. There were actually registrations for the conversions and some sort of little slips of paper were made available, which were to confirm that no one need be afraid. But then Herman proclaimed from the pulpit that in no instance could Serbs remain in Croatia and that they were never again to walk on Croatian soil.

After this threat, everyone who had not yet done it, signed up for conversion. The names were changed from Jovan to Ivan, from Stevan to Stjepan.

One day a message came from the community administrator from Jabukovac that contained the order that the 18 richest Orthodox citizens were to be deported to Serbia. And it happened, too. About 18 to 20 families were deported, and they were allowed to take along only what they could carry in their hands. Since all 20 families and their luggage had to fit on a truck, it was really little that they could take along.

Then the cloister administrator put on a pistol belt. He was an official military-state "FN." Together with others, he went into the homes and properties of the deported families. The monks took the best and most valuable objects for themselves on a wagon; the remaining things they distributed among the Ustashe. It was the abbot personally who did the distributing.

He made Ciga the director of the conversion action and sent him to the village of Maja. Also he himself went there every morning and made appropriate entries into the files.

While I was still working on the railroad, Benko Ciga always carried a pistol. He wore a monk's robe, a pistol, and then a long, black coat over it all. He had the pistol with him every day. The cloister administrator Herman wore his weapon even in the church. When he took off his church clothing after mass, the monk's cord and the pistol were both visible, and it was clear that this was a threat for the people who were not willing to convert. . . .

The chair: Do you have anything more to say?

Yes, I have something else to say. Right after that—it was around the 24th or 25th of July—the Ustashe got orders to go to the Serb villages of Cuntic, Klinac, Donje, and Gornje Mlinage. They were to take along all the inhabitants of these villages and order them to dress in their good clothes, since they were to be baptized in St. Antun's Church. All the Ustashe took on to carry out the orders. I know that, although I was not in the village, because I was working.

Of course, the people were very much afraid as they were preparing for the calamity. They got dressed up, put on fresh underwear and suits, and went to St. Antun's. When they arrived there, they saw that no one was there—neither the archbishop nor any Frater. So they decided to go to Cuntic. A half a kilometer away there was a great plain below a mountain. They went down there. When they got down there, they saw a great mass of people surrounded by Ustashe. Of course, the cloister administrator was also there. Benko Ciga was not there, only the cloister administrator. The inhabitants of the village knew immediately that a mortal danger was threatening. The Ustashe forced them all into a circle, made them perform a round dance and sing some Serb songs—I don't know what else. Some were beaten with rifle butts and with wire. Finally they shot two or three people. The judge of the court in Petrinja, Turki, shot two or three times with a machine gun. Four or five people were killed. When the Ustashe had really gotten their ire up, they called in the train, forced the village inhabitants into the cars, and drove them to Grabovac. There another Ustasha band was already waiting for them and—mowed them all down.

Of course the entire booty that had been gained in these communities was taken to the cloister. I said that they managed with one truck when they went to Hrvatski Cuntic. In October or November 1941, already 50 trucks were needed to transport the booty.

Attending the various meetings with the cloister administrator was Dr. Puk from Glina, who, as I remember, was Minister of Justice, Dr. Rebok, who worked in the hospital in Glina, and General Rumler.

In November, Colonel Mrak also took part. Probably you have already heard of Colonel Mrak. He was the one who had started the crimes on Banja. And this Colonel Mrak, whenever he needed information, went to no one other than the cloister administrator—that is, the man who was also present at the rebaptisms and the killings and who had connections with the ones in Church, the field camp leader, and the Ustashe, and who ultimately in 1942 stayed usually in Zagreb, Sisak, or Karlovac, while the people's liberation war was expanding: He must have gotten wind of something or other. Appropriately, because in July 1942, the partisans liberated Hrvatski Cuntic. The cloister administrator was not in the village. He was in Zagreb. The other monks locked themselves in the tower of St. Antun's Church and stayed there. They pulled up all the ladders so that the partisans could not get to them. When the Ustashe finally came into the village, the partisans retreated, and the monks fled to Petrinja. I heard that the Ustashe in Cuntic—80 were from my village—had seen the cloister administrator Herman Kenavija in Zagreb. He was wearing an Ustasha uniform.

Jozo Mikolasevic, born in 1916 in Podgarac, living in Budimci, rope maker by profession, Croat, testifies to the activities of the priest *Sidonije Solc* in the baptisms.

The chair: What do you know about the rebaptizing of the Serbs in Budimci?

The priest Sidonije and the Ustasha camp director Hripko came into the village, rallied the inhabitants, and held speeches. After that, they arranged a meeting to rebaptize all the Orthodox people. The population tried to get a postponement in Nasice. From there, however, the order came that the action was to be carried out on the spot and that everything was to be prepared immediately. Then Sidonije appeared with several Ustasha offcers and the district leader Hefer from Osijek, also with several officers. The rebaptism was carried out in the church.

The chair: Did any of you sign an application in which there was a request for permission to join the Catholic faith?

No.

The chair: So you were all baptized together?

Yes.

The chair: Did the people do that voluntarily?

No, only under pressure from the Ustasha.

The chair: Is the village Budimci a Croatian or a Serb village?

The village is Serbian; there are only four of us Croats.

The chair: Was the populace persecuted by the Ustashe thereafter?

Later Ustashe came into the town and drove the whole population to the camp. In front of the church, they held a speech. They asked: "Why are you looking after the partisans?" Mrs. Milica Stojsic replied that the partisans forced the village people at gunpoint to supply them. Mrs. Stojsic then was thrown into a burning house by the Ustashe.

The chair: So it didn't help them to assume the Catholic faith?

No. They were driven into the camp and 318 inhabitants died.

The chair: Does that include those who died in battle?

No.

Dane Vrkljan testifies on the cooperation of the priest *Ivancic* with the Ustashe.

The chair: What do you know about the rebaptism of the Serbs?

I know the following: In 1941, some days after the arrival of the occupation forces in our area, the Ustashe arranged a demonstration in our village. At that time there were about half Croats and half Serbs living in our village. The Ustashe ordered everyone, no matter whether they were old or young,

to come to the reception of the convention guests from Osijek. About 600 people gathered. The former district leader Stjepan Hefer came with two unknown Ustashe and the pastor Ivancic from Brodjanci in a car from Osijek. Once the pastor had arrived, the demonstration was opened. Up front in the procession were the children, behind them adults, young men, and women, and in the back the old men and women. They paraded through the village, followed the priest Ivancic, who told them the slogans they were to chant. If he raised a finger, then "Pavelić, Pavelić, Pavelić!" had to be cried; when he turned his hand, the slogan, was "Ante, Ante!" At the same time, the Ustashe went through the crowd and checked everyone to see if he or she was participating in the chanting of the slogans.

Finally the procession reached the church, in front of whose portals a platform had been built. The former district leader Stjepan Meter was the first to speak to the people. The two Ustashe from Zagreb followed and the pastor Ivancic was fourth. The latter said the following in his speech: "I want to emphasize several other things that my predecessors omitted. Who is guilty of all the tribulation that our poglavnik had to bear in the period of his exile along with his colleagues who were with him? The Serbian people, the Serb alone is guilty of this. In our Croatian land, the Serbs may no longer exist—away with the dogs, send them across the Drina! But we have a good master who will take care of them. And do you know who this master is? This master is our poglavnik." After the speech, the drinking bout lasted all night. Pigs were roasted, etc. Some days later, the pastor Ivancic came back into town with the then Ustasha field-camp director Stjepan Kazonic. They drank all night, and on the next day they left again.

In the next night, the Ustasha field-camp director drove 15 Serbs out of our town into the heath between Osijek and Capljina, beat them there until they were completely covered with blood, threw them into a ditch, and mowed them down. After a week, the Pastor Ivancic came into our town again to hold mass.

After he had done this, he went to the Ustasha field camp. From the door, I could see that Simo Vukovic was waiting there, a father of eight children, to inquire about his horses that had stayed with the former Yugoslav army. One hour after Simo Vukovic encountered Ivancic, several Ustashe left the field camp and arrested him. He was taken to the canal at the end of the village yet that evening, beaten, and abused. On the next day, he was found there dead.

Approximately eight days after this event, the pastor Ivancic came to our village to rebaptize the Serbs. He explained: "Every Serb who gets rebaptized will be left alone and will be able to stay here." Also he informed us that they had to take part in religious instruction and that they all had to learn to pray. Later when he indeed held religious instruction, he had several armed Ustashe with him. They checked precisely to see who was present and who was missing. In the evening, he asked the people why this one or that one had not come.

Thus, for example, the Mrs. Boja Polovina had not appeared. The pastor asked her husband where his wife was. He replied: "My wife is sick." The woman was indeed pregnant and could not come. Immediately the pastor sent several Ustashe to get her. They took the husband along. When they found Mrs. Polovina in the village, they insulted and scolded her. "Get up! March, you bitch!"

Because religious instruction was very short and it was therefore impossible to always keep everything in your head, it frequently happened that someone did not know something. This one was then ordered to report every four hours to the pastor—4 kilometers from Brodjanci.

On the day of the baptism, Hefer and several Ustashe came from town. After the rebaptism, there was a drinking bout that lasted into the evening. A few days later I saw 14 people being driven to the camp, although they had been rebaptized and each had paid 70 Dinar for it. Two of these people died in the camp; the others were taken to the camp in Gradiska.

After that, in the fall of 1943, I saw personally, along with my neighbor Duko Mitrovic—we met between 11 and 12 o'clock—the pastor Ivancic in Ustasha uniform and with a gun in his hand accompanied by field camp director Stjepan Kazonic and about 15 other Ustashe comin gback from the activity in Poganovci. They went to the school. From there, the pastor didn't leave the village until late in the night under cover in the direction of Vaganac. Apparently he didn't want to be seen by anyone.

The public prosecutor: Did the Croats protest the crimes of the priests and the Ustashe?

How were we to protest? We didn't dare move. On orders of the priests, the Ustashe came under our windows at night, to my place, for instance, and knocked loudly to see if anyone was at home or not.

The public prosecutor: It is constantly claimed that all this happened in the interest of the Croatian people. When the Serbs were mowed down, was that the will of the Croatian people?

It didn't happen in our name; it happened in theirs.

Ivan Vicic, agriculture student from Osijek, speaks about the Priest *Jakob Seb:*

In 1941 in all the sermons spoken by the Catholic priests in Osijek, it was said that every Serb had to be rebaptized. I still remember that religion classes were held for the Orthodox and that they were rebaptized when they had taken part in them two or three times.

The chair: Did you have the impression that the Serbs accepted the Catholic faith voluntarily?

My school colleagues did not convert voluntarily.

The chair: Were you converted?

Yes.

The chair: Who forced you to do it?

It was mainly Jakob Seb who was religion instructor at my school at that time. He said that everyone had to convert, otherwise he would not be admitted to the school any more.

The chair: Did you notice any other measures against the Serbs?

I know that the Serbs in Osijek were arrested. In one night, there was a mass arrest. Afterwards they were taken to the camp.

Mihajilo Duricic testifies about the behavior of the monks led by *Dionizije Juricev*.

The chair: What do you know about the persecution of the Serbs and about the compulsory conversions?

I remember the following events:

In October of 1941, several monks came to our town with the Ustasha authority. They admonished the people to come to religious instruction and to convert to the Catholic faith. Among the monks was one whose name I remember well, Dionizije Juricev. He said, once the people had gathered: "Anyone who does not assume the Catholic faith has no place in the NDH, because in the NDH only Croats can live and no one else." The instruction took about a week, and when it was over, a banquet was held at which several Ustasha officers and the priest were present. They held a lot of empty speeches and they explained to the people whom they had gathered to this banquet—it was a small congregation with about 2,700 people, all Serbs—that no one was threatened because they had all become loyal citizens of the NDH. Thereafter they left the village and left the priest August Kralj behind. Every Sunday he held the mass, organized choruses to sing in the church, and such things. He stayed almost a year. During this time, he explained again and again that we were all Croats and that we had never been Serbs. We had been rebaptized soon enough and therefore had nothing to fear.

Almost a year later, at the beginning of October 1942, a group of Ustashe came to our town and settled there. I asked the pastor, who visited me frequently not only as a spiritual shepherd but also as a friend, what this meant. He guaranteed me that there was no danger and charged me with telling this to the others.

But hardly three days had passed when in the night of 13 October 1942 a large number of Ustashe from Jasenovac surrounded the whole community unnoticed. Since we had not expected this, no guards had been posted. The small Ustasha group staying in the town had probably prepared the terrain.

In the gray of morning—it was foggy—I tried to escape into the neighboring town. The Ustashe nabbed me, however, right on the street and drove me along with several neighbors to the middle of the town. There we encountered a second group of Ustashe driving women and children ahead of them—half naked, just as they had been gotten from their beds. Along with these Ustashe was also our pastor August Kralj. His robe, which hung below his knees, was very dirty. He had walked over the fields wet with dew in order to show the Ustashe how to surround the community so we would not be able to see into the woods.

I asked him: "What does this mean, Reverend?" "Don't be afraid. You're only going down to the Save and will return home again soon—and see to it that no one runs away!" he replied. I didn't believe him and at the next opportunity used the tumult and the fog to escape into the woods. The Ustashe took about 2,000 people prisoner and drove them all to Jasenovac. Only about 500 were able to escape.

When we came back into town about three days later, we found 34 victims there mutilated in all sorts of ways. Among them was a young woman who had been impaled on a stake. They had hacked off body parts from a young man. Some had been killed with blunt instruments and had been mutilated terribly. We buried them.

Later we learned that the pastor had long planned his retreat from the town. Together with the Ustashe, he had taken his things and the objects from the plundered houses in about 40 vehicles. He had gone to Sunja and stayed there.

The public prosecutor: Where is he now?

We don't know. Up until last year, he was pastor in Sunja. In the last year I myself moved to Sunja. They told me he told the people in a pastoral letter that the partisans were heretics, that they drove horses into the churches, slept there, and that the churches for them were not sacred. . . . The people, however, came to realize that he was an enemy of the people. When he became aware of that, he disappeared one day and no one knew where he had gone and what had happened to him. Then another pastor came. But he didn't stay long, either, and now a third is there. We don't know where August Kralj is now. While he was still in Bog, he had a motorcycle and went to Zagreb every week. On Sunday, he held mass, stayed one or two days in Bog, and then went to Zagreb. . . .

The public prosecutor: He went to Zagreb every week?

Every week.

The public prosecutor: Here today archbishop Stepinac sits accused. He claims that he neither knew that people at that time were being killed by the Ustashe nor how this happened and least of all that priests had anything to do with it. He has maintained this during the whole trial. What do you think?

What I said isn't known just to me. Two hundred to four hundred people from my village can confirm it.

(Long applause in the court room)

The chair: You said that from your village, Crkveni Bok, 2,000 people were taken to Jasenovac?

Yes.

The chair: Did they come home?

Yes, except for eight people who live there. But this happened only under pressure. Five hundred courageous people fled into the woods and 100 to Banija to the partisans. In the triangle [the area between the rivers Kupa, Una, and Petrova, translator's note], where a great part of the Serb people live, there were 2,000 other courageous people: on the third or fourth day, they sent a deputation, because a General Tumler and Seitz, the secretary of Pavelić, came, and they said that all of them would go to the partisans if they did not release the prisoners. Under pressure from the Germans, who had an interest in seeing that not so many would fight on the side of the partisans, they let the prisoners go.

Ilija Subaric, farmer from the village of Josevica, speaks about the effect of the collaboration of Stepinac with the Ustashe even before the war:

I remember that in the beginning of 1941 in Sarajevo I was surprised by the capitulation of the former Yugoslavia and already then had the opportunity to see how individual people from Hercegovina were brought into the camp and were shot there. I did not know the reason.

Then I came home and was inducted into the army in July of this same year. There I was witness to the disappearance of individual Serbs who had been inducted into the Croatian army and who came with the usual certificate of baptism. Where they disappeared to, I don't know. I also know that in Glina several young women from the surrounding villages were rebaptized. They went to the Catholic church regularly. However, they were arrested and likewise disappeared.

Then, I know of a family from Gornji Grabovac that had been rebaptized, later arrested, and they disappeared; no one knows where.

Many reported voluntarily for rebaptism to save their lives. Some, for example, Petar Vreca, Jefto Maric, Topalovic, and Avdalovic even, submitted requests themselves, which were then recognized. After that, religious training was given for two weeks and finally the ceremony for the conversion from Orthodoxy to the Roman Catholic faith was held. Seven or eight days later, I invited the pastor to dinner and asked him whether he could guarantee the life of the Serbs who had accepted the Roman Catholic faith. Smiling, he answered me: "I have saved their souls."—After a short time,

Maric, Topalovic, and Avdalovic were killed just like the other Orthodox people.

Milica Pekic, born in Bijelo Brdo, living in Karlovac, just 14 years old:

The chair: Tell us, please, what you know about the rebaptism of the Serbs into the Catholic faith.

(The girl is confused.)

They were rebaptized. . . . I don't know anything about it.

The Chair: Were you there when violence and murders were committed against the Serbs?

Yes, I saw them kill the Serbs. They rebaptized them in 1941 and murdered them in 1942.

The chair: How were they rebaptized?

They baptized my mother, but not me and one little boy. They rebaptized my mother and my father.

The chair: Did they rebaptize your father and your mother with violence?

Yes, with violence; they had to submit to rebaptism.

The chair: Why did they have to?

Because they wanted to live. Anyone who didn't submit was killed.

The chair: When did they begin killing?

In the spring they began.

The chair: In what year?

1942.

The chair: In 1942?—When did the Ustashe come?

The Ustashe came and started mowing everything down. . . . Me, too! Here!

(The girl points to her neck.)

The chair: Tell us about it; don't be afraid.

The Ustashe took away 125 people from my village and murdered everyone, everyone that they had taken away.

The chair: Did your father and mother survive?

My mother survived, but not my father.

The chair: Did they kill him?

Stabbed and killed him.

The chair: Did they intend to kill you, too?

They captured me at home and took me into the woods along with all the others who were there at the time. Then they killed them all.

The chair: How did you save yourself?

They stabbed us and threw us into the ditch. Then they went away. When they began singing, I stood up and ran with two boys through the woods to the village of Kolobuc.

The chair: Where did they stab you?

In the woods.

The chair: Show us on your body.

(The girl raises her hair to the horror of everyone in the room and shows her wounds.)

The chair: What did they stab you with?

With a bayonet.

The chair: How?

In six places with the bayonet.

The chair: Did your brothers and sisters also die?

Three brothers and one sister were stabbed to death.

The chair: And in the village? How many were killed there?

About 20 old people; they killed them all.

The chair: They killed them all?

All of them were stabbed to death.

The chair: How did it happen that there were only 20 people in the village?

The public prosecutor: The girl said "old people."

That happened in several villages.

The chair: The others fled into the woods?

Yes, into the woods, and went to the partisans. . . .

Mara Rupcic, farmer's wife from Udbina, speaks about the priest *Mate Mogus:*

When the first Serbs were being rebaptized, the priest Mate Mogus was there. He gathered the Ustashe around him and whatever he commanded them, they did it. In Udbina, where he lived, and in the surrounding villages, there were quite a few Orthodox people. On orders of the priest, the Ustashe slaughtered the Orthodox and eliminated them. Mogus had the Orthodox come to him and took bribes from them. The people paid because they were afraid.

One day he gathered the Orthodox from three villages, because they were to be rebaptized. When they had gathered in the church—we Croats were there, too—he told them: "Go out to the monument to King Petar; I will speak to you there." The poor people went out to hear the speech. Mogus gathered the Ustashe around him and turned to the people: "You Serbs have come to be rebaptized. No one will rebaptize you. I am supposed to baptize the wolf, and the wolf just runs into the woods. For you, there is no salvation, whether you are baptized or not." He pointed to the Ustashe and continue: "Look at my Ustashe; they are my twelve falcons. Wherever I send them, they waste everything. They destroy everything, and when they go home, they sing. They are capable of killing these 12,000 Serbs. You Serbs, for you there is no hope, even if you go into the woods. I will find you there, too!"

We Croats and the Orthodox people lived well with each other. Mogus continued: "We will divide up your land, because there is no hope for you. Go wherever you want." Then the poor people ran away out of fear and never came back.

In Udbina about half the people were Orthodox and the other half Croats. On orders from Mogus, all the Orthodox were destroyed. They dragged them to the Velebit mountains, from where they never returned.

Once a woman went to the Ustashe to plead for her husband. The woman had ten children and her husband was in prison. She was accompanied by several Croatian civilians. The Ustashe told them that they would listen only to instructions from the priest: He commands, they obey. "We see that this is a poor woman, and we know about her husband, who was captured and is sitting in prison. But without the priest, we dare not do anything." Then the civilians went to the priest and asked him: "We plead to you for this woman, she lives among us, and we get along well together. Please, save these poor people." He replied: "I will kill this bitch, so I don't have to see her again, and throw her in the canal. That I will tell my Ustashe to do. The bitch will be destroyed, so she won't stink any more."

In the further course of the hearing, Mara Rupcic also reported on the crimes of the priest in the village of Susice. A mail carrier who went to this town regularly was attacked by partisans along the way. But he managed to flee in his car. When he told this to the pastor later, the latter threatened him that he would kill him if he brought mail to Susice again. In Susice,

he said, there would soon be no more Serbs. "No one will survive. I will destroy all of them," threatened the priest. On the next morning, the mail carrier was accompanied by ten Ustashe. Again they were stopped by partisans. Three Ustashe were killed, the others fled, and the car was left behind. To avenge himself, the priest thereupon had his Ustashe kill five people and another twelve Orthodox people from the surrounding villages who were in prison, had them abused, murdered, and thrown in ditches. I saw it myself. The remaining Orthodox people immediately left the village and none returned. The priest ordered the civilians to kill any Serb wherever they see one. He said they dare not exist here and would have to be wiped out.

Josip Ban, employee, born in Ledenice, speaks about the Ustasha terror.

The chair: What do you know about how the Serbs were rebaptized and persecuted?

Right after the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Ustashe began to intern the Serbs and drive them to the camps. In September 1941, they tore down the Orthodox church in the village of Suhopoljsko Borovo. The bell and all the other valuables were taken away. Where, I don't know. Tiles, stones, and everything that remained of the church they sold to the Germans, the Hungarians, and the Croats who were living then in Borovo. On 21 November 1941 they began to rebaptize the Serbs. Two monks came to our village from Virovitica. They were accompanied by the camp director Bakic and other Ustasha functionaries.

Two weeks later, they continued the rebaptism action. This time it involved those who were not in the first round. Before the second date, the Ustashe appeared from Suhopolje and Virovitica with the camp director Bakic and one other camp director, whose name I cannot remember. But I believe that it was Vargolir. They ordered the Serbs to be rebaptized, otherwise they would be taken to the camp or killed. Also two priests came from Suhopolje, whom I did not know. They held gatherings and admonished the Serbs also to be baptized. Then supposedly nothing more would happen to them. But from this day on, the murders, plundering, and ravaging did not stop, and people continued to be taken to the camp.

On a day in September 1941, four trucks arrived in Borovo early in the morning. In them sat Ustashe. I was still in bed, but when I saw what was happening, I got up and ran into the vineyard. That's what I always did whenever I learned that the Ustashe had come. They surrounded the whole village. Everybody was squeezed into a courtyard. There they separated the Serbs from the Croats, Germans, and Hungarians. There were again about 25 to 30 Serbs, among them women and children, separated and taken to a room. There they were beaten black and blue. Later all but four people

were locked in the trucks. But the four were tortured bestially: They tore out their arms, legs, and eyes. After these abuses, they were killed and buried in the manure ditch.

In the meantime—it was about noon—I had ventured out of the vineyard onto the street. There I encountered two Ustashe. One of them was a known henchman, a certain Josip Polgar. He arrested me, laid his gun on my shoulder, and accused me of being a Croatian traitor. I unbuttoned my blouse and shouted for him to shoot me; he would thus kill a better and more upstanding person than himself. He didn't do it. He slung his gun on his shoulder and let me go ahead of him. He drove me to the truck in which the Serbs were and threw me in. The truck was full of blood. I can't say any more.

The chair: And what happened then with this truck?

They drove us to Virovitica to the camp. . . .

Ostoja Samardzija, assistant in a forestry business, from Mlaka, speaks about how the rebaptisms were carried out in his village:

On approximately 15 March 1942, a priest appeared from Zagreb. He had been sent to rebaptize all the residents of Mlaka. Once he had arrived, he summoned first the men, almost all of them older men. The meeting took place in an inn. I went to hear what the priest wanted and what he would talk about. He explained approximately the following: "I come from the bishopric of Zagreb. I was interned in Istria with about 400 other priests. Since there is no more room for us there, I was sent here to rebaptize you." The people replied that they did not believe that and that they would not fall for such a thing as long as they have not spoken with the others. Then the priest began to scold loudly and said that those who do not submit to rebaptism are enemies of the "Independent State of Croatia" and would be declared fair game. But those who behaved differently would enjoy full rights and would be "purebred Croats." Then the meeting was interrupted.

On the next day at 8 o'clock, thirty Ustashe appeared who had been waiting at the train station and forced the whole population of Mlaka into the parsonage. The priest was there already and several Ustashe, who were probably officers. When we had all assembled, he held a speech: "I was sent here from Zagreb, from the bishopric of Zagreb, to rebaptize you Orthodox people and convert you to the Catholic faith. I will stay here for the next week. In this time you will study from the catechism and prepare yourselves. Each of you will bring a tax of 40 Kuna, which is payable to us." So the people went to religion classes for a week. Every day the Ustashe went around in the village, fetched them from their houses, and drove them into the parsonage.

On the eighth day, when the rebaptism was to take place, we were called into the big hall of the parsonage, which was already overfull with people. There again was the priest and several Ustasha officers. In each corner of

the hall stood an Ustasha with a machine gun pointed. In the middle, the priest had taken a seat and at a table next to him sat an Ustasha, the so-called confirmation godfather. Next to the table, stood two Ustashe, who each carried a candelabra and a candle. We went one after the other to the table. Before the priest, each had to raise three fingers and repeat the following oath: "I swear by God. . . ." I can't remember the rest of the text. Then each had to say: "I am no longer a Serb, not Orthodox, but a pure-blooded Croat." Then at another place 40 Kuna was paid by each in cash.

When it was all over, the priest held a speech in which he said: "You whom we have rebaptized today are now pure-blooded Croats. You now have the right to serve in the army. Whoever wants to can also join the Ustasha army. He should then report to the field camp. He will be accepted there."

Then this confirmation godfather also said a few words: "I am here the commandant and you all know me in Mlaka. Beginning today, I am your confirmation godfather. You are all to call me 'godfather.' "

This was on 13 April and already on the 14th at 6 o'clock in the morning came the infamous Ustasha Vasilj Panic along with this confirmation godfather to arrest the whole town. All the residents were arrested, tortured, and sent to the camp. On the next day they butchered 26 men and transported the others to the camp at Jasenovac together with women and children. Of the 1,232 people that they had expelled from Mlaka, only 145 returned home after the war.

Branko Stankovic, born in Slobostina near Slavonska Pozega, reports on the compulsory baptisms and the burning of people in the church.

The chair: What do you know about the compulsory baptism of the Serbs?

I know that the Serbs in 1942 were rebaptized. A certain Bozidar Santic, a missionary or monk from Zagreb, came to our town to the parsonage that was there then in Slobostina. At a teacher's house, I was by chance talking with him and asked him who sent him here. He told me the Archbishop's See in Zagreb sent him. During this time, he also carried out the rebaptism action.

In the baptism, he forced the people to repeat some prayer, which they didn't want to do right away. So he began to speak, but the people didn't want to follow him. He started a second time, but again no one wanted to join his prayer; on the third try, he said that he would have to turn them over to the Ustasha quarters if they did not choose to speak. So they were forced to repeat his prayer and join the Roman Catholic faith; he carried out this rebaptism in other villages, too. When the people hesitated, he threatened that the Ustasha would come for them and punish them.

On 14 August 1942, the compulsory baptism of the people from the neighboring villages of Dezevci, Zigrovci, Skendrovci, and those from the Kozara mountains in Bosnia was carried out. And although they had joined

the Catholic faith, the Ustasha drove about twenty to thirty of the town inhabitants into the church, locked them up there, and set the church on fire; the remaining five to six hundred were thrown into the well. In all, four wells thus became mass graves. At the baptisms themselves, they said that the people would be protected and would not be persecuted if they would convert. However, these were empty promises: they continued to persecute the people and committed crimes against them.

Jozo Jelcic, tailor from Capljina, reports on the priest *Don Ilija Tomasic:*

In the year 1941, when the Ustashe had begun with the slaughters, the priest Don Ilija Tomasic announced in the village Pribirovci and the surroundings that he would give his guarantee that the Serbs who accept the Catholic faith would be left in peace. He taught the people what they had to know for the first days. He began with the prayers and distributed a little book in the form of a brochure to every house. Two or three days later, the village, which was pure Serb and had about 1,300 inhabitants, was surrounded by the Ustashe. Although he who had guaranteed that nothing would happen was there, the Ustashe came and picked up 240 men, women, and children and drove them to the gorge Usurman. Some fled, but the women and children remained and were thrown into the gorge by the Ustashe. Some threw themselves into the gorge out of horror.

Frater Tugomir Soldo in the years 1940 and 1941 led the "Union of Saint Anton" in Capljina. In the year 1941, it was revealed that this Catholic club was nothing more than a club of murderers.

The public prosecutor: Was Frater Soldo also an Ustasha?

He said that he was an Ustasha already in 1934.

The public prosecutor: Who was the leader at that time?

The mayor was Rebac, but he told Rebac that he would assume full powers and began to fire the people who were from the HSS [Croatian Farmers Party, translator's note] and from other parties.

The public prosecutor: That means he had civil and spiritual powers. You said you had heard that the former members of the "Union of Saint Anton" were ninety percent murderers.

Yes, they were all Ustashe and murderers. At the capitulation of the Yugoslav army, they immediately put on the uniform of the war-mongering Ustashe.

Simo Manigodic, merchant from Konjic, gave eyewitness testimony about the persecutions and the compulsory rebaptisms in his area:

Right after the founding of the infamous so-called Independent State of Croatia, the followers of Macek and the Ustashe came into the area of Hercegovina. Our pastor in Jablanica, Frater Nikola Ivankovic, received one of their transports and held approximately the following speech: "Strike and slaughter everything that is Serbian, even the child at its mother's breast."

Then the persecution of the Serbs began all over Croatia. They threw the Serbs alive, half dead, and dead into various ravines. The Serbs were terribly abused in all of Hercegovina.

Then they distributed printed forms and required a written declaration of conversion to the Catholic faith. Many of my relatives signed to save their lives. Those who gave their signature were sent home, while the others were killed in prisons. Later they picked up the Serbs in Ljubinje, Mostar, Ljubusko, Trebinje, Konjic, Capljina, and other places. They picked up about 500 people and took them to the camp in Jablanica, where they kept them for a few days. During this time, these 500 women, men, and children dug a ditch and were instructed to lay electric current through this grave. However, some decent Croats and Moslems from Jablanica discovered this. To save the threatened Serbs from death, they informed the Germans in Sarajevo directly. Then some German officers came, looked over the situation, and ordered the people to be released from the camps. Then everyone was taken to Gospic and killed. As of now, no one has returned home, and I believe that no one will return any more.

Officially it was said that the Serbs were to either die under the knife, emigrate, or be rebaptized. They couldn't emigrate, and so anyone who wanted to save his head had to accept the Catholic faith.

The pastor Nikola Ivankovic, otherwise an Ustasha field-camp director, said to one of my relatives: "Why do you risk your life by not assuming the Catholic faith?"

Although they had assumed the Catholic faith, 20 to 30 people were killed every day and thrown into the ravines. Some of them survived the tortures and will best be able to report on the misery that was caused in our areas.

But to somehow protect ourselves, we sent pleas to Glavas in the then Ministry of Religion and Education; he again issued permission certificates for us to convert to the Catholic faith, on which it was confirmed that we would be seen as equal citizens.

But it wasn't true, because of all of us, only we three remain alive.

Without consideration for his religion, every decent Serb, Croat, or Moslem in our state judges those who committed monstrous violence, and we hope that the high court will pronounce the most severe punishment for everyone who is guilty of the horrors and tortures that we had to experience. . . .

Mico Ignjatovic, potter from Brcko, accuses *Stepinac* and *Ilija Violani* of compulsory rebaptisms and persecution of the Serbs:

The rebaptism actions in Brcko began in 1941. They tried to force us to convert with the threat that then nothing would happen to us. Certain people, retired people, state employees, and some others actually converted, but the others, I among them, held our ground and were locked up because of it. We were periodically released for a short time, but then were locked up again. But again no one converted. The war criminal Dr. Ilija Violani, who in the first days after the liberation by the people was condemned and shot, several times had a talk with the presently accused archbishop Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, but that didn't change anything.

When Dr. Alojzije Stepinac dispatched Dr. Ilija Violani in November, he brought along two companies, the 18th and the 5th Ustasha company composed of Ustasha immigrants. The commander of the 18th company was Captain Barjak; Captain Franjo Kastel was the commander of the 5th company. They came to Brcko on 29 November. On the same evening, they arrested several innkeepers and made them our missionaries; and when they released them on the next day, they said that the application for conversion had to be submitted by the 1st of December in the morning. If we did not choose to convert, they would make us a head shorter. From two to four o'clock in the afternoon, they herded up over 150 Serb family men and sons. When the Ustasha patrols had gathered us up, they threw us in the high school like in a cage. There they beat us with anything that they had at hand, with rifle butts and with whips. At 15 degrees below zero (centigrade) they took off our sweaters and shoes, took away our winter coats from four o'clock to twelve o'clock and beat us for seven hours without interruption. They made us walk naked and barefoot to Gunja, for four kilometers along the railroad. They locked up 60 Serbs who were unable to walk and seven Jews. There we remained for 24 hours.

In the evening came the infamous county chief Montani with the Ustashe and said: "We weren't aware that you had submitted applications." We didn't know this either! "OK, you are now free, and tomorrow you will go to the rebaptism."

On 2 December, we appeared in the church office. There they gave us pre-prepared forms that had been brought from Zagreb. We signed our names. On 2 December in the evening, they plundered the Orthodox church, which was the richest and biggest in Bosnia and Hercegovina, removed all the gold objects and valuable books, set them afire and tore them down to the foundations; after that, they held celebrations there.

Then they went to the cemetery and desecrated all the Serb-Orthodox graves and monuments with dynamite and hammer blows. We were rebaptized, which, however, didn't help us, because the persecutions continued and we were terrorized and persecuted even as converts.

Petar Glavas, carpenter from Zagreb, victim of the Ustasha terror:

I know a lot about the Ustasha crimes, but I don't know where to begin.

The chair: Tell us what was the most horrible.

Then I will talk about what I myself experienced. They arrested me on 24 February 1944 and took me to Zvonimirova Street. There was the notorious Ustasha police. I was arrested by the agents of the infamous Drazenovic and interrogated and tortured by him himself. They hit my arms, legs, and head using a wire with steel particles. They beat me black and blue and then tied my hands. I was all blue and bloody. I told them: "Is this how you treat the Croatian people?!" On their hands, they wore something hard with which they knocked out my teeth; since then I have worn false teeth. They kicked me with their Ustasha boots and broke my knee cap; I still suffer from it today. Then they tied my arms and beat me with an iron bar below my knees; they tied me to a rod between the desk and the chair so that I was hanging in the air with my feet upwards. They beat me on the legs and the kidneys and wherever else they could. They stripped me and questioned me about everything imaginable, things I didn't know anything about and about which I could not tell them anything. They took me to a dark basement and threw me among the others and didn't question me further.

Only when I came to in the morning did I see where I was. I was all blue, bloody, and swollen. For several days, they did not give me anything to eat, although my wife and children had brought food. Some days later they took me to Nova Ves to Dordiceva Street, where I was tortured again. When I got to the prison, I thought that no one could be tortured like me. But I saw that there were much worse cases who were completely dark blue under their shirts from the blows.

Then I was in Savska Cesta Street for a short time, and from there they took me to the Gradiska camp, where I had to do heavy loading. The food was bad and our arms and legs began to swell. They cooked us "cornmeal mush," as we prisoners named it; that was mouldy flour in water, no fat, no salt. They forced us to perform more and more difficult work.

Then they took us in a rather small group to Jablanac, which was a kind of farm. There the Ustashe abused us as they saw fit. Sundays were the worst. Then the Ustashe went to Orahovica and got drunk, and when they returned, they took us individually to the bunker and questioned us: "Where is Tito?" Then they ordered each one of us to lie down; they walked on us and beat us in every possible way. They beat some to death and then took them to the wire fence; the next day they assembled the prisoners and said: "See, these guys tried to escape." Then they fetched five or six more people and shot them next to the ones lying there, whom they had taken from the bunker totally beaten.

After the time that I had spent in Jablanac, I was taken to Jasenovac at the beginning of fall. That was an equally terrible hell. In the first days, there weren't many of as, but in November 1944 and in December of the

same year, Jasenovac looked like an ant hill. People came from all directions: women, children, mothers with children in their arms. . . . They waited all day between the barracks and even in the evening they had no roof over their heads. On the next day, when they were taken away, they never got to either the men's camp nor the women's camp. They simply disappeared.

I knew comrade Ivan Komadina, who looked after the clerk duties in the camp. One day I asked him how many of us there were, but I don't remember any more whether he told me nine thousand or fourteen thousand. After a few days, the liquidations began. At night, they took the prisoners away and killed them.

At this time, I was working in the wood shop, and the Ustashe came in every day to have their knives and daggers sharpened. Once I alone sharpened five daggers. One Ustasha told me: "If you don't make this knife as sharp as a razor, you will be the first one whose throat I cut." They took the prisoners behind the wood shop and behind the metal factory and killed them there. They were taken there in the evening. I didn't see them, but I know that they were slaughtered, because I heard their screams and the blows of the murderers. Several times I heard a mother calling. "Spare my child!" The men screamed seldom. Sometimes one heard the scream "Ow," but they did not scream as loud as the women.

There was a boy with us working as an apprentice but only 9 or 10 years old. One night they came into our room and fetched the boy. He screamed and begged them: "Leave me alone, please, I am good, I am innocent." It didn't help; they took him away.

In the same way, a little boy who was locked up with his father was fetched by the Ustashe and taken away. The little boy screamed: "Papa, don't leave me. . . ." The father took the child and carried it away, then he came back alone. On the next evening, he, too, was taken.

It was one huge slaughter. Only four thousand of us survived.

Right before Christmas 1944, I was transferred to Lepoglava with another 64 people. The transport from Jasenovac to Lepoglava took a week. Of 64 people, only 60 arrived. Right at Christmas time, that is, between the 25th and the 26th of December, we got to Lepoglava. We prisoners talked among ourselves about whether it would be any better there. But it was even worse. Twice a day we got allegedly cooked turnips, which, however, was usually a swallow of pure water, neither salty nor greasy. We never saw any bread. The greater part of the prisoners were from the surrounding area: Croats from Zagorje and Varazdin. Many people could not stand it and died of starvation. Each day 15 to 20 people died. One night, the Ustashe came into the cell and got us out of bed and forced us to bury them. On this evening, eight of us had to bury 24 people. The wagon with the bodies got into mud and wouldn't budge. They beat us, but we could not get the wagon out. We had to carry the bodies on our backs, one after the other. We laid them in the ditch and threw dirt on them, and then we returned to the wagon. The Ustashe beat us again, because the wagon couldn't be pulled out of the

mud. When we returned, they lined us up and ordered us: "Lie down! Stand up!" They didn't leave us alone until they went to sleep.

The individual cells were built for one person and were perhaps 150 by 130 centimeters. In these single cells, 6 to 8 people slept, but our number diminished very quickly, and then there was room in the individual cells.

When the People's Liberation Army approached and liberation was at hand, their sadism increased even more: every night beatings with a club. They abused the people in every possible way. One evening, around 5 o'clock, as I was by chance in the hallway, I saw them beating someone with an iron bar until he fell to the floor. I don't know if they killed him. I can't remember now everything that happened and everything I experienced, but I can say that it is only a hundredth of all that I saw and experienced.

The public prosecutor: Listen, Lisak. Is it true what Glavas says?

I was neither in Jasenovac nor in Lepoglava.

The public prosecutor: I ask you, is it true what the witness has said?

(Silence)

The public prosecutor: You have heard it now; was he telling stories or did he tell the truth?

I can't know; I was neither in Jasenovac nor in Lepoglava.

The public prosecutor: Are the statements correct; what do you think?

They might be partially accurate.

The public prosecutor: And tell Stepinac sitting there next to you how the Croatian people died under the Ustashe.

Matilda Strazemarac reports on the death of her twenty-year-old daughter, whom the Ustasha hanged:

They arrested my daughter in the administrative offices of the state rail system. They came to my residence and searched it, these informants—like common thieves. When they came in, they laid the revolver on the table. I stood there and tried to go to the kitchen—I was baking bread. "Don't move." My legs stiffened, and I couldn't move. Then I heard how they had locked up my child. I went to the reviewer who was interrogating her and asked about her. He told me that he would sentence her to six months in jail. But the case would have to go to Lisak.

The chair: And what happened then?

Then they killed my child.

The chair: Where did they kill her?

In Sveta Nedelja.

The chair: Hanged?

Yes.

The chair: How old was she?

Twenty years old, Mr. Chair. Look. . . . (The witness stands up, approaches the chair's table and shows the picture of her daughter.) She was a good soul. (She cries.) Today I am alone. I also lost my husband through this matter. He was sick, and that affected him so much that he died. I took her things to the accursed Ustasha police for Public Order and Security. The things, Mr. Chair, don't mean anything to me. I got nothing from my child that I could kiss. They stole everything from me, everything. (She cries.) When they had killed her, they removed her suit, the jacket, the shoes, and the stockings. She was barefoot. (The witness stands up, turns around, and looks at the accused.) Where is the criminal?! Oh, where is he?! It is terrible. . . .

The chair: Take her out of the room.

(The witness leaves the room crying.)

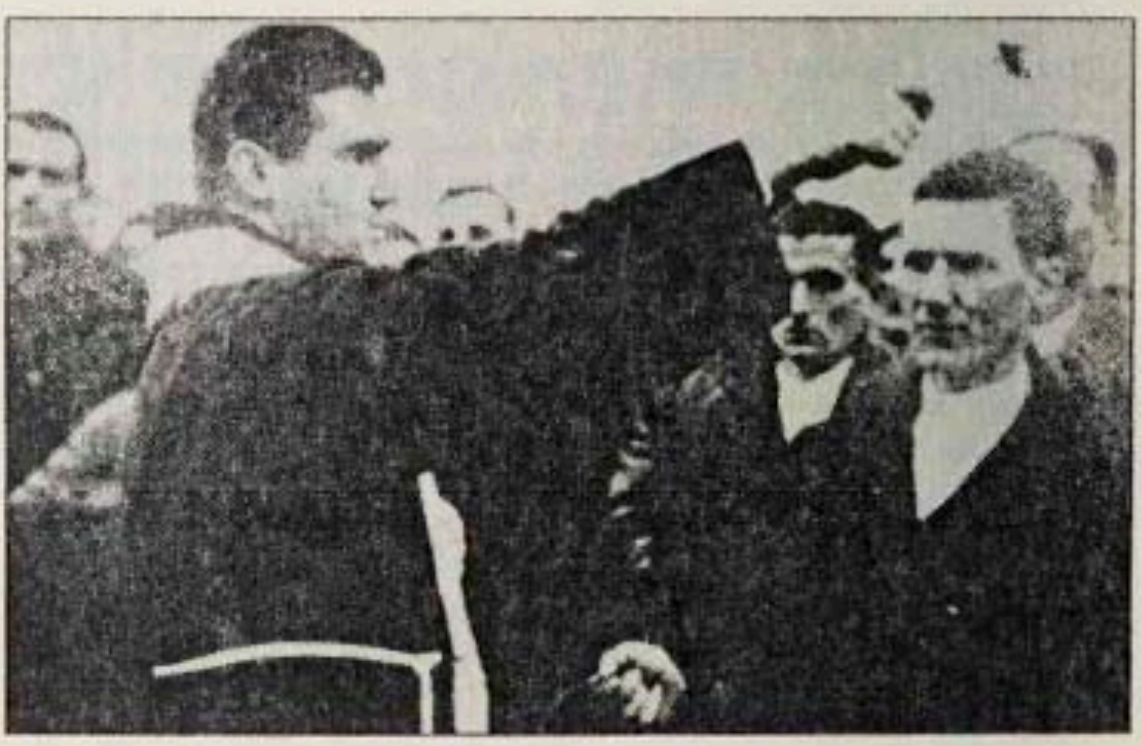
The chair: Defendant Stepinac, did you hear from the statements of the witness what criminals we are dealing with here? Do you still stick to your claim that you were discussing only civil matters when you were meeting with Lisak, Luburic, and other criminals at meetings, dinners, banquets, etc.?

My conscience is completely peaceful and clear.

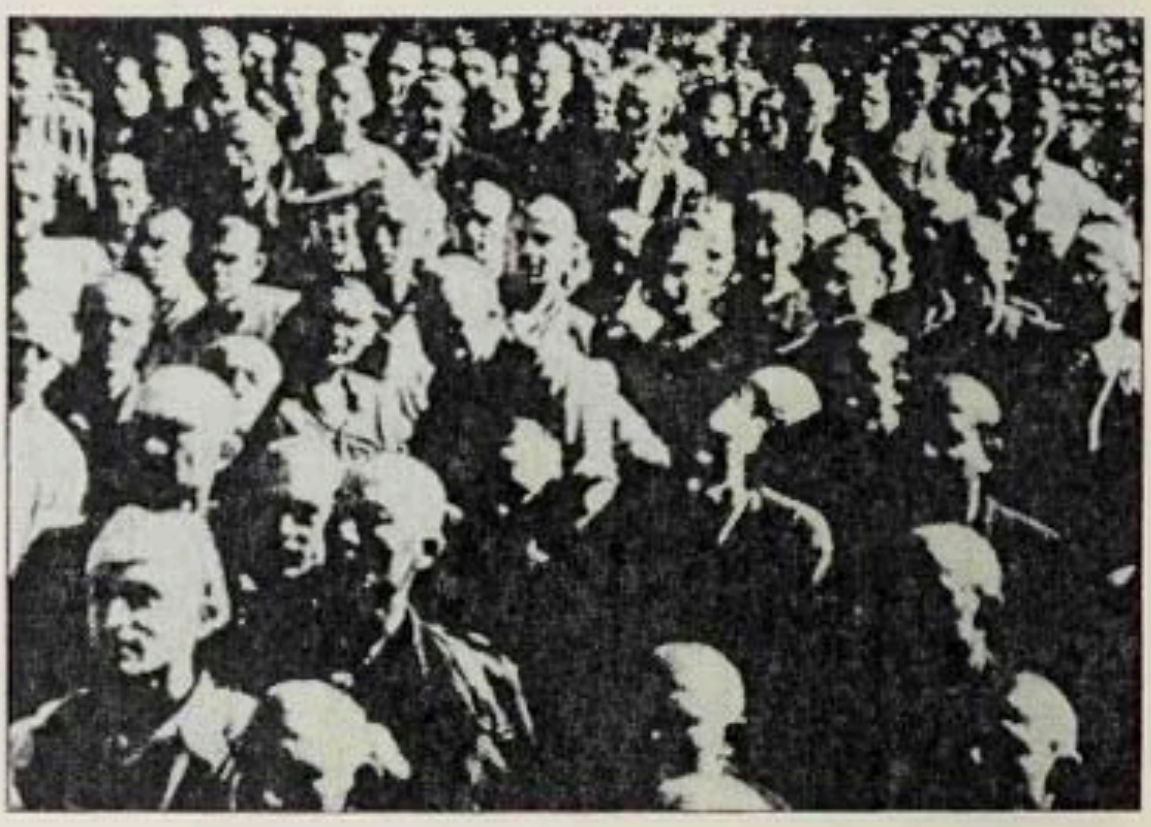
The chair: Your conscience and Lisak's as well?

Completely clear.

(Archives of Vladimir Dedijer—source material on the court proceedings against Alojzije Stepinac)



Roman Catholic priest at the ceremony of rebaptism of Orthodox Serbs in the village of Mikleus near Kutina—private collection.



Compulsory rebaptism—Yugoslav Cinemathek Nr. 5047.

21

The Interrogation of the Accused Alojzije Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb

The chair: Accused Stepinac, do you know how many Serbs were rebaptized from Orthodox to the Catholic faith during the occupation?

I do not know.

The chair: Do you know that there was a number of rebaptisms?

I do not know exactly how often this happened.

The chair: But you surely know that it was a great number?

There was talk of it; but we do not have exact figures.

The chair: That was no normal number of conversions as was usual in normal times. There were indeed more.

Yes!

The chair: You know that?

I know that.

The chair: What was your attitude toward these conversions?

I have already made a statement on that.

The chair: Where?

In the protocol and in the documents that we published.

The chair: Do you know that there were compulsory conversions?

Never on our part.

The chair: But the Ustashe did exert pressure?

What the others did has nothing to do with me.

The chair: So you did not exert pressure?

No.

The chair: Did you have any means of pressure at your disposal?

None.

The chair: That means then that you were not able to exert any force. That came only from the Ustashe?

I am sticking with my statement in the protocol.

The chair: In this statement, you said among other things that at the time of the NDH fewer Serbs converted to the Catholic faith than Catholics to Orthodoxy during the occupation. Do you stick with this statement?

The entire number is difficult to determine, but I know how many had converted at the time of Yugoslavia.

The chair: How large is this number? Can you cite the number?

I do not know it exactly, but it was a large number.

The chair: Was force used in the conversion of the Croats to the Orthodox faith?

Certainly.

The chair: Do you know exactly how many converted?

I know approximately.

The chair: This is peculiar. You don't know how many Serbs converted to the Catholic faith. But you know how many Croats accepted the Orthodox faith during the time of Yugoslavia. What formalities were prescribed by the Church officials for the conversions?

My chancery can answer that.

The chair: Was it necessary for applications to be made for conversion?

They were made.

The chair: In every individual case?

Yes.

The chair: To whom?

To the Ecclesiastical See.

The chair: To the Ecclesiastical See of the appropriate bishopric?

Yes.

The chair: So in the area of the archbishopric of Zagreb, to you?

To the Archbishopric Court.

The chair: So the applications were made there?

Yes.

The chair: Was any kind of religious instruction a prerequisite for the act of rebaptism?

Yes.

The chair: How long did this religious instruction last?

Each according to the circumstances.

The chair: What does that mean, each according to the circumstances?

Each according to the circumstances means depending on how far they had progressed in religious instruction.

The chair: Was that the only criterion for conversion to the Catholic faith?

Yes.

The chair: The religious instruction thus for those who had progressed badly lasted longer than for others?

Yes.

The chair: In regard to this rebaptism, did you issue a resolution from the bishops' conference?

Yes.

The chair: Why did you see yourself obliged to issue this resolution?

Because it was necessary.

The chair: And why did you believe that it was necessary?

To inform everyone what we thought about this matter.

The chair: The resolution is dated 17 November 1941. So it was issued while the conference of the Croatian Catholic Episcopate was being held?

Yes.

The chair: And you considered it necessary to inform everyone what you were thinking about this matter? Exactly what did you say?

I cannot remember.

The chair: But nevertheless. Approximately what did you establish?

We agreed with the viewpoint of the Church.

The chair: And what was the viewpoint of the Church?

That no one can be accepted by force into the Catholic Church.

The chair: What did you say in this regard?

I do not know exactly.

The chair: Had conversion been conducted in the period before the issuance of this resolution?

I do not know exactly.

The chair: But what do you suppose? Were they conducted?

Probably not.

The chair: In the protocol you state something different.

I cannot remember exactly.

The chair: But when the conversion had not yet started, why did you consider it necessary to establish the principles of rebaptism in a resolution? I see a contradiction there. If the conversions had not yet begun, then you would not have needed to consider this problem.

(Silence)

The chair: Were you interested in what was happening in the area of your archbishopric regarding the conversions?

I developed everything through my Ecclesiastic See, through the archbishopric chancery.

The chair: What does that mean? What does it mean that you developed everything regarding it?

That means that I did not make the decisions myself.

The chair: And of course you did not work with it yourself, either? So you knew nothing about the whole matter yourself; you didn't know anything about the Ustasha crimes and the other things that happened in connection with the rebaptisms? But I know that that is not true! At the conference, was a committee formed in this matter?

Yes.

The chair: Who was on this committee?

That is listed in the protocol.

The chair: But why should we always read what you stated in the protocol? Answer personally and explain the connections here. Answer. The chair of the bishops' conference was you and you were also a member of this committee?

Yes.

The chair: Furthermore, the committee also consisted of Dr. Viktor Buric and Dr. Janko Simrak?

Yes.

The chair: So it was a three-person committee?

Yes.

The chair: What was the name of this three-person committee?

It had no name.

The chair: Up until this point in the Catholic Church of Croatia, was it the practice to have a three-person committee for the purpose of rebaptizing the Serbs?

No.

The chair: And why did this committee exist?

So there would be no abuse in this matter.

The chair: Did you achieve this goal?

I believe that we kept our conscience clear.

The chair: I did not ask you about your conscience, but whether or not you managed to prevent abuse.

I believe so.

The chair: Did you bring to task any priest who objected? And did you receive a report from any of the clergy under you about the number of converted Serbs?

The reports went to the Ecclesiastic See, to the consistorium.

The chair: Did you protest in any cases?

When we considered it necessary, then we did.

The chair: Didn't the number of people converting to the Catholic faith seem remarkably large to you?

There were special circumstances—but the main point is that we kept our conscience clear.

The chair: What was the criterion that decided the transfer from any faith, regardless which one, to Catholic belief?

I would prefer not to pursue this matter any further.

The chair: The basic stipulation is the conviction of the correctness of the Catholic faith, isn't it? Did you really believe that the enormous number

monished the clergy to ascribe the responsibility for the attitude of the people and of the clergy to Stepinac alone. The common Stepinac cannot have such influence, only the archbishop Stepinac.

The battle against me has been going on for 17 months in the press and in the public. Also I was de facto confined to the archbishop's palace for 12 months.

The rebaptism of the Serbs has been thrown at me as my crime. This, however, is an incorrect designation, because anyone who is once baptized does not have to be rebaptized. So we are talking about a change of religion.

I will not go into this any further, but will say only that my conscience is clear. History will some day judge the matter. The fact is that I had to transfer pastors because their lives had been threatened by the Orthodox; the Serbs were intending to kill them because they were delaying the conversions. The fact is that the Church during the war had to fight with thousands of problems. But it always acted in the interest of the Serbian people and always pursued the intention of helping them as much as possible. The chair showed me a letter in which I requested the unoccupied Orthodox cloister in Orehovicar, our former Pauline cloister, to house the Trapists whom the Germans had driven from Reichenburg. I considered it my duty to help our Slovene brothers who were expelled by the Nazis and had to bring them into safety.

The military vicarage has been thrown at me as a severe crime. The chair of the court asked me whether the treason of Yugoslavia was not clear to me when I took up relations with the Independent State of Croatia. In the former Yugoslavia, I was already military vicar and tried to regulate the question of the military vicarage in these eight to nine years of my activity. But no definitive solution was reached. The problem was finally regulated in Yugoslavia by the concordat, which came about under great difficulties and was even ceremoniously ratified in parliament, but was again destroyed by the mobs in the street.

When the war between Yugoslavia and Germany was over, I was obliged to render spiritual aid to the Catholic soldiers of former Yugoslavia as well as to those of the newly created Independent State of Croatia. We had to consider the fact that the state was eliminated, but the army still existed.

Neither for the Germans nor for the Ustashe was I a "persona grata." I was neither Ustasha nor did I take their oath, as did your officials present here. The Croatian people decided for the Croatian state, and I would be a monster if I would not feel the pulse of the Croatian people who were enslaved in the former Yugoslavia. To emphasize again: It was not possible for the Croatians to be promoted in the army or achieve diplomatic offices unless they changed their faith or married someone of the other faith. These are the facts and the background for my pastoral letters and sermons.

What I said about the right of the Croatian people to freedom and independence is in harmony with the fundamental principles of the allies that were brought up on Yalta and in the Atlantic Charter. Accordingly,

every people has the right to independence; why should this be prohibited from the Croatian people alone? The Holy See has often emphasized that even the little people and the national minorities have the right to freedom. Must the Catholic bishop and metropolitan keep quiet on the subject? If it must be, we will fall because we did our duty. If you believe that the Croatian people are satisfied with this fate and you give them the opportunity to express themselves about it, I will not stand in the way. I have respected the will of my people, and I will continue to respect it.

You accuse me of being an enemy of the government of the state and of the people. Please tell me what was my government in the year 1941. Was it that of the putsch instigator Simovic in Belgrade—the traitor, as you call him—the one in London, the one in Jerusalem, was it you in the forests or the one in Zagreb? And in the years 1943 and 1944, was it the government in London or the one in the forests? Only since 8 May 1945 have you been my government. Was I supposed to obey you guys in the woods and those in Zagreb? Can one serve two masters at the same time? That corresponds neither to the Catholic moral nor to international conventions, much less human rights. We were not able to ignore the government here, even if it was an Ustasha government. Only since 8 May 1945 have you had the right to interrogate me and to hold me responsible.

The chair of the court, Vimpulsek interrupts him: According to that then, we would not be permitted to judge either Pavelić nor Lisak.

As far as I'm concerned, you neither have proof of any terrorist activity nor will anyone believe you. Lisak, Lela Sofijanec, and others came to me under false names, and I received letters that I couldn't even read; if it is my fault that these people came to me, I will accept the judgment calmly.

I will not reproach myself for the fact that I gave the priest Maric a certificate of safe passage; my conscience is clear because it was not my intention to do an injustice, and with a peaceful heart, I could go to the other world with this accusation. Whether you want to believe me or not is beside the point. The defendant Zagreb archbishop cannot only suffer for his convictions but even die!

The regime president Dr. Bakaric told the priest Milanovic: "We are convinced that behind these actions stands the archbishop, but we have no proof." This is enough for me.

And then: What is our whole battle about? What is our trouble about? And why has the situation not calmed down?

The state attorney has confirmed so many times that there is nowhere a greater freedom of conscience than in this land. So I am taking the freedom to cite a few facts, from which the opposite will be seen. For the umpteenth time, I explain before all of you: 260 to 270 priests were murdered by the liberation movement. In no other civilized state would such a large number of priests be punished for such errors as you are insinuating.

You made the fatal mistake of killing these priests. The people will never

excuse you. Our Catholic schools, which were built with such immeasurable sacrifices, have been confiscated. The work of our priest seminaries has been crippled. And if I had not gotten material support from America, we would not have been in a position to be able to begin at all with the work this year.

[. . .]

The most painful point is the following: No priest and no bishop is sure of his life in these times, neither day nor night. Bishop Srebrnic was attacked on Susak by youth who were incited by certain people; they held him for three hours in a room and insulted him. They undertook further attacks, and your police only watched on. I myself experienced the same thing in Zapresic. During a confirmation trip, Bishop Lach was held for a whole night in Koprivnica, and he was not allowed to perform the confirmation. Even your people from the woods came to me and said: "That is unworthy behavior. We are going to the government to protest." Bishop Buric had his windows broken out with stones while he was on a confirmation trip. Bishop Pusic, as I heard recently, was hit with rotten apples and eggs.

The freedom which you proclaim is nothing more than sham, and we have no desire to be slaves without rights. We will fight with all legal means for our rights in this state.

As to the other accusations, with which you place us on a level with murderers and friends of terrorists, I say: Not all crimes in the former Independent State of Croatia were committed by the state militia and by the Ustashe. It was not easy for the Church to prevail. It had to battle many difficulties.

[. . .]

No one should think that I wanted the war. The present government should speak with the Holy See. The Church knows no dictates and is not opposed to legal pacts. If these exist, the bishops know very well what their duty is. In such a case, the priests—different from the case at hand—will address themselves to any blame.

Finally I would like to say a few words about the communist party, my actual accuser.

Anyone who believes that we have taken up our present position out of material reasons is mistaken, because we are also resolute after we have been reduced. We have no objections at all that the workers in the factories are getting more rights, because that is in harmony with the papal encyclical. We also do not object to just reforms. But the adherents of communism should, if they are allowed to preach and spread materialism, also allow us to take confessions and to spread our teachings. The Catholics have died for these rights, and they will continue to suffer a martyr's death for them.

I conclude: With a little good will, one can arrive at an understanding, but the initiative lies with the present regime! Neither I nor the Episcopate

are empowered to conclude such a basic pact. Only the state authority and the Holy See can do this. And as far as I and my court process are concerned: I need no mercy; my conscience is clear.

(A. Benigar: *Alojzije Stepinac, Croatian Cardinal,* pp. 582-88.)

22

Cloisters and Churches as Ustasha Bases

Special correspondent of Tanjug with the unit of the VIII Corps reports in a radio broadcast on the crimes of the monks from Siroki Brijeg:

> In the defeat of the enemy base Siroki Brijeg, the center of the Ustashe and the fascists in Hercegovina, many documents were discovered that shed light on the criminal activity of some monks. From the documents it is clear that the monks from Hercegovina were the most loyal colleagues of the Ustasha and of the occupiers. Franciscans not in the service of the Ustashe and of the Nazis were rare. For the most part, they committed treason against their own people, transformed the churches and cloisters into fascist fortresses, and misused them for the spread of fascist propaganda.
>
> Such a crime center was Siroki Brijeg, from which not only a great number of spiritual instigators of Ustasha crimes arose, but also many Ustasha murderers. In the cloister and in the Franciscan school, documents and photographs were confiscated that show this clearly. In the defeat of this base, luggage belonging to the monks was found in the cloister that they had prepared for flight with the Germans and the Ustashe. The Ustasha monks hid along with the German staff in the well fortified electricity central. From this base, the criminals fought to their last breath. Among the fallen monks were found considerable sums of money in dollars and in Kuna, as well as Ustasha identification. Six fallen monks were discovered in their positions in the trenches near the village of Knezpolie, some kilometers from Siroki Brijeg. Several monks managed to flee along with the scattered remains of German and Ustasha troops.
>
> Among them was also Pater Berto Dragicevic, an active Ustasha and commandant of the Ustasha poiice. In the end, he organized the Ustasha police from farmers whom he had enticed and misled with lies and promises.

Документи о злочиначком фратара из Широког Бријега

Специјални дописник Тањуг-а код јединица VIII корпуса радиограмом јавља:

Разбијањем непријатељског упоришта Широког Бријега, центра усташа и фашиста у Херцеговини, откривени су многи документи који осликавају злочиначко дјеловање неких фратара. Из ових се докумената види да су фратри из Херцеговине били најјачи сарадници усташа и окупатора. Ријетки су били фрањевци који нису били у служби усташа и хитлероваца. Великом су владали свој родни народ, а прије и самостално предсједници у фашистичке банде и злочинце, били их за широке фашистичке пропаганде.

Такав злочиначки центар био је и Широки Бријег и у њему је откривен не само велики број интелектуалних аутора усташких злочина, него и много усташких кољача. У самостану и фрањевачкој гимназији запљењени су документи и фотографије који то јасно показују. Приликом разбијања овог упоришта у самостану је пронађен портрет фратара који су се спремали да бијег с Нијемцима и усташама. Група фратара-усташа окупила се у јако утврђену споменичку централу тијесно с четничким штабом. Из тога упоришта борили су се они закључно до посљедњег даха. Код погинулих фратара нађено су такође своје униформе и мноштво оружја, као и усташке легитимације. Шест погинулих фратара нађено је на положају у рововима код села Кнежпоља, неколико километара од Широког Бријега. Неколицини фратара успјело је да побјегну са разбијеним остацима Шијекаца и усташа. Међу њима налази се и фра Берто Драгичевић, врховни усташа и командант усташке милиције. Он је у посљедње вријеме ојачао у усташку милицију сељаке, које је лагао и обманио разним лажима и обећањима. Усташки организатор био је и фра Дилда Чорић. У самостану је нађена фотографија на којој је овај фратар сликан како са шлемом на глави сједи у тенку заједно с италијанским војницима. Поред ове фотографије нађене су још многе на којима је снимљен у другој усташкој одјећи фратар Чорић је организовао усташки подмладак, давао пријемнице у војска је подијелио усташке легитимације Јозу Францетићу и Пеленићу. Био је усташки логорник негдје у сјеверној Хрватској. Међу фратрима у Широком Бријегу било је активних усташких шпијуна, што је потврдио и један заробљени усташки војник који је служио код тукача. Међу овим усташима био је и фра Јозо, професор средњег гимназије. Гвардијан самостана Широког Бријега, фра Крешо Пејић био је повезан и радио с фра Радом Бужићем био усташки у другој [illegible] [illegible] У аксиом [illegible] [illegible] је фратар [illegible] у чиме [illegible] [illegible], пронађена су и писма која је упућивао фра Крешо Пејићу писао збјегунац из Лабашнице фра Никола Пешковић. Тако у писму од 3 марта 1943 овај злочинац, говорећи о борбама партизана против Пјемонта Талијана, усташа и четника код Лабашнице, пише: „Ја сам пратио ратно за план партизана и упорно ме то италијанску команду". Фрањо Пешковић је родом из села Шпегарића код Лубушког. Он је био усташа још прије 1941 и активно је судјеловао у покољу Срба и у борбама око Пересјека годе 1941.

Многи фратари бавили су се активно шпијунажом и били у служби Гестапоа, па су у ослобођено крајево слали шпијуне. Тако је у селу Дриновцима, код Лубушког, усташа и Милан Стојић, док нису гонили фрањевачке гимназије у Широком Бријегу, хотјели фратри послали у њихово родно мјесто да шпијунирају у корист усташа. Овај се је шпијунак био пријавио Народно-ослободилачком одбору и добио учитељско мјесто.

Сада је разбијено ово усташко легло у којем су фратри тровали омладину и настојали да ербују народ у усташко-фашистичку службу.

Tanjug report about the monks of Siroki Brijeg.

Also Pater Didart Coric was an Ustasha organizer. In the cloister, a photograph was found in which he is depicted sitting with Italian soldiers in a tank and with a helmet on his head. In two other photographs, he can be seen with Ustasha murderers. Pater Coric organized the Ustasha Youth and held speeches in which he glorified the Ustasha criminals Jure Francetic and Pavelić. He was an Ustasha camp director somewhere in northern Croatia.

Among the monks in Siroki Brijeg, there were active spies for the Gestapo; this was confirmed by a captured German soldier who was serving as translator. Among these Gestapo people was also Pater Granic, teacher at the Franciscan school. The cloister administrator at Siroki Brijeg, Pater Kreso Pandzic, spoke German and along with Pater Rade Vuksic was constantly in the company of German officers. In the archives of the cloister, in addition to letters that Pater Oton Knezovic had sent to the murderer Pavelić in the name of the cloister, were found also the letters that Pater Nikola Ivankovic, pastor from Jablanica, had sent to the cloister administrator Pater Kreso Pandzic.

In his letter of 2 March 1943, this criminal writes about the battles of the partisans against the Germans, Italians, Ustashe, and Cetniks near Jablanica: "Privately I learned of the plans of the partisans and informed the Italian command." Pater Ivankovic from the village of Predgradje near Ljubuski had been an Ustasha already before 1941 and actively took part in the Serb massacre and in the battles around Nevesinje.

Many monks were in the service of the Gestapo as active spies and sent spies into the liberated areas. Thus, for example, in the village Drinovci in Ljubuski county, Milan Simic, student in the 5th year of the Franciscan school in Siroki Brijeg, was arrested. He was sent by the monks into his birthplace to spy for the Ustashe. This traitor reported to the People's Liberation Committee and received a teaching position.

Siroki Brijeg, this breeding place of the Ustasha, in which the monks poisoned the youth and tried to win the people for Ustasha service, has now been defeated.

(Report by Tanjug, broadcast and published after the liberation of Siroki Brijeg—now Listice—in heavy battles on the 6th and 7th of February 1945, in which the units of the 26th division of the VIII Corps of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia defeated the 270th regiment of the German 369th legionnaire division and heavy Ustasha militia.)

PART FIVE

THE POPE'S LOYALTY TO THE USTASHE EVEN AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE NDH

23

The Efforts of the Vatican to Save the NDH

At the beginning of 1943, the Vatican began seriously to fear that the fascists would not win. Italy stood before collapse. The Allies were wielding decisive blows to the Nazi war machine. In Yugoslavia, the People's Liberation battle was fully kindled. The perspectives for a new Yugoslavia were becoming more and more clear. Along with other concerns, those involving the NDH particularly tormented the Vatican. Lobkowicz wrote in a letter of 18 June 1943 to Lorkovic the following:

> Cardinal-State Secretary Maglione expressed his regret to Marcone that one is obliged to fear the fate of the Croatian state after the war's end.

In another letter of 14 April 1943, Lobkowicz had reported on his conversation with Montini, who in spite of the critical situation was insistent that the NDH must be maintained:

> He is convinced that Croatia is a bulwark (Montini used the German expression) against Bolshevism, that the Holy See knows this, and that it is interested in the preservation of the present eastern borders of Croatia. The Croats could not amalgamate with the Serbs.

This was the view of the two persons closest to the pope at this critical point in time. Characteristic was also the attitude of Cardinal Pizzardo, one of the most prominent people in the College of Cardinals and next

to Pacelli as candidate for the papal chair. Lobkowicz wrote on 10 June 1943:

> The cardinal (Pizzardo) sees the present world situation as something fleeting and thinks that the current map of Europe will see great changes. He further holds the view that the Croats must be separated from the Serbs in any case. Otherwise, he is most inclined toward the Danube Confederation as the key to the solution of the problems in central and southeastern Europe.

Cardinal Marchetti-Selvaggiani, papal governor in the Roman bishopric, was also of this opinion. Lobkowicz wrote about him:

> He showed great interest in our matters and in our questions and he agreed with me in the question of the Drina border, but he added that he doubted seriously that we would succeed in this, especially in case that the Allies would win.
>
> (Letter of 10 June 1943)

In the same letter there is also mention of the views of Cardinal Pellegrinette, the former nuncio in Belgrade, who spoke about Yugoslavia and the Serbs only in tones full of hate. Monsignore Felice, likewise former nuncio in Belgrade, also thought the same, and Cardinal Fumasonik Biondi "expressed his inner desire that God preserve Croatia."

Anyone who knows the Vatican will not assume that the pope and the others only "desired inwardly" with folded arms or fervently prayed to God that he "preserve Croatia." But rather, they worked at it in their well known ways.

It is historically proven that Pope Pius XII immediately before the American invasion of Italy undertook great efforts to save Mussolini's fascist regime by means of a cleverly negotiated compromise with the United States. The role of Myron Taylor, then personal ambassador from Roosevelt to the pope, as well as that of the American archbishop (and later cardinal) Spellman, who was in Rome for this matter, was revealed in various publications. To the sorrow of the pope, Roosevelt was the one to thwart the plan, although around him there were also people who wanted fascism to remain in power in Italy.

Already in 1943, Pius XII realized that Germany and Italy would lose the war. Already then he began his activities for a peace of compromise. Historically two actions are known with which the pope was intent upon saving as much as possible of the fascist reactions in both countries.

Salvemini and La Piana wrote extensively about this in their book *La sorte dell' Italia.* They come to the following conclusion: "Fascism, with

or without Mussolini, was to stay in power" (p. 198). The goal was to prevent revolution and Communism in Italy.

Various solutions were weighed: one saw Grandi, the fascist minister, another saw Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, as the new head of state.

> Nowhere else, if we exclude fascist circles, was panic and fear of the direct collapse of Mussolini greater than in the Vatican. It saw in advance that the Italian people after the liberation would not forget the Church's co-guilt in the fascist tragedy and would not forgive her.
>
> (ibid., p. 343)

The American Cardinal Spellman was active as a go-between in Rome in 1943, that is, still during the war. When he returned to America, Spellman declared that "the Vatican is deeply concerned about the social unrest that could arise in Italy after the military defeat" (*New York Times*, 12 May 1943). The Pius-Spellman plan saw "a period of time of 10 years for the political consolidation of Italy," in which the political goal was to be reached—preventing a Communist revolution. During the time of his diplomatic activity, Spellman in his own way influenced the revolutionary will of the Italian masses. In June 1943, he spoke before 25,000 workers in Rome:

> Salvation does not lie in revolution! . . . Italy needs the spirit of true solidarity and brotherliness, which will embrace everyone, the workers and the employers, great and small. In a word: all classes of the people.

According to his words, revolution destroys "private property and the basis of the family." The masses should therefore forgive the bloodthirsty fascists so that society and its conservative make-up can be maintained and Italy can be turned into an Anglo-American protectorate without difficulty.

Although the original plan did not quite succeed, a portion of what the pope wanted was realized. Revolution in Italy was not thwarted by the activity of the pope and his Anglo-American friends, but by the mistakes of the Communist party there. As a result, the pope succeeded in bringing his Christian Democratic outfit into power. Whereas one entered into coalitions in the beginning—even with the Communists—the actual goal of gradually pushing the Communists completely out of power was soon reached. Likewise, essential elements of fascism were saved—as the pope had wanted.

In reference to German fascism, Pius XII started his rescue plan already in 1943. In July of 1943, the Spanish magazine *Informaciones* wrote

that the pope was warning of the danger "that would arise if the demand of Germany's unconditonal capitulation would be accepted." The Reuter news agency reported on 23 July 1943 from Rome that the Vatican wanted to assume the role of go-between in the peace talks between the Allies and Germany.

The magazine *Newsweek* published in August 1943 "from well informed sources" in London the news that the pope was working on a peace of compromise with Germany. At the same time, a group of former Catholic priests in England in their magazine *Converted Catholics* accused the pope of wanting to save Nazi rule from collapse under the guise of neutrality. And, indeed, still while he was "working at peace," Pius XII sent Hitler a cordial telegram in which he congratulated him that the attack on his life was not successful.

Following the pope's directives, the American bishops, who had sabotaged the efforts to destroy fascism all during the war, then formed a "Committee for the Propagation of Peace Plans," that is, for the rescue of Hitler and Nazi fascism.

But the pope still had other wishes and intentions. In one of his last interviews, Jan Masaryk reported to the American magazine *The Protestant:* "There is proof that the Vatican during the war had the intention of uniting the German military with the Americans in a common effort against the Soviet Union." But Roosevelt lived too long, . . . All that did not bring the results that the pope wanted, but his participation in efforts to see that Nazism in Germany and fascism in Italy were never quite liquidated and today are again gaining territory is nevertheless not minute. Related to these intentions from the pope, arose also the project of a Croatian state with the Drina as border.

The fact that Spellman at the time of his stay in Rome in 1943 was in contact with the Ustasha representatives, the fact that the Ustasha deputies conducted conversations with him—upon instructions from the Vatican—is a sure fact that is proven through documents. Croatia was only a building block in a comprehensive plan that probably did not differ from the one that Cardinal Pizzardo rewrote as the "Danube Confederation."

The fact that the Vatican already at that time intended to set up a Catholic monarchy in Austria again with Otto von Habsburg at its head is also proof. To rescue all of Hitler Germany seemed to the pope to be impossible and perhaps also undesirable. He surely reckoned with a division of Hitler Germany and in his plans he also considered Catholic Bavaria along with Austria.

The pope even let his thoughts lead him to uniting these two countries. They were to form the nucleus of a Catholic state block to which Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia were to belong also. It

is no secret that the Vatican was still mourning the Habsburg monarch. The Austrian empire was the bulwark of Catholicism in central Europe, the only empire in which the Church had substantial rights and in which the state promoted and favored religion actively. The Holy See saw the reestablishment of the Habsburg empire as a necessary barrier against the spread of Protestantism from the north, of Communism from the east, and of Orthodoxy from the south.

From the viewpoint of Catholic interests, that was a vital task; the plan, however, could not be realized; Roosevelt ultimately stood in the way.

But it is indisputable that the Vatican in 1943 tried to solve the problem of the Catholic monarchy for Austria with the cooperation of America and that in doing so it had also brought up the Croatian question. It is also known that the pope later, when Rome was already occupied by the Allies, continued with even greater vehemence with the Allies its efforts to reorganize central and southern Europe according to its interests. In the great trials against the Ustasha war criminals in Zagreb and in the detailed research on the activity of the Church, the connections between these plans and the behavior of the Vatican in Croatia were clear. Specifically, the Vatican—with the help of Archbishop Stepinac—had tried to make it easier for the Allies to intervene in the "rescue of Croatia" through the transformation of the Ustasha state into a pseudo-democratic system, i.e., to effect the occupation of Yugoslavia by the Allies at least up to the Drina.

But the Vatican was not successful in this. But from the directives that it gave to its subservient organs in Croatia, it must be concluded that the Vatican as well as the Croatian clergy up to the last moment, up to the day of liberation, believed that these plans would be realized.

So it was not only the fanaticism of Stepinac, who explained why he so steadfastly stuck to the rescue of the Ustasha state at a time when it was clear to everyone that the liquidation of Ustashadom was imminent and unavoidable. Only the pope's directive could have brought him to speak so totally for the rescue of the NDH.

The conclusions from Yalta and the obligations that Roosevelt had assumed could, however, not be so easily neglected, and in the final analysis the positive powers on this side won out. In the end, to be sure, the power of the People's Liberation Army is to be thanked for the fact that all the efforts failed to establish a situation in the western Balkans that was favorable to the pope.

But it is certain that the Vatican, through negotiations by Archbishop Spellman at the beginning of 1943, also plied the government of the United States to save the NDH.

From the report of the "extraordinary representative of the NDH in

Rome," Lobkowicz, on 6 March 1943, it can be seen how Spellman saw the NDH:

> In New York, I had the opportunity to visit Archbishop Spellman in the company of his secretary Wurster: The archbishop, as you know, was in Rome for about two weeks. Numerous rumors arose concerning the significance of this visit and his person. After my encounter with him, I see the following facts as absolutely certain:
>
> Spellman was already before his appointment to the office of Archbishop of New York a political personality, specifically an official of the Vatican state secretariat under the present pope, the then state secretary Pacelli. He was Pacelli's confidant, traveled a lot, and established a lot of connections. As a cosmopolitan person, he was the first and probably the only Catholic bishop to get a pilot's license and piloted a passenger plane in Alaska during an inspection trip. In his time, the press all over the world wrote about the "flying bishop."
>
> Now he is the confidant of President Roosevelt, who sees in him the most prominent representative of North American Catholicism, especially since he was a former coworker of the present pope. Spellman is simultaneously the military vicar for the Catholic soldiers in the American army.
>
> On his trip to Rome, he spent three hours in Madrid in conversation with the Caudillo. The Spanish ambassador promised to get me detailed information about this meeting.
>
> During his stay in Rome, he was received by the pope in four long audiences. No one knows what they talked about.—As you know, there are things that the pope does not entrust even to the Cardinal State Secretary himself, as was also the case with the visit from Taylor.
>
> Spellman explained again to the local personages that his trip was of a strictly Church nature and that there was no political background for it.
>
> The Italian government behaved very obligingly toward him. The personal guard was left to the Vatican police. Only upon crossing the city, was he accompanied by an Italian police car. He lived outside the Vatican in Gianicolo, the extraterritorial area of the papal college "De Propaganda Fide" is the building of the North American Institute.
>
> My audience with Spellman came about through negotiations of the local American canon, member of the Liberian Chapter, whom I have known for some years and who lives constantly in Rome, after I had conferred with the ambassador S. Peric.
>
> Spellman's secretary himself called me and arranged a meeting for Tuesday, the 8th of March at 8:30. We met at the agreed time in his residence. While we were waiting, the secretary was able to look through the calling cards that were lying on the table and convinced himself that among them were the calling cards of numerous Italian dignitaries—for example that of the head of the appellate court, several senators, etc. Even two ministers from the present cabinet are to have visited him.

I gave him my calling card. While we were waiting, we heard the word "Croatia" in a lively conversation in his room.

Spellman received us with extraordinary courtesy and said immediately: "You can't tell me much new about your matters. I am well informed on everything and know the Croatian problem well. Some years ago, I traveled in your country and just the diffrence between Belgrade and Semmon, not to mention Zagreb, told me enough: these are two different worlds! They don't belong together."

We agreed that the present Croatian state was an important bulwark of Catholicism and of the west against the east and that the Drina border represents the guarantee for the preservation of the Catholic position in this area. A reestablishment of Yugoslavia would mean not only the destruction of the Croatian people but also of Catholicism in this area. Instead of a border of the west at the Drina, we would then have the borders of Byzantinism at the Karawankas.

Spellman agreed with these explanations and added that President Roosevelt was for the freedom of all peoples and the Croats were no exception. He also said that he personally wanted to do everything in his power for us, but that we, however, had numerous enemies and one cannot do much against many. He said he was very pleased with the Croats in his bishopric, the priesthood as well as the faithful. He emphasized again that he was very well informed about us, partially by the secretary of the Zagreb archbishop Dr. Lackovicz, who had also visited him.

We presented to him the gray book and our last copy of the Ustasha principles in Latin. He leafed through it with interest and asked: "Does President Roosevelt have it?" We replied that that is probably not the case. Then he recommended forwarding a copy to Tittman, Roosevelt's permanent ambassador in the Vatican. We replied that our state was in a war with the United States and it was therefore impossible to pursue such relationships; and especially because of our being Croatian Catholics, we had addressed him as the Catholic bishop whose concern was known to many of our emigrants. He accepted this with complete understanding. His attitude told us that he was intending to deliver the gray book and the Ustasha principles to President Roosevelt.

Since we were pressed for time in order to get to the farewell audience with the Holy Father, our visit had to be ended. He accompanied us to the car, helped us personally into our coats, and was overall more than cordial. He regretted that he could not spend more time with us. Upon our departure, he said in English: "God bless Croatia!"

This letter documents the fact that Spellman was quite well informed about the conditions in the Ustasha state and conveyed great sympathies to the Croatian fascists. That means that he got precisely the same impression in the Vatican that the Ustashe gave him. Also for him, Yugoslavia was a danger for Catholicism and for western civilization just as

it was for the most avid Ustasha! He, too, spoke of Byzantium! Like the other Roman cardinals, he, too, was enthusiastic about the Ustasha principles.

But although he wanted to rescue the NDH according to papal wishes, it can be seen from Lobkowicz's words that he was not very confident ("We have numerous enemies. . . .").

This report from Lobkowicz also shows that Spellman had contact with the fascist government in the midst of the war. With his desire to help fascism in an already rather difficult and critical situation, he was fully on the papal course.

We have seen how in 1942 Archbishop Stepinac in Rome during his papal visit made headway for Pavelić and the Ustasha state and that the Ustashe were especially enthusiastic about him because of it. In May of 1943, Stepinac was in Rome again. This time he came with the expressed purpose of firming up the position of the NDH and to prepare the Vatican for action in case any changes of international character were to come about. Even Stepinac was under the impression of an outcome unfavorable to fascism and to Ustashadom. That is why he gave the pope a memorandum in which the main point was the fervent request for the pope to spare nothing to assure the continuation of the NDH. In this memorandum (of 18 May 1943), Stepinac was operating especially with the fact that the Ustasha state had been of service in the mass conversion of the Serbs, so that the base of the Catholic Church had been increased by it. The fall of the NDH would bring about the loss of these masses of new followers gained by force. At this place, Stepinac said the following:

> As you are bringing peace to the world, Holy Father, think also of the Croatian nation which has always been true to Christ and to you. The young Croatian state, which over a period of time of several centuries came into being under more terrible and more difficult circumstances than any other state and which has fought despairingly for its existence, thereby shows that it desires to remain true to his Catholic tradition under all circumstances and wishes better to secure more clearly the influence of the Catholic Church in this part of the globe. In the case of a defeat or of its diminution, thousands of Croatian faithful and priests would willingly and gladly sacrifice their lives to prevent this happening. Not only would those approximately 240,000 people converted from Serb Orthodoxy be lost, but also the whole Catholic population of many areas with all their churches and their cloisters.

Stepinac thus reveals that up to the middle of 1943 no less that 240,000 Serb Orthodox were converted by force! He operated with this overwhelming number before the pope as with a positive and brilliant result and emphasized

that this great success, which surely pleased the pope, too, would be ruined if the NDH were to perish! Is this not yet another proof for the fact that the pope was directly responsible for the mass conversions in Croatia, i.e., also for what followed the conversion?! This memorandum also contains the following text:

> Following the nature of the matter, and in case God does not have a great miracle in mind, the success of Catholicism is closely bound with the success of the Croatian state; the existence of Catholicism is coupled with the existence of the state. The salvation of the state is the salvation of Catholicism, Holy Father.! As I believe firmly in divine grace and providence, whose chosen one you are, I commend the independent State of Croatia to your divine care and your prayers in the conviction that I am at the same time to the best of my abilities commending the holy faith in my homeland and in the Balkan.

Again: The Church cannot get along without the Ustasha state and the state cannot get along without the Church. It must be noted that Stepinac does not limit the matter to Croatia but he is playing on the interests of the Church in the whole Balkan! That means that he was likewise of the opinion that the Ustasha state was only the starting point for an offensive and the expansion of its territory in the remaining Balkan.

When Stepinac returned from Rome, his paper *Katolicki list* (Nr. 23, 1943) announced that the pope had blessed the priesthood and Ustasha Croatia. The archbishop published in the paper a letter in which he

> announces to the faithful that the Holy Father Pius XII upon my [Stepinac's, author's note] official visit sends through me to his faithful in the archbishopric of Zagreb and in Croatia his cordial and paternal blessing and is asking the dear Lord for help for us and our homeland.

Lobkowicz reported on 10 June 1943 enthusiastically on Stepinac's effect in the Vatican. He continues to say that upon this occasion even the papal legate in Zagreb, Marcone, was in Rome (in order to support Stepinac), and that Marcone told him that Stepinac:

> had reported positively about Croatia in the Vatican. It can be seen that the Vatican is still well disposed toward Croatia. It is said that in the Vatican Archbishop Stepinac was advised to try to strive for the most cordial relationship possible with the Croatian state authorities.

It is significant that Stepinac was given such advice at the same time that they were working to more closely unite Ustashadom with the Croa-

tian Farmers Party for tactical reasons—in regard to the outcome of the war. Of greatest concern to the Vatican was Ustashadom with Pavelić at its head. Lobkowicz wrote further: "The archbishop said that he could see a distinct difference in the attitude of the Vatican in regard to the Croatian state a year ago and today. He discerned a basic improvement in every respect."

That means: An even better attitude than the earlier one—which was good! In the following, we want to show the unusual way in which Stepinac spoke for Ustashadom to the pope and his following in the Vatican: "He raised especially," so says Lobkowicz, "our laws against the crime of abortion, which would be very much welcomed in the Vatican."

It is interesting that the Vatican was so much concerned with this problem, while the fact that the Ustasha were slaughtering thousands upon thousands of people did not cause it the slightest concern. Lobkowicz continues: "On the basis of these laws, the archbishop partially justifed also the tactics against the Jews, who in our country are the greatest advocates of such a crime." (i.e., of abortion).

The matter could not be clearer. Even if only "partially," the persecution of the Jews by the Ustasha is forgiven! This document deserves special attention and we can count these few lines among the most condemning documentation.

There is no doubt that the pope at this occasion gave Stepinac the guarantee or at least a firm promise that he would proceed according to the wishes of his memorandum and that he would intervene for the NDH under all possible circumstances, so that the NDH would not disappear from the picture at the end of the war. The blessing of the pope and his promise was quite justifiably interpreted by the Ustasha to mean that the pope was praying for their "homeland."

At precisely that time (2 May 1943) the organ of the bishopric Sarajevo, *Katolicki tjednik*, wrote about the visit of the papal legate Abbot Marcone in Bosnia and in Hercegovina and emphasized that he "is very amicably and very properly concerned about the welfare of the Croatian people. He reflects only loyally the thoughts and the feelings of Pius XII, and we have always known that the popes were the greatest friends of the Croats and of Croatia."

There is no doubt that the archbishop knew precisely how the pope was thinking and what he had in mind to do for the NDH. At that time, Marcone visited the representatives of the Ustasha regime in Mostar and the Ustasha military commandant and held agitating speeches against the partisans. *Katolicki tjednik* on 23 May 1943 wrote extensively about this and told that the legate emphasized "that the Holy Father was follow-

ing with the greatest love and sympathy the development and the welfare of the small but loyal Croatian people. . . ."

The paper writes further that the papal legate:

> conversed especially long with our Ustasha representatives. He brought cordial greetings from the Holy Father and wanted to hear everything that was worrying the Croatian people. He emphasized that the Holy Father was very much interested in the conditions and the life of the Croatian people.

There is no doubt that the papal legate completely identified the Ustasha criminals with the Croatian state and the Croatian people, and that the pope considered it necessary to support the Ustashe and to eliminate whatever was "worrying" them. In actuality, this was directed against the interests and the longings of the people, which had long fought against the Ustashe.

In one of the preceding chapters, we spoke of the special audience that the pope granted to the Ustasha minister David Sincic on 9 May 1943, as well as what Sincic reported to the Ustasha foreign ministry about the course of the audience. We remember how he emphasized the ceremonial character of the audience and repeated what the pope said about Pavelić and the NDH. But the report by Sincic was nevertheless more of a formal character, and he did not expose everything in it that he talked about with the pope. He had made this report more upon the request of the Ustasha authority in the Vatican, Lobkowicz, who according to protocol sent it to Lorkovic—along with his own regular report. But it became known that Sincic had more extensive talks with the pope.

In a trial of a group of war criminals in Zagreb in May and July 1947, Sincic appeared as a witness (he was condemned as a war criminal in another trial) and told everything that he knew about the plans to save the NDH with the help of the relationships with the Vatican and the western allies, and finally he also told of the goal of his trip to Rome and his visit with the pope.

During the hearing before the court on 2 June 1947, Sincic said the following:

> I described to him our situation under the double occupation. Then we came to speak of the international situation. I complained to the pope about the Italian army and asked him to intervene because at that time I was leading the action for the liberation of our people interned in Italy, which was getting nowhere. But I was still successful in actually getting them out of the camp before the Germans came. While we were discussing the world situation, we came to speak of Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia, and the pope

> told me: "Italy will soon find a way to get out of the war, and the Italian people will soon make a contribution toward peace in the world. Italy is seeking and will find the way. I am working on it. Also elsewhere there is work on it." In this connection, the pope was especially interested in Macek and the Croatian Farmers Party. He was of the opinion that the situation in Croatia could be changed by this party.
>
> Then he spoke about the communist danger that was threatening the world, and about how the question of Croatia and the other states could be regulated. Croatia was to play an important role in this. In Italy itself, the authorities would seek their own way toward their salvation, because they saw the danger of communism and also the futility of the war that Germany was conducting. "I believe," continued the pope, "that the German people should also do this, but it is especially necessary that the people of the Balkan do it. I am happy that recently General Antonesco from Rumania was here, who told me in conversation that also in the Balkan and in the rest of the world there is a desire to proceed this way. I am also working for this."

From this conversation between Sincic and the pope, it is clear that the pope was having an effect on the Ustashe so that they, too, would align themselves with the Croatian Farmers Party. By playing on the Italian fascists and on the fascist collaborator Antonesco, he was recommending to the Ustashe to save themselves by any sort of subterfuge, or to come across positively to the allies. In the same conversation, the pope asked about Pavelić, sent his greetings, and expressed the desire to see him again. Undoubtedly, the pope had also employed the American Archbishop Spellman only to influence the allies.

Later Sincic told the court that he had made an "oral report" in Zagreb about the visit with the pope.

> They happily agreed with me, asked me to continue my work in building even more contacts and asked me to stay in Italy until the expected events would occur, because this was the beginnings of my contacts with the Vatican. . . . Stepinac was satisfied with this development. He wanted to influence the poglavnik in order to make it possible for the Farmers Party to work among the people, so that it would become stronger. He was of the opinion that after the victory of the allies, they would take over the power in Croatia. Stepinac said that even if the English had not yet won in Italy, they would by 1944, and therefore he wanted to do everything to save Croatia.

But, as is known, things developed differently. Nevertheless, we must note how and why the pope worked for the salvation of the Ustasha state and how he was intending to proceed in the matter.

In the same trial, Marcic appeared as witness. He had been involved in Germany in an action to rescue the Ustasha state. Marcic testified the following:

> It is clear that behind this plan stood the Vatican, who supported it because it presented only advantages for the Vatican in every respect: On the one hand, a barrier was created against the USSR, on the other hand, the freedom to negotiate was maintained, even if it did not lead immediately to the desired Danube Confederation.

Marcic, too, was in touch with Stepinac:

> I returned to Zagreb and described the situation to Stepinac in a lengthy discussion. He, too, was enthusiastic about this solution, because he as archbishop is a man of the Vatican who cannot deal otherwise and cannot think other than along the directives that he receives.

According to the testimony from Simic as well as that of Marcic, both of whom were active as Ustasha ambassadors and were initiated into the plans, it was a matter of the destruction of Yugoslavia or of the rescue of the reactionary fascist structure that was the NDH. This happened with the perspective that Croatia was to be a part of a Danube Confederation or that a block of Catholic states in central Europe was to be formed under the direct control of the Vatican.

That was the middle of 1943 shortly before the capitulation of Italy. Since no advance by the allies over Italy or on other paths in the direction of the Balkan could be expected, the Ustasha continued the old course. Up to the end, they maintained the firm belief that the pope would stay with the familiar viewpoint and would save the NDH in any case. The cordial relationships between the Vatican and Pavelić would continue.

For a grand pilgrimage in Marija Bistrica in July 1944, Stepinac held a sermon that was even more remarkable since everyone had to know that the defeat of fascism was at hand.

The main Ustasha newspaper *Hrvastski narod* on 23 July 1944 carried a one-page report with the title "The first Prelate of Croatia," which was supplied with a picture that showed the archbishop in ceremonial vestments alongside Pavelić. The paper referred to Stepinac as the "prime nobleman of the kingdom" and compared him to that ecclesiastical honor bearer who in the middle ages had stood in the foremost position in the retinue of Croatian kings, i.e., it awarded him this position in the retinue of Pavelić. The Ustasha paper commented on the sermon in Marija Bistrica as follows:

> It is probably no accident that His Eminence Stepinac chose this great holy shrine of Croatian Catholicism to exercise his office. He came not only as shepherd of souls or to speak about the great religious and moral dangers and tasks of our tragic times, but also as the first prelate of Croatia. In this function, he has taken a position on the existential questions of his people and has expressed his views with words out of which was speaking the whole authority of the archbishopric office and of the first Catholic honor bearer in the Croatian state.

Stepinac used the opportunity to speak about the war and the Ustasha state, which the mother of God would protect and save:

> If the war opponents who cloak our land in horrors see it as a crime that the Croatian people, who have longed for freedom with all their power and with their whole hearts for centuries, today defend their state independence with incredible sacrifices, then all the other peoples would also be criminals who also bear such an unwavering longing for freedom and independence. No one is to doubt the fact that the Croats will never abandon their rights. Our plea to the mother of God from Bistrica is: "Help us! Today, when the world is crumbling and a flood of destructive views floods the soul, help the Croatian people to remain true to their Catholic past. For two decades, the communist philosophy has been urged upon the world. The Croatian people has up to now resisted it. Help us that they will continue to resist in the future. . . ."

The archbishop referred to the conditions that the occupying powers and the Ustasha had created in Croatia as the goal for which all fighters for freedom and independence had longed in the history of Croatia. The allies and the people's liberation movement, which ultimately brought freedom to the Croatian people, were sentenced by the archbishop and he referred to them as war criminals!

The newspaper of the Ustasha movement, *Hrvastski narod,* thrust this sermon by the Zagreb archbishop in Marija Bistrica into the proper light and wrote:

> That is an attitude true to the principles of the Croatian people's right to their own state. When these words come from the mouth of the Zagreb archbishop, then they are not only words in the name of human laws but through them the eternal weight of divine right is cast into the balance in favor of the Croatian battle for their own state.

Since he knew the power of such a statement, the bishop added: No one should doubt that the Croats would ever relinquish their right. You could

not deny this about the Croatian people, not even in the states that were fighting on the other side in the war for allegedly the same goal, national self-determination of the peoples.

Through this statement, the Catholic Church in Croatia again put words into the mouth of its highest honor bearer concerning the Croatian people's position regarding the fight that is being fought in the name of divine and human rights.

The Nazis' official news agency made a lot of publicity for this sermon. For this reason, Radio London reacted to the statements of Archbishop Stepinac as follows:

> The allied pilots do not machine-gun the population of a single occupied country that is fighting for its freedom. They shoot only at military installations of the Germans and the Ustashe.

[The archbishop, on the other hand, had instilled fear into the procession by maintaining they would be attacked from the air with machine guns. . . .]

> Only the Germans and their lackeys can claim that the allies perform bestialities. Only the Ustashe can claim that the Croatian people under their rule are defending freedom and independence, because they themselves are neither free nor independent. The allies will force communist ideology onto no country, not even Croatia. The policy of the allies is expressed in one sentence: The people will decide on their government themselves. In regard to the very delicate and sharp statements that the German news agency ascribes to Dr. Stepinac, he himself must attest to whether the German propaganda is telling a lie. Otherwise it is clear that Archbishop Dr. Stepinac has now publicly added his name to the list of his Nazi and Ustasha protectors, and that means that he is an enemy of the allies.

But it was not concocted German propaganda, and the archbishop had nothing to deny. To the contrary, he confirmed his performance at Marija Bisirica in the newspaper *Katolicki list* on 13 July 1944 with a decisive position in favor of the NDH. He especially emphasized the necessity of awakening in the people a trust in the free Croatian state, this state of the thousand-year struggle for freedom, independence, and for the right to national self-determination, which, he says, has finally been achieved in this war.

Katolicki list writes literally:

> What does its national state mean to the people? Our national Croatian sons see in it the highest power and authority. They are flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood; they feel in the same spirit in which the people

> also feel. It must therefore be made clear to the people that those in power are their proper friends, that they want and do good for them. The people must learn to value and revere their government properly and to work with it as closely as possible. One of the most important and greatest, but also one of the most difficult tasks is now to transfer this national organism from the traditional spirit of opposition into the spirit of cooperation with the government. The people already recognize and will see much more clearly in the future that all laws levied by the peoples' state are only for the good of the people. The people feel it now already, and when the situation calms down, it will feel even stronger and more clearly that the money of the people is spent only for its own good.

That was clear language: the Croatian episcopate with its archbishop at the head put the whole authority of the Church into the service of the Ustasha state in order to weaken the hatred and the mistrust of the people for this monstrous structure. The Church used its pulpits to deceive the people and to convince them that the Ustasha criminals had only their good in mind. The Church admonished the people to love and to revere these criminals, to obey their terrible laws, and to give them their money.

It is surely unnecessary to point out the relationships between the Croatian episcopate and the Vatican at that time. The bishops could not have behaved this way if this had not coincided with the will of the Vatican. The episcopate informed the Vatican about the events in the NDH and about the peoples' liberation struggle and received directives from the Vatican.

In *Hrvastski narod* there was the following on 23 July 1944:

> "I am an unshakeable optimist in regard to the future of the Croatian people," said His Eminence, the Archbishop Dr. Stepinac, recently as he once again had the grace to receive us again in his historical residence. Since we know him, we know that it is primarily the consciousness of the justice of the battle of the Croatian people that makes him so optimistic. We also know—and we derive this from the conversation with him and his closest colleagues—that he makes every effort to contribute with his deeds to our being able to look to the future with hope.
>
> On his frequent travels to the Vatican, the Zagreb archbishop always appeared as a worthy prelate of his state. He never missed the chance to be the first to celebrate the holy mass for a happy end to the struggle of the Croats at the grave of Saint Peter, and no less to state his position in favor of the rights of the Croatian people before the head of the Catholic Church, one of the greatest authorities in today's world, by informing the curia about the real situation in Croatia.
>
> Although the Vatican diplomacy had not yet recognized the Croatian state de jure, the Zagreb archbishop managed that the Holy See show be-

> fore the whole world how dear the Croatian state is to it by establishing de facto contact with the Croatian govemment through its legate. Visibly moved, the archbishop assured us of the Vatican's support. The Holy See today is directly informed about the situation in Croatia, about the will, the efforts, and the rights of the Croatian people, said the archbishop. And it is probably related to the Roman experiences, which strengthen his belief in the victory of justice, when His Eminence again in all seriousness and in all confidence says: "I am an unshakeable optimist."
>
> We still remember his words when he graciously told us: "The Croats will remain their own lords, I am sure of that." And his coworkers told us at the final handshake that no one would feel for the Croatian people and for the Croatian state as much as he!
>
> And that is the first prelate of Croatia.

All this confirms what we have said in this chapter: to help the Ustasha state and to solidify the familiar role of the priesthood, which was steadfastly on the Ustasha course, that was the Vatican's policy! And it bears the responsibility for this.

The events, however, developed differently from what the Vatican had imagined. The promises it gave to the episcopate in Croatia and the Ustashe were not fulfilled. True to the Vatican directives, Archbishop Stepinac was still trying at the last moment, i.e., directly before the liberation of Zagreb at the beginning of May 1945, to influence the course of events and in doing so became a central political figure. The bishops' conference was called to order, new memoranda were formulated and sent to the Vatican, and in order to establish relations with the allies, a federation was formed with the Slovene bishop and collaborator Rozman. But everything was in vain. The allies came and Pavelić had to flee the land with the Ustashe.

There was nothing left for the Vatican but to adapt to the new situation. However, it was successful in rescuing Pavelić's life and a great number of criminals among his associates, who were able to hide in cloisters and even in the Vatican. The Vatican became a center of Ustasha emigrants. It took care of the criminals; it organized their release from the camp, and brought them as "official" travelers to various countries of South America. The director of the undertaking was the priest Krunoslav Draganovic, who along with Pavelić rose to be the most important man of the Ustashe. He had his headquarters directly in the Vatican and from there prepared a new terrorist action: groups of saboteurs were slipped into Yugoslavia and a spy service was organized. The plan, however, blew up and ended with a big trial in Zagreb in the months of July and August 1948. In this trial, the Vatican's old and new ties with the Ustashe were

uncovered and those responsible were identified. The following is a report based on the material from this trial.

It is well known that a great number of deeply involved priests and some bishops fled the country along with the Ustasha criminals—for example, the archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Iwan Saric, and the bishop of Banja Luka, Garic. The infamous collaborator and war criminal Bishop Rozman fled from Slovenia. They all found refuge at first in Austrian cloisters, until the beginning of 1948 when they saw another solution. During the trial in Zagreb, among other things, all the above-mentioned people were named in connection with new conspiracies against Yugoslavia.

The accused Milos testified against them. This murderer of many thousands of people, slaughterer in the Jasenovac camp, trafficked with these bishops and negotiated with them about plans for the future. Milos reported on one meeting in the archbishopric of Celovac, where they discussed the Danube confederation:

> The prince bishop of Salzburg started the ball rolling. I do not remember his name. In addition to him, some German functionaries took part; from Slovenia there was Bishop Rozman and several Slovenes, then Archbishop Saric and, I believe, the Ustasha minister Balen. It was their goal to create a corporation that would work at transforming the Danube confederation into fact.
>
> This confederation was to consist of a collection of Catholic countries: Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, and possibly later the Czechs would join. . . . Once in the conversation with Sucic (Ustasha minister), I heard that Pavelić sanctioned this action to form a Danube confederation, but he did not speak about details.

Also the accused Kavran reported in the trial about this meeting:

> I was not present, but I remember that Sucic told me about it. That was in the middle of or at the end of 1945, I don't know exactly any more. One day Sucic came to Celovac; he visited Archbishop Saric and met several ministers there who were staying in Celovac.

Kavran confirmed that the Ustasha ministers Susic, Dumandzic, and Balen as well as the Ustasha deputy of the military vicar, Cecelja, were present.

> Cecelja came along with an Austrian priest, and when he saw them gathered, he said that he had come because of a very important matter about which we wished to speak. He told briefly that a paper had to be composed from which one could deduce the power, the strength, and the possibilities that a free Croatian state could offer. A second paper would have to be

> added to this one that was to be taken to Rome in the next few days. . . . At this moment in Rome, the Cardinals' Consistorium was being prepared. The Viennese cardinal Innitzer was to be present and the papers were to be delivered. Later it became known that a plan for the formation of the Danube confederation was being made, which Croatia was to join and for the execution of this plan, certain papers were necessary. Since the matter was being taken up with rather short notice, it could not be solved immediately, and nothing was formulated.

The Zagreb trial revealed the far-reaching activities of the Catholic Church in cooperation with the Ustasha criminals. These activities stretched from the most common crimes through terrorist actions to plans of the highest rank. All levels of the hierarchy, from the little monk up to the cardinal, participated. The deep hatred for Yugoslavia united them all. It is characteristic that the murderer Milos was drawn into the Vatican's plans and took part in the discussions with the bishops. Milos testified in the trial that he was a friend of Archbishop Salic and of Bishop Garic, whom he knew "from earlier," i.e., from the times when he was slaughtering thousands of people in Jasenovac.

High Vatican honor bearers supported the Ustasha criminals with word and deed at the time of their imprisonment. Among them, Cardinal Ruffini was especially prominent. He visited the prisons, encouraged the criminals, held speeches for them, in which he emphasized that their continuing struggle was justified and that they would win and return to their lands. In the Zagreb trial, a visit from Cardinal Ruffini to the prison was mentioned several times.

During his hearing, there was a confession by the criminal Kustro, mass murderer and later terrorist slipped into Yugoslavia, who was in the Fermo camp from July 1944 to November 1946:

> I am aware that at that time Church honor bearers visited the camp: the archbishop of Fermo, I don't know his name, a cardinal [Ruffini, translator's note], Dr. Draganovic and once Dr. Dominik Mandic. When the archbishop came, he held a sermon in the church and as far as I can remember, he once spoke before the prisoners. The cardinal was greeted by Professor Zanko at the entrance to the camp and returned his greeting. In his sermons, he emphasized that there would be a reestablishment of the NDH.

Also the accused criminal Rosandic reported on Cardinal Ruffini's visit to the Fermo camp:

> The preparations for Cardinal Ruffini's visit to the camp were intensive. Not only the camp commandant but also the whole personnel were busying about,

> even the major, and everyone was full of expectation. It was a ceremonious reception. Cardinal Ruffini arrived with several priests, among them Dr. Mandic, responsible for the financing of the cloister and who had distributed a lot of money to the emigrants. Cardinal Ruffini held a speech in which he emphasized that the Vatican knew quite well who the Croats were, that they were among the best fighters against miscreants, and that they got the honorary title of "Bulwark of Christianity," because they had proven that even for the future they were the best fighters against a renewed attack from miscreants. He assured everyone that their future was assured because it was known of the Croats that they wanted to have their state back and also that they would get it. That was the essence of the speech.

It had such a resounding effect that this visit from Cardinal Ruffini to the refugees in the Fermo camp solidified the position of Draganovic, Zanko, and the other Ustashe, who now felt themselves bolstered. This became clear in their statements: "Here we see that they were looking after us, and we were thinking that we were forgotten."

This speech also increased the Ustashe's desire to fight and they had gotten a new thrust from it.

During the trial in Zagreb, the accused Kavran testified that a book had been printed for the information of the cardinal and the other high clergy; the book had the title *Martyrium croatiae* (Author: Professor Bareza), and all cardinals and bishops got it.

In the course of the investigation, the accused engineer Petracic gave the following protocol about the ties between the Ustashe and the Vatican:

> Professor Zanko with the help of the priest Draganovic in Rome entertained ties with the Vatican for the Fermo camp; Draganovic represented the imprisoned Ustasha functionaries' main ties with the Vatican. Draganovic regularly visited the civilian and military camps of the Ustasha prisoners. He therefore must have been in possession of a special permission from the authorities. Through Draganovic, we also got to the pope himself and to some of his representatives in the Vatican. The Vatican supported us financially and through Dr. Mandic, the chief treasurer of the Institute of Saint Hieronymus, we got rather large sums of money.

After the war, Pius XII showed that in regard to the Ustasha he wanted to continue the course from the period before the war.—Draganovic himself was not present in the trial. For this reason, there were no further disclosures about his secret visits and conversations with the pope. But some significant moments came to light, anyway.

The accused Rosandic reported on the visit with the pope of a delegation from the Fermo camp. The delegation consisted of the two war

criminals Professor Zanko and the former rector of the University of Zagreb, Professor Horvat. Also the priest Draganovic was present. They presented to the pope a petition in which, as Rosandic testified, they asked "that the pope intervene for the Croats who had incurred problems. He was asked to support them materially, but also to intervene to see that they would not be handed over nor persecuted. That was only the beginning of the whole matter," said Rosandic. He continued to say that Zanko and Horvat after the visit with the pope reported that the latter had promised "to intercede fully for them, that he would provide material aid, and would support the whole matter."

When one asks where the priest Draganovic got the authority, why he was able to slip whole transports of criminals to Argentina, where he got the money for the financing of the terrorist army, etc.—the pope's promise in mid-1945 explains everything.

The accused Milos reported likewise during the trial in Zagreb about the visit of this delegation to the pope in 1945:

> Colonel Stir and the deputy Colonel Tomic told me that Zanko and Horvat were with the pope and had submitted a petition asking that Pavelić not be handed over and that the pope had said that he would use all his authority because he considered Pavelić a good person and a good Cathoiic.

That throws an even clearer light on the Pavelić case, explains even better why this bloodthirsty criminal, one of the worst of the last war, was not handed over to Yugoslavia, and why no one placed him on trial outside Yugoslavia but instead, to the contrary, he enjoyed the protection of the highest positions. It throws a significant light on Pope Pius XII, that he steadfastly called the murderer of hundreds of thousands of people a "good person" and a "good Catholic."

Also, the accused Kavran confirmed in the Zagreb trial the previous testimony about the visit of this delegation with the pope in 1945. Likewise, he emphasized the fact that these statements of the pope had an "absolutely positive" effect on the Ustashe in the camps.

Also, the accused Rosandic spoke in the trial about the ties between the pope and the Ustasha war criminals. In the protocol, there is special attention given to the visit with the pope in which the petition was submitted.

> After the return to Fermo [from the Vatican, where the delegation "had been received ceremoniously"!], Zanko called a meeting to which he invited all the camp inmates. In his speech, he depicted in all detail the reception with the pope and repeated the basic points of his speech. At the beginning, he said, the pope had presented the historical significance of the Croats'

> struggle, especially their battle against the Turks, for which they had received the honorary designation "Bulwark of Christianity," and he emphasized that the Croats recently had proven that they were deserving of this honorary designation still—in the battle against bolshevism. He hoped that the Croats even in the future would remain loyal to the Vatican. Furthermore, he (the pope) emphasized that he would concern himself especially with the Croats and their state and that he would not abandon them in any situation. But he would unceasingly support them in their efforts.

Everywhere in Italy and in Austria, this audience with the pope made an extraordinary impression on the emigrants and invigorated their discouraged spirits.

Therefore, the pope was honored by the Ustasha criminals. When they were slipped into Yugoslavia as terrorists, they carried not only bombs, knives, and radio systems, but also the likeness of the pope. This, too, was shown in the Zagreb trial:

> The chair of the court asked the accused Kavran: Did you bring a picture of Pope Pius XII across the border; did you have a rosary and a chain with a pendant of Saint Anton and a pistol?
>
> Yes!
>
> The chair: How does that fit together?
>
> (Silence)

But during the trial he entered the following protocol:

> Of course, the authority of the pope, who said that we had to lead the battle and that he would support it, had an encouraging effect on us.

So the pope had a direct influence on the development of new, criminal Ustasha actions and on the formation of new terrorist gangs who again tried to destroy the Yugoslav state. This time the action could be nipped in the bud.

The imprisoned Ustashe found many opportunities to see their spiritual leader. At another occasion, they came disguised as a choral club to give a concert for the pope. The chorus had been formed in the Fermo camp—certainly a special kind of camp for war criminals that allows a choral club to go on tour. . . . The accused engineer Petracic reported:

> The concert was held in a building near the Institute of Saint Hieronymus. This led to an audience with the pope. It was a rather short audience with many people taking part. It was arranged especially for Croats and Poles.

> The pope received us with a few words in Italian. . . . He wished us a happy return home and gave us the Holy Blessing.

In this chorus, which was directed by the priest Jole Bujanovic, who was also a major war criminal, organizer, and executer of the great massacres in Croatia, many war criminals of the same calibre sang: the county supervisor Juraj Marcovic, upper Ustasha functionaries, Nikola Jercovic, Captain Slavko Hajdinovic, Nicola Jerbic, Maks Hranilovic, etc. There were also among them terrorists who were later slipped into Yugoslavia and then were condemned in the Zagreb trial.

The Ustasha minister Vladimir Kosak, who had to answer for his war crimes before the peoples' court in Zagreb, as witness in the trial of Archbishop Stepinac brought up the fact that the latter had said, "that the Ustashe had gotten from the Vatican and from the high clergy the guarantee that everything would end well." This information, he said, he had gotten from the wife of Ante Pavelić. But that means nothing other than the fact that the Vatican wanted to persuade Pavelić's Ustashe personally to return to Croatia to again attack miscreants worst than beasts.

This is only part of the proof for the unbroken solidarity of the Vatican with the criminal Ustashe even in the period after their deposing. We present this without claiming it to be a complete picture or the presentation of the entire documentation at our disposal. We merely wish to point out that the Vatican did not give up and never came to terms with the situation that had been created after the war by the defeat of the Ustashe and of fascism and by the victory of the people's forces in Croatia and Yugoslavia. The Ustasha movement abroad with the "good Catholic" Pavelić at its head could thus through the papal blessing be assured of his "fatherly concern."

(*Secret Documents on the Relationship between the Vatican and the Ustasha-NDH*, pp. 75–80.)

24

Archbishop Stepinac Preserves the Ustasha Booty

At the beginning of May 1945, when the German as well as the Ustasha troops had left Zagreb, Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac received from the Ustasha government the archives of the foreign ministry of the NDH for safekeeping and signed a receipt.

At the same time, Archbishop Stepinac declared himself prepared to have the Franciscans on the capitol bury a part of the gold from Pavelić, mainly gold teeth of the victims of Jasenovac, and the remaining booty.

Written evidence of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac on the receipt of the archives of Ante Pavelić:

The Independent State of Croatia
Foreign Ministry
Zagreb

Confirmation of receipt

Hereby the receipt of the archives of the Foreign Ministry of the Independent State of Croatia is confirmed, specifically:

1. a chest covered with tin and marked with "AB-I" sealed with two locks,
2. a wooden chest marked with "AB-II," sealed with two locks,
3. three wooden chests marked with "PAV-I-III," sealed with one lock
4. a wooden chest marked with "OL-I," sealed with two locks,

NEZAVISNA DRŽAVA HRVATSKA
MINISTARSTVO VANJSKIH POSLOVA
ZAGREB

Potvrda primitka.

Potvrdjuje se ovime primitak pismohrane ministarstva vanjskih poslova Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i to:

1. Jedne limom obložene škrinje pod oznakom "AB-I", zatvorene sa dvie brave,
2. Jedne drvene škrinje pod oznakom "AB-II", zatvorene sa dvie brave,
3. Jedne drvene škrinje pod oznakom "RAV-I", zatvorene sa jednom bravom,
4. Jedne drvene škrinje pod oznakom "OL-1", zatvorene sa dvie brave,
5. Jedne drvene škrinje pod oznakom "OL-2", zatvorene sa jednom bravom,
6. Jedne drvene, limom obložene, škrinjice pod oznakom "RŽ", zatvorene sa jednom bravom.

Za sve brave primljeni su ujedno i ključevi i to po jed. za svaku bravu.

Zagreb, dne 6. svibnja 1945.

Predsjednik Poglavnikova Ured za škrinje:

Primio ukupno Ured za škrinje:

Stepinac nadbiskup

DR. ALOJZIJE STEPINAC NADBISKUP ZAGREBAČKI

Facsimile of the confirmation of receipt for the archives of the Foreign Ministry of the NDH, which Archbishop Stepinac took into custody at the beginning of May 1945.

5. a wooden chest marked with "OL-II," sealed with one lock,

6. a small wooden chest covered with tin and marked with "RZ," sealed with one lock.

For all of the locks the keys are simultaneously transferred, one for each lock.

Zagreb 6 May 1945

On orders of the poglavnik to transfer 8 chests

(Signature unreadable)

Received a total of 8 chests

A. Stepinac

Archbishop

(Archives of Vladimir Dedijer)

Pavelić died in 1959 in Madrid holding a rosary, a gift of Pope Pius XII from the year 1941, after he had received the special blessing of Pope John XXIII shortly before his death.

The official Ustasha news of Pavelić's death was as follows:

The poglavnik of the independent state of Croatia left the Republic of Argentina on 23 July 1957 at the border crossing of Rio Galegos (Patagonia), and on 24 July 1957 he arrived in Punta Arenas in Chile. Thereafter, he stayed four months in Santiago, the capital of Chile and then traveled to Spain. On 29 November 1957, he arrived in Madrid. In November and December 1959, the poglavnik was obliged to undergo medical treatment in the German hospital in Madrid. On 23 December 1959, the chief of the Croatian militia, Engineer Ivan Asancaic was informed by the daughter of the poglavnik, Marijana, by telephone from Madrid that the health of the poglavnik was serious and since there was no hope for recovery, his expiration was to be expected. In the same call, it was asked that someone come from Buenos Aires.

On 18 December 1959, Reverend Dr. Branko Maric received confession from the poglavnik and Reverend Dr. Miguel Oltra gave him the sacrament of holy communion on the same day.

On 27 December at 8:00 p.m., Reverend Dr. Branko Maric gave him the last rites. On the same day, he received from the Holy Father John XXIII the special blessing. In the early morning of 28 December 1959 at 3:55, the poglavnik died peacefully in his sleep.

At the moment of his death, attending him were: Reverend Dr. B. Maric and his daughter Visnja.

This first news of the death of the poglavnik was sent on 28 December 1959 at 4 o'clock in the morning Madrid time by urgent telegram to Buenos Aires so that all organizations of the Croatian liberation movement in the world would be officially informed, which was also the case.

In the course of the same day, information directly from Madrid reached the former minister of the NDH, Prof. Dr. Andrija Ilic (Great Britain), the headquarters of the Croatian Society of Europe (Munich), the Engineer Milan Sega (USA) and the president of the United Canadian Croats, Ante Markovic (Canada).

Radio Madrid first broadcast a report on the death of the poglavnik in the midnight news on 30 December 1959.

Up to this time, no one in Madrid had known of the poglavnik's stay in Spain, of his illness, and of his death.

The doctor of the deceased Croatian head of state was the German university professor Dr. Rudolf Seitz. The medical report on the illness and the death was subsequently published.

After a blessing on 28 December 1959 at 4:30 p.m., Pavelić's body was taken to the church of the cemetery Sacramental St. Isidor and lay there until 31 December 1959. The Croatian head of state was holding the rosary in his hands that the Holy Father Pius XII had given him in 1941 at his official visit to the Holy See.

On 31 December at 12:00 noon, Reverend Dr. Branko Maric read the Holy Mass *dies obitus presente cadavere* and thereafter the burial took place at the same cemetery.

In the church, in addition to the family of the poglavnik, were Minister Dr. Andrija Ilic; former president of the Rumanian government and leader of the "Iron Guard" movement, Nj. E. Horia Sima; president of the Anti-bolshevik Peoples' Block and of the Ukrainian National Movement, Dr. Vladimir Pastuscuk; the Rumanian minister, His Eminence V. Jasinski; and Spanish and Croatian friends.

After the Holy Mass, the coffin was opened and those present were able to see the blessedly deceased poglavnik for the last time.

At the open grave the former minister, Prof. Dr. Andrija Ilic, took leave in the name of the martyrs homeland and all Croats throughout the world. Then the councilman of the Croatian Liberation Movement, Dr. Zvonko Matic, and Pastuscuk held the following speech in the name of the Anti-Bolshevik Peoples' Block:

> May the Spanish soil weigh lightly on our brave head of state until the day the Croatian patriots will have taken him to the liberated independent State of Croatia, which he had resurrected through his unflinching struggle and which he through his great sacrifice had branded as an everlasting goal

on the whole Croatian people for all times! The poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić is with us!

(*Hrvatska,* Buenos Aires, 8 January 1960)

25

Andrija Artukovic: "I was Guided by the Moral Principles of the Catholic Church."

Andrija Artukovic, Pavelić's Minister of the Interior, at his trial in Zagreb on 16 April 1986, said: "My principles and laws were those of the Catholic Church. There is no difference between them." He placed value on the statement that he subordinated his life and his behavior "to the moral principles that the Catholic Church represents."

In regard to the compulsory rebaptisms of the Orthodox people and the genocide of them for religious reasons, Artukovic strongly incriminated the Catholic Church:

> I talked with Stepinac about the conversions. I was not familiar with the material and since I knew the archbishop personally, I entrusted him with this task. He, archbishop and respected religious leader, gladly accepted it and advised me in religious matters.

Of course, the accused Artukovic denied any pressure and spoke only of "recommendations" in the sense that the conversion to the Catholic faith had been offered to everyone who wanted it.

> He assumed his new office and assured me that he would seek out the proper co-workers. He said to me: "Leave that to me. As representative of the Catholic Church, I will carry out the matter to the best of my ability and my

> conscience." . . . I thereby charged Stepinac as a respected religious leader and was certain that the matter was in the best hands with him.

Because of the trial of Andrija Artukovic, the US-American press reported on the connections between the Vatican and the Ustashe, especially about the role played by Krunoslav Draganovic, the secretary of the Institute of Saint Hieronymus in Rome, in the organization of the flight to Argentina and to other Latin American states for Pavelić and other Ustasha leaders and Nazi war criminals.

(From correspondents' reports from AP, AFP, and Reuters on the trial in Zagreb, published on 17 April 1986)

26

Two Secret Documents on Catholic Priests' Help in the Flight

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
New War Department Building
Washington 29, D.C.

21 January 1947

COUNTRY: Italy/Vatican/South America

SUBJECT: Vatican-sponsored International Emigration Organization

DATE OF THE REPORT: November 1945

EVALUATION: B-3

1. . . .

2. BACKGROUND: In about August, 1945, the existence was noted of a Church organization known as the O.N.A.R.M.O. (*Opera Nazionale Assistenza Religiosa Morale Operai*—National Organization for the Religious and Moral Assistance to Workmen) whose aim was that of placing chaplains in all large factories to counteract the influence and propaganda of similarly placed Communist Party personnel. Thus, while the organization's aims were primarily religious, they had a certain underlying political bent, in view of their anti-Communism. . . .

. . . This organization was headed by a priest named Don TORRAZZA in Genoa, a very close associate of the Auxiliary Bishop of Genoa, Monsignor SIRI. . . .

. . . It was learned that Monsignor SIRI was contemplating founding an anti-Communist organization, to be fused eventually with the Monarchist "TRICOLORE" movement, already existing in Genoa and Turin, should this movement prove reliable.

3. DEVELOPMENT

. . . A) International Emigration Organization: . . .

Nothing was heard of this organization nor of its protagonists until just recently when their names reappeared.

* * *

WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER
INCOMING CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

STATE DEPARTMENT MESSAGE FOR
INFORMATION OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT

From: AMPOLAD Leghorn via Rome Italy sgd Greene

To: Secretary of State

Nr: 83 21 May 1947

British Embassy has informed AFHQ of receipt information that number of Ustachi including some on war criminals lists intend sail May 25 from Genoa for Buenos Aires aboard PHILIPPI, flying Panama flag. British Embassy stated there will be small number listed war criminals whose names are not known and who intend travel clandestinely, having embarked before other passengers and hidden in the ballast. There will also be about 40 "small fry" with plausible identity documents.

(Ref Deptel 30, May 2). In addition McLean mission has informed AFHQ that Ustachi war criminal Vilko Pecniker now in hiding near Bagnoli camp. McLean mission recommended to GHQ that immediate steps be taken arrest him as most dangerous Ustachi leader still at large.

COS, AFHQ, informed me that for the present no arrests of quislings and war criminals will be made outside DP camps and AMG territory, but that such information as that reported above will be passed to Italian authorities for whatever action they care to take. . . .

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
NEW WAR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

21 January 1947

COUNTRY: ITALY/VATICAN/SOUTH AMERICA

SUBJECT: Vatican-Sponsored International Emigration Organization

DATE OF REPORT: November 1946

EVALUATION: B-3

2. BACKGROUND: In about August, 1945, the existence was noted of a church organization known as the O.N.A.R.M.O. (OPERA NAZIONALE ASSISTENZA RELIGIOSA MORALE OPERAI - National Organization for the Religious and Moral Assistance to Workmen) whose aim was that of placing chaplains in all large factories to counteract the influence and propaganda of similarly placed Communist Party personnel. Thus, while the organization's aims were primarily religious, they had a certain underlying political bent in view of their anti-Communism.

This organization was headed by a priest named Don TORRAZZA in Genoa, a very close associate of the Auxiliary Bishop of Genoa, Monsignor SIRI.

It was learned that Monsignor Siri was contemplating forming an anti-Communist organization, to be fused eventually with the Monarchist "TRICOLORE" movement, already existing in Genoa and Turin, should this movement prove reliable.

3. DEVELOPMENT:

A) International Emigration Organization:

Nothing was heard of this organization nor of its protagonists until just recently when their names reappeared

WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER
INCOMING CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

NND 785040 4/13/83
WGLewis

~~TOP SECRET~~

CROSS REFERENCE			
FROM	TO	PLACE	DATE
86		Leghorn	5/21/47
87		Leghorn SD	5/27/47.

STATE DEPARTMENT MESSAGE FOR INFORMATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

From: AMPOLAD Leghorn via Rome ~~Italy sgd Greene~~

To: Secretary of State

No: 83 21 May 1947

British Embassy has informed AFHQ of receipt information that number of Ustachi including some on war criminals lists intend sail May 25 from Genoa for Buenos Aires aboard PHILIPPI, flying Panama flag. British Embassy stated there will be small number listed war criminals whose names are not known and who intend travel clandestinely, having embarked before other passengers and hidden in the ballast. There will also be about 40 "small fry" with plausible identity documents.

(Ref Deptel 30, May 2). In addition McLean mission has informed AFHQ that Ustachi war criminal Vilko Pecnikar now in hiding near Bagnoli camp. McLean mission recommended to GHQ that immediate steps be taken arrest him as most dangerous Ustachi leader still at large.

COS, AFHQ, informed me that for the present no arrests of quislings and war criminals will be made outside DP camps and AMG territory, but that such information as that reported above will be passed to Italian authorities for whatever action they care to take.

Sent Dept 83, repeated Belgrade 55.

Greene

Note: 30 is CM IN 990 (7 May) End Gen Noce

ACTION: Gen Noce

INFO : Gen Spaatz, Mr Petersen, Gen Chamberlin, Gen Norstad, CSA

CM IN 4381 (26 May 47) DTG 21 May 7PM Jm

~~TOP SECRET~~

[redacted] 4 MAY 27 1947

MESSAGE CENTER COPY

COPY NO. 19

Facsimile of secret news to the Secretary of State.

Afterword

Pavelić was deposed, the Ustasha organization was defeated, and the guilty were brought to court, provided that they were not able to flee in time, as did the Poglavnik, for example. Archbishop Stepinac did not have to flee. The gray eminence in the background was able to live on totally undisturbed by justice after the fall of his accomplices, as if nothing had happened. And he did not retreat discretely, as you might expect, but actively exploited the halting attitude of the new regime—which not unjustifiably feared international difficulties if he were to be arrested. So he continued to collaborate with the Ustashe still active in the country as guerrillas and magnanimously placed his bishop's palace at their disposal. He even openly demanded that the west use the atomic bomb to fell the government in Belgrade! Even after that he was handled with kid gloves: Yugoslavia merely requested that the Vatican recall him from Zagreb. But the Holy See did not deign to accept this as a magnanimous offer. Stepinac stayed. Only after this provocation was he arrested at the end of 1946 (!) and brought before the court. The trial could not have been more fair: Not only was the whole world press invited, at the request of the government, only Catholics were admitted as judges. (Conversely, in our most free state [Germany], membership in one of the two major churches [Catholic and Lutheran] is not a reason for bias in a blasphemy trial against atheists.)* The sentence: a ridiculous 16 years of hard labor. Immediately the Vatican raised its

*This refers to the blasphemy proceedings in Germany, in which atheists have been persecuted for publicly criticizing the Catholic Church. In these proceedings, the atheists were not granted the right to refuse a Christian judge because of bias.

freshly elected martyr on a shield and put its whole propaganda machine into motion against this "political decision": It intervened—not without success—with all governments of the world. Even the American president and the United Nations came into the picture, and the world press fell into a unison witch hunt. The 800,000 dead remained unmentioned—until today.

Stepinac, by the way, was the only high cleric to be called to justice for his deed, at least partially—he was released after five years and even received the purple robes of a cardinal. The Catholic Church again washes its hands in innocence and comes away without a hair disturbed, although it supported the Ustashe right from the beginning. The pope blessed Pavelić not only on his death bed. Already before the founding of the NDH, he received this man, twice deservedly condemned to death, and his cohorts in private audiences, blessed him and the others, and wished them "much success." After the usurpation of power by the Yugoslav fascists, he expressed his joy over the developments in Croatia knowing well what was happening there. He was well informed by Archbishop Stepinac and the papal legate Marcone—presumably better than anyone else. Also 8,000 photographs of the massacres were present in the Vatican. But the pope did not only keep silent. No matter whether it was the pope, an archbishop, a monk, or a simple priest, all of them supported "the Catholic battle rites in the Kingdom of God."

The Nazi party was banned; the Catholic Church was not. On the contrary, it flourished well and at the present is again returning to the front ranks after the French Revolution forced it into the rear. The pope can even allow himself to turn down a visit to Yugoslavia because he refuses to accede to the more than justified demand that he apologize to the dead Serbs and their loved ones.

What does it mean that one should forgive? Well then, be logical: Please open all prisons. What is a dead man in comparison to 100 million? And finally end the discrimination against Adolf Hitler, rehabilitate Eichmann, and compensate the family of Rudolf Hess! What do you mean, that is something quite different? Why? Are you a racist? One is not permitted to kill Jews, but Serbs are fair game—and nevertheless 60,000 Jews were killed on this occasion. Oh, I see, the Catholic Church has changed, but the Nazis never will change, and besides it has done so much good. Well, Hitler too: after all, everyone knows he built the Autobahn. And his "Winter Aid" was certainly morally not inferior to Catholic charity. And as far as change is concerned: the Nazis were not given a chance to change, if you can forget that they have persevered in the best positions as members of the CDU or (but rarer) of the SPD in our new, still current history.

The Catholic Church, on the other hand, has had almost 2,000 years; the proof is still outstanding. Quite to the contrary, even after the fall of Pavelić, the Church supported its murderous friends, and the Poglavnik owed his freedom exclusively to the Vatican. It not only let him find refuge in its cloisters and then in Rome, but also through its *Commissione d'Assistenza Pontifica* got him a phony passport of the Red Cross, so that he could flee to Argentina and spend the last days of his life in comfort. And as yet another reminder: the pope refused to apologize to the victims —four years ago. That is surely enough, isn't it?!

In any case, isn't it enough to bear a deep shame for belonging to the church after one's eighteenth year—or at least after reading this book? And as far as "probation" is concerned: one can join this very worldly organization again, if one absolutely must, at any time—specifically when the missing papal apology is followed by material compensation (with all the interest). The biggest land and stock owners in the world should not find it difficult to raise the money. And anyone who can't think of anything better to do with his church taxes could address this compensation plan in private. Where there's a will, there's a way—the church has drilled this message into us, and it is up to us to use it for a good purpose.*

*On the basis of the 1933 concordat between Hitler and the Vatican, which is still valid in Germany, the state collects dues for the two major Christian churches and calls them "church taxes."

Appendix I

Report of the "Boro Dedijer Foundation for Peace" on the Work of the Russell Tribunal of 1 March 1985

Investigations on genocide and compulsory assimilation were on the agenda of the Russell Tribunal from the very beginning. Already during the First World War, Bertrand Russell conducted a campaign against the war strategy of annihilation. At that time he expressed ideas similar to those of Lemkin, who coined the concept of "genocide" about twenty years later.

The First Tribunal on the investigation of U.S. war crimes in Vietnam pronounced the U.S. government guilty of genocide of the Vietnamese people. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote his well known treatise on genocide at that time, which was adopted into the basis of the sentence.

For the deliberations of the Tribunal, Professor Vladimir Dedijer presented a historical documentation on genocide crimes and a treatise on concepts of international law and on international ethics.

In his work, Professor Dedijer also used material from his unpublished manuscript on the genocide of Jews in the Second World War and his writings on genocide crimes in Yugoslavia.

Members of the Russell Tribunal considered individually or in communal effort a multitude of constantly increasing cases of genocide crimes and compulsory assimilation in our times. Here we would like to list only a few:

1. Jean-Paul Sartre in 1973 in the issues Nr. 324–326 of his journal *Les Temps Modernes* dedicated himself to the problem of compulsory assimilation in France.

2. On the basis of the findings of the First Russell Tribunal, that there is no state and no social system that has not been involved in genocide crimes, a commission

was formed for the investigation of crimes against twelve small ethnic groups in the Soviet Union in the years 1944–1946.

3. Upon the initiative of Jean-Paul Sartre, a commission was formed in Italy to investigate the question of genocide in Ireland.

4. The Second Russell Tribunal on Latin America considered among other things the crimes against the local Indians; these investigations were continued by the Fourth Russell Tribunal in the Netherlands.

5. On 1 May 1983, a group of Armenian history professors petitioned Professor Dedijer to reassemble a Russell Tribunal to investigate the genocide crimes of the Turkish state during the First World War. On 15 June 1993, Professor Dedijer therefore suggested to the general secretary of the Basso Tribunal, Dr. Gianni Tognoni, that this tribunal should undertake the task. Dr. Tognoni agreed on 5 July. The suggestion had already been made from other people.

In the spring of 1984 in a special meeting of the tribunal in Paris, Turkey was pronounced guilty of these crimes.

6. Representatives of the Slovene minority in Italy also addressed the Russell Tribunal with a complaint. Among the tribunal, the Italian president Pertini, and other politicians, there were various negotiations. On 13 June 1984, President Pertini reported to Professor Vladimir Dedijer in writing: "I would like to inform you that I have charged the proper government authorities with the investigation of this case"

7. Various other cases regarding the investigation of genocide crimes and compulsory assimilation have been presented to the members of the Russell Tribunal:

a) Complaints regarding criminal actions have been lodged against Hungary, Serbs, and Germans in Rumania.

b) Complaints were raised against Bulgaria because of the Turkish minority there being threatened with extinction.

c) In April 1983, a group of Serb and Croatian intellectuals accused the Moslems of genocide of Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and in Hercegovina. The case was investigated by Dr. R. Rizman; the accusations against the Moslems proved to be unfounded.

However, in this part of Yugoslavia an alarmingly great number of punishments are pronounced because of slanderous remarks.

d) In connection with the claim by the leader of the French communists, Marchais, that there are no instances of forced assimilation of minorities in France, we received a request to investigate "the compulsory assimilation of minorities in France, especially of the Basks."

e) We received a request to take up research into the genocide crimes, especially of religiously motivated ones, in Croatia during the Second World War.

In a supplementary petition, we were asked to investigate the current living conditions of the Serbs in Croatia.

f) From Ghana came the request to investigate the compulsory expulsion of two million Ghanian laborers out of Nigeria.

g) We received petitions to clarify the slaughter of Palestinians in two Beirut camps.

h) We were also asked to investigate the state of emergency of the Albanians in the Yugoslav Kosovo area and the situation of the Serbs and Montenegrans there, who are still fleeing from this area in great numbers.

i) Various petitions have been submitted to conduct investigations into the genocide in Macedonia since the beginning of the twentieth century.

etc., etc.

On the basis of the increasing, world-wide state despotism, the number of genocide crimes is also rising. We have therefore decided to handle the above-mentioned cases together in a scientific symposium. The main task of this symposium will be to examine the definitions of the genocide convention of 1948 and to prepare the realization of new forms of genocide, especially of cultural, economic, and political genocide. We are planning an international meeting of scientists from throughout the world.

On the basis of his decades-long experience in the historical investigation of genocide crimes, Professor Dedijer has been asked to compose a book on this subject based on the work of our organization similar to what he had done already subsequent to a symposium in 1972 in Linz commemorating the one hundredth birthday of Bertrand Russell, which took place at the urging of the Austrian Federal Chancellor Dr. Bruno Kreisky. In this work, Professor Dedijer treated the subject of the symposium, the development of spheres of political influence. Professor Dedijer accepted the new charge and informed his publishers abroad.

The work treats especially the example of the Macedonians as victims of political interests and of genocide. Let us remember the last words of the great poet James Joyce in answer to the question of whether he believed in a happy future for humankind: ". . . only if Macedonia and Ireland exist." In this book, for which the majority of the documents have already been assembled, the following aspects of Macedonian history are handled:

a) the division of Macedonia among the kingdoms of Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania at the beginning of this century;

b) annihilation actions against the Macedonians in all these countries (including the newly founded Yugoslavian state);

c) the founding of the socialist Republic of Macedonia and the situation of the Macedonians in Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania;

d) a critical evaluation of the position of the socialist Republic of Macedonia within the Yugoslav federation of states;

e) a comparative investigation of the situation of minorities in Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, and Macedonia currently.

Rudolf Rizman, Christopher Farley

Appendix II

From the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*

Proselytes

There is ample evidence of a widespread conversion to Judaism during the period of the Second Temple, especially the latter part of the period, and the word *ger*, which in biblical times meant a stranger or an alien, became synonymous with a proselyte.

Among the notable converts to Judaism may be mentioned the royal family of Adiabene, Aquila and Onkelos; Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Vespasian; and Fulvia, wife of Saturninus, a Roman senator. Unique, as the only case of forced conversion in Judaism, was the mass conversion of the Edomites by John Hyrcanus.

In addition to those outstanding figures, however, it is obvious that proselytism was widespread among the ordinary people. The statement of the New Testament that the Pharisees "compass sea and land to make one proselyte" (Matt. 23: 15), suggesting a vigorous and active proselytization may possibly be an exaggeration, but on the other hand, the near pride which the rabbis took in the claim that some of their greatest figures were descended from proselytes point to an openhanded policy toward their acceptance. Such incidents as the different approach of Shammai and Hillel to the request to be taught the principles of Judaism by a potential proselyte and the incidental mention of "Judah the Ammonite proselyte" point to the fact that the movement was not confined to the upper classes. In fact Josephus states explicitly that in his day the inhabitants of both Greek and barbarian cities evinced a great zeal for Judaism.

It was during this period that the detailed laws governing the acceptance of proselytes were discussed and codified, and they have remained standard in Orthodox Judaism.

Laws of Conversion

The procedure, established by the *tannaim,* according to which a non-Jew may be accepted into the Jewish faith, was elucidated as follows: "In our days, when a proselyte comes to be converted, we say to him: 'What is your objective? Is it not known to you that today the people of Israel are wretched, driven about, exiled, and in constant suffering?' If he says: 'I know of this and I have the merit to belong to that people,' we accept him immediately and we inform him of some of the lighter precepts and of some of the severer ones . . . we inform him of the chastisements for the transgression of these precepts . . . and we also inform him of the reward for observing these precepts . . . we should not overburden him nor be meticulous with him . . ." (Yev. 47a; cf. Ger. 1, in: M. Higger, *Sheva Massekhtot Ketamnot* [1930], 68-69). This text refers to a person who converted through conviction. The *halakhah* also accepts a posteriori proselytes who had converted in order to marry, to advance themselves, or out of fear (Yev. Z4b, in the name of Rav, see TJ, Kid. 4:1 65b-d; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13: 17; Sh. Ar., YD 268: 12)., The acceptance of a proselyte "under the wings of the Divine Presence" is equivalent to Israel's entry into the covenant, i.e., with circumcision, immersion, and offering a sacrifice (Ger. 2: 4, in: M. Higger; loc. cit. 72).

A proselyte had to sacrifice a burnt offering either of cattle or two young pigeons. R. Johanan b. Zakkai instituted that in those times when sacrifice was no longer possible, a proselyte was not obliged to set aside money for the sacrifice (Ker. 9a). Therefore, only circumcision and immersion remained. R. Eliezer and R. Joshua disagreed as to whether someone who immersed himself but was not circumcised or vice versa could be considered a proselyte. According to R. Eliezer, he is a proselyte, even if he performed only one of these commandments. R. Joshua, however, maintained that immersion was indispensable. The halakhic conclusion is that "he is not a proselyte unless he has both been circumcised and has immersed himself" (Yev. 46). The act of conversion must take place before a *bet din,* consisting of three members; a conversion carried out by the proselyte when alone is invalid (Yev. 46b-47a). There is a suggestion that the three members of the *bet din* must be witnesses only to his acceptance of the precepts but not to the immersion. Maimonides, however, decided (Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13: 7), that a proselyte who immersed himself in the presence of two members only is not a proselyte. The schools of Shammai and Hillel differed on the issue of a proselyte who had already been circumcised at the time of his conversion: "Bet Shammai states: 'One must draw from him the blood of circumcision'; Bet Hillel states: 'One need not draw the blood of circumcision from him.' " (Tosef., Shab. 15: 9; TB. Shab. 13Sa). Most of the rabbinic authorities decide in favor of Bet Shammai (Tos. to Shab. 13Sa; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14: 5; Sh. Ar., YD 268: 1), and "who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments and hast commanded us to circumcise proselytes and to draw from them the blood of the covenant" (Shab. 137b) is said in the circumcision benediction of proselytes.

A proselyte must observe all the precepts that bind Jews. The statement: "There shall be one law for the citizen and for the stranger that dwelleth amongst you"

(Ex. 12: 49), which refers to the paschal lamb, the sages interpreted to mean that the stranger (proselyte) was the equal of the citizen concerning all the precepts of the Torah (Mekh. Pisha, 15). They tried to equalize the status of the proselyte and that of the Jew; certain differences stemming from the origin of the convert, however, remained. According to an anonymous Mishnah, a proselyte may not confess himself after taking out the tithes since the statement occurs in the confession "the land which Thou hast given to us"; nor does he read the section on the first fruits, where the statement is: "which the Lord hath sworn unto our fathers to give unto us. The proselyte, praying by himself must say: "the God of the Fathers of Israel"; in the synagogue he says: "the God of your Fathers" (Ma'as. Sh. 5: 14; Bik. 1: 4). According to one tradition, R. Judah permitted a proselyte to read the section on the first fruits, claiming that Abraham was the father of the whole world (TJ, Bik. 1 : 4 64a; but in Tosef., Bik. 1 : 2 this permission is only extended to the, Kenites). The Palestinian *amoraim,* R. Joshua b. Levi and R. Avihu, agreed with R. Judah. The authorities (particularly R. Samson in his commentary to *Bikkurim* [ibid.], and Maimonides in his letter to Obadiah the Proselyte, below) in permitting a proselyte to say "the God of our Fathers" in the prayers based themselves on the same rationale.

A proselyte terminates all former family ties upon conversion and "is considered a newly born child." His Jewish name is not associated with that of his father and he is referred to as "the son of Abraham (our father)." Later, it became the custom to name the proselyte himself after the first Jew who knew his Creator "Abraham, the son of Abraham." According to the letter of the law, a proselyte may marry his relatives. The sages, however, decreed against this "So that they should not say: 'We have come from a greater sanctity to a lesser sanctity.' " (Yev. 22a, Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14: 12). The disqualifications pertaining to testimony of relatives in judicial cases of family members do not apply to the proselyte; his relatives also may not inherit from him. If no heirs were born to him after his conversion, his property and his possessions are considered not to belong to anyone, and whoever takes hold of them becomes their owner (BB 3: 3, 4: 9; Git. 39a; Yad, Zekhi'ah u-Mattanah 1: 6).

(*Encyclopaedia Judaica,* ed. Cecil Roth, Oxford/Jerusalem 1971)

Appendix III

Decree of Omar II from the *Koran-al-Raya*

1. Christians and Jews in conquered lands are not permitted to build their own cloisters and churches.

2. They are not permitted to make repairs on their buildings.

3. When Moslems live in Christian or Jewish houses, repairs of these houses can be made only in dire necessity.

4. Christians and Jews must build special hostels for Muslem travelers.

5. In these hostels, they must provide full hospitality for three days.

6. The acquisition of real property and houses is reserved for Moslems.

7. Christians and Jews may neither permit their children to read the Koran nor to touch it. On the other hand, they may not prevent anyone from their circles from adopting the Islamic faith.

8. Christians and Jews may not sue each other.

9. They are obligated to greet Moslems at all times with full respect.

10. When they enter a house, Christians and Jews must offer a Moslem a place of honor. At the same time, it is forbidden for them to utter a word of contradiction.

11. They are forbidden to wear the same type of shoes and clothes as the Moslems.

12. They are not permitted to learn the Arabic language, the language of scholars and writers.

13. They are forbidden to ride a horse with a saddle.

14. The wearing of sabers or other weapons—at home as well as in public—is forbidden to them.

15. They are forbidden to sell or produce wine.

16. Jews and Christians are not permitted to manufacture seals with their names.

17. They are forbidden to wear wide belts.

18. They are forbidden to have crosses or Bibles on them in public.

19. They may not speak loudly within a house, only whisper.

20. Within a house, they may sing only softly.

21. They are permitted to pray softly when someone dies.

22. Moslems are permitted to plow up and sow over all old cemeteries of the miscreants.

23. Christians and Jews are not permitted to have slaves.

Appendix IV

From the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*

In the course of time, the Spanish Inquisition evolved an elaborate procedure of its own. When a tribunal was opened at any place, an edict of grace would be published, inviting those conscious of heresy to come forward and make confession within a "period of grace," generally of 30 or 40 days. After the lapse of this period they could be proceeded against by Inquisition officers. At later stages, an edict of faith would periodically be issued, summoning all persons, under pain of excommunication, to denounce to the authorities all offenses enumerated in it of which he might have cognizance. These invariably comprised all those popularly associated with Judaism: lighting candles on Friday evening, changing the linen on the Sabbath, abstaining from pork and scaleless fishes, observing the Jewish holidays and especially the Day of Atonement and the fast of Esther, laying out the dead according to the Jewish custom, etc. By this means, the whole population became accomplices of the Inquisition in its task of eradicating heresy; and the denunciation of one of the customs mentioned above, performed absentmindedly or by mere force of habit, was frequently sufficient to bring a man to the stake.

Arrest and Evidence

Everything took place under the greatest secrecy, which became one of the main terrors of the Inquisition. Any breach of this was liable to be punished with the utmost severity, like heresy itself. From the moment of arrest, therefore, the utmost segregation obtained. The accused persons were confined in the dungeons of the Inquisition, such as may still be seen in Evora and elsewhere. As was inevitable, there were sometimes terrible abuses, women suffering especially; and it happened more than once that female prisoners were dragged pregnant to the stake.

The rules governing evidence were so devised as to exclude all witnesses who

were likely to be of any use to the prisoner, on the ground that their evidence would be untrustworthy. No such scruples, however, prevailed with regard to witnesses for the prosecution, who were frequently inspired merely by venom. Moreover, the names of the accusers were suppressed, though originally this was supposed to be permissible only in the case of "powerful persons" who might intimidate the witnesses. The accusers and accused were thus never confronted. The evidence admitted was flimsy in the extreme: mere regard for personal cleanliness might be sufficient to convict a man of Judaism or Islam, and so cost him his life. Once the accusation was made, the subsequent procedure was based upon a desire to make the accused person confess his crime and thus be admitted to penitence. If this was not forthcoming spontaneously, in accordance with the spirit of the age, torture might be applied: though as a matter of fact in this particular instance the Spanish Inquisition, notorious though its cruelties were, compared favorably with the Roman, where torture might be continued even after confession in order to extort the names of accomplices. Death under torture was by no means uncommon. In most cases, however, the physician who was present enforced sufficient moderation to avoid this conclusion. Generally, the torture was abundantly sufficient to elicit a confession, if one had been withheld up to that point. It was imposed in most cases only to procure the confession of what the inquisitors already knew or suspected. The cases in which a condemnation was avoided were therefore few in the extreme. Thus, in the Toledo tribunal between the years 1484 to 1531 they totaled on an average less than two yearly. In the Portuguese Inquisition, the number of condemnations came to well over three-quarters of the total number of cases tried.

Punishments

Often, in the case of any convicted person who professed repentance, "reconciliation" followed and the defendant was restored to the bosom of the Church. In such a reconciliation the defendant had to abjure either *de levi* or *de vehementi.* A transgressor of a *de levi* reconciliation might perhaps be punished to abjure *de vehementi.* This, paradoxically enough, being itself considered a punishment since the convicted person had to participate in the procession of the auto-da-fé, and had to do many penances, pilgrimages to holy shrines, etc. There were two forms of reconciliation on *de vehementi,* and a slight transgression from Christianity would be considered a relapse into the old sins. Harsher penalties in force included scourging, very common in the early period but remitted more and more frequently as time went on. This was executed publicly under every humiliating circumstance. Similar, with the omission of the lashes, was the *verguenza,* which consisted in the offender parading the town stripped to the waist and bearing the insignia of the offense, the town-crier meanwhile proclaiming the sentence. The *mordaza* or gag was sometimes applied, this being regarded as increasing the humiliation of the punishment. In abjurations *de levi,* the offender added that in case of failing in his promise to comply with punishment he should be held as impenitent: in abjurations *de vehementi,* that in such a case he should be considered and treated

as a relapsed heretic. A reconciliation of this sort could be performed only once and any subsequent conviction was taken as an obvious proof that the original penitence had been insincere and the culprit was condemned to the stake.

The reconciliation was invariably accompanied by a punishment of varying intensity. More severe was the penalty of the galleys, an economical device of Ferdinand the Catholic whereby the punishment of heresy was turned to the benefit of the state and which was adopted by the Roman Inquisition. In 1573, and again in 1591, the Suprema ordered that all Conversos, even when confessing their crime freely, should be sent to the galleys, and it remained a penalty very frequently inflicted upon secret Jews. In the course of the 18th century, other types of penal servitude were substituted. For women, forced service in hospitals or houses of correction was the alternative.

Perpetual incarceration was another common form of punishment; though the prison was known by the euphemistic title of *casa de la penitencia* or *de la misericordia.* At a later period, the duration of the imprisonment was generally decreased, persons being released after eight years or even less, though the title of the punishment officially remained the same. Among the other punishments may be mentioned that of exile or exclusion from certain places, and the custom of razing to the ground the house of any particularly heinous offender or one in which heretical—especially Jewish—services had been held.

It was not only in his own person that any person convicted of a serious offense by the Inquisition was punished. A number of disabilities followed which fell not only on those penanced but also on their children and their male descendants for two generations to come: they were excluded from any public dignity; they were not permitted to become physicians, apothecaries, tutors of the young, advocates, scriveners, or farmers of revenue; they were subjected to certain sumptuary laws, not being permitted to wear cloth of gold or silver or precious stones, to bear arms or to ride on horseback. Neglect of these provisions, sometimes even after the lapse of several generations, brought the offender once more into the clutches of the Inquisition. However, infractions were generally punished only by a fine, and the sale of rehabilitation ultimately became very common.

One of the strongest weapons of the Inquisition was the power it had of confiscating the property of those convicted of heresy. At the beginning, the proceeds were devoted to the use of the crown, but they gradually devolved more and more upon the Inquisition itself. In the early period, general arrangements on the part of the New Christians to save themselves from arbitrary confiscation were not uncommon, but this practice speedily died out. It was through this power that the Inquisition was raised into a corporation of such vast influence and wealth. Above all, it made it overwhelmingly to its interest to procure the conviction of all who were brought before it, especially when they were persons of great means. Nothing else, perhaps, was more instrumental in draining the Peninsula of its accumulated wealth during the course of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. It was a weapon which struck at the whole of a man's family, and might reduce it in a moment from affluence to beggary, while through its means the economic life of the whole country was liable to be disorganized.

The Death Penalty

The final sanction of the Inquisition was that of death. As an ecclesiastical body, however, it was not permitted itself to be a party to this. It therefore "relaxed" the convicted person to the secular arm, with a formal recommendation for mercy, adding that if it were found necessary to proceed to the extreme penalty, it should be done "without effusion of blood"—that is, by burning. This was an old legal fiction of the Catholic Church dating back to the 11th or 12th contury; and the mode of punishment was justified by a text in John 15: 6: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Generally speaking, the extreme penalty was reserved for those who refused the opportunity for repentance: either the *contumacios,* who gloried in their crime and died true martyrs; or the "relapsed," who had been reconciled on some previous occasion and whose backsliding proved their insincerity; or the *diminutos,* whose confession was incomplete and who shielded their accomplices; or the *negativos,* who refused to confess to the charges made against them in the hope of escaping conviction. In this last category there must necessarily have been included on occasion some who were absolutely innocent of the crimes imputed to them and would not confess to falsehood even to escape death. The fact that such persons were condemned to the flames shows clearly on what sure ground the Inquisition generally felt itself. "Dogmatizers," or those who, whether baptized or not, propagated heretical views were also regarded as inevitable victims, and in the earlier period of the Inquisition many fervent professing Jews suffered under this head. However, by no means all of those executed capitally were burned alive. A profession of repentance, even after condemnation, was almost always effective in securing preliminary garroting, only the corpse then being burned at the stake. The effigies of fugitives, with the bones of those who had escaped justice by death (sometimes in prison or under torture) would similarly be committed to the flames. Those burned in effigy on certain occasions sometimes totaled something like half as many as those burned in person. This was far from an empty formality, as the condemnation secured the confiscation of their property, while reconciliation was in such cases obviously outside the bounds of possibility.

The Autos-da-Fé

The sentences of the Inquisition were announced at the so-called Act of Faith: *auto-de-fé* as it was termed in Spain and *auto-da-fé* in Portugal. For lighter offenses, the ceremonial might be private (*auto particular* or *autillo*), in which case it would be held in a church; but this was rarely resorted to for so grave a crime as Judaizing, particularly as it was considered wrong to pronounce a sentence of death in the sacred precincts. In most cases, the ceremony was public (*auto publico general*). This ultimately became the subject of elaborate organization. The ceremony would take place on some feast day in the principal square of the city. Ample notice

was given so as to attract as large a group of spectators as possible, spiritual benefits being promised to all who were present. Two stagings were erected at vast expense—one for those convicted and their spiritual attendants, and the other for the inquisitors and the rest of the authorities, while a temporary altar, draped in black, was set up in the middle.

The proceedings would be opened by a procession in which all the clergy of the city took part. Behind them followed those condemned to appear. All those abjuring *de vehementi* had to carry lighted tapers in their hands and to wear the *sanbenito* or *saco bennito* (the *abito* as it was called in the official sentence). This, which was an innovation of the Spanish Inquisition, consisted of a long yellow robe, transversed by a black cross (in the case of those convicted of formal heresy alone, only one of the arms was necessary). In case the heretic had escaped the stake by confession, flames were painted on the garment, which was sometimes of black. Those condemned to be burned bore in addition pictures of demons thrusting the heretical into hell, while they wore tall miters similarly adorned for additional prominence (the use of these, which were worn in different forms also by bigamists and perjurers, was forbidden by the Roman Inquisition in 1596). In certain cases, as an additional punishment, the *sanbenito* had to be worn in public even after the release of the prisoner, exposing him to universal scorn and derision. After it was removed, it was generally hung up in the parish church of the delinquent accompanied by a fitting inscription, thus marking out the wearer and his family for lasting humiliation. These memorials of shame were destroyed only with the abolition of the Inquisition in the early years of the 19th century.

When the procession had arrived in the square where the auto-da-fé was to be celebrated, amid general scorn the penitents would take their place on the scaffolding reserved for them. A sermon would then be preached by some distinguished cleric, directed especially against the penitents, upon whose heads a torrent of the most unsparing insults would be poured. They would then appear one by one before the pulpit to hear their sentences, which would hitherto have been kept a profound secret. This took some time, the proceedings often being protracted into night and sometimes being spread over two or even three days. The sentences of those "relaxed" to the secular arm were left to the last. They were then formally condemned to death by the civil magistrate and escorted to the *quemadero* (or *brasero*), the place of burning, by a detachment of soldiers, whose presence was sometimes necessary to save them from a violent but more humane death at the hands of the infuriated mob. To light the brand with which the pyre was kindled was considered a religious duty and honor of the highest degree and frequently fell to the lot of visiting royalty. The ashes of the victims were supposed to be scattered to the winds. A repentant heretic would sometimes be strangled before being burned.

During the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, the auto-de-fé came to be regarded as a great public spectacle in the Peninsula and its dependencies, vying in popular appeal with bullfights. Especially splendid celebrations would sometimes be arranged in honor of royalty: thus on Feb. 24/25, 1560, an auto-de-fé was held at Toledo to celebrate the visit of Philip II and his bride, Isabella of Valois.

The tribunal of Madrid was inaugurated on July 4, 1632, by an auto-de-fé in celebration of the safe delivery of the queen; but the climax was reached on June 30, 1680 on the Plaza Mayor of the same city, in the presence of Charles II and his bride, Marie Louise d'Orléans, in honor of their marriage. At this, which began at six o'clock in the morning and lasted 14 hours, no less than 51 persons were burned either in person or in effigy, the king himself setting light to the brand which kindled the *quemadero*. This, as a great court spectacle, formed the subject of a painting by Rizi. It was the last great solemnity of its kind, as Philip V, the first of the Bourbon line, refused (in 1701) to grace with his presence one arranged in honor of his accession, and the usage was henceforth abandoned.

Accounts of the auto-da-fé, giving full details of the names of the victims and the nature of their punishment, with particulars of who was burned alive, who after garroting, or who in effigy, were subsequently printed and hawked about the streets: they form one of the main sources of information for the proceedings. Similarly, the sermons preached at the auto-da-fé were often subsequently published: in Portuguese alone about 15 are extant in print. They speak of the penitents often as Jews, and in terms of the most outrageous vituperation. Most noteworthy is the sermon delivered on Sept. 6, 1705, at the great auto-da-fé held at Lisbon by the archbishop of Cranganore which was notable for the violence of its language: it was answered by David Nieto, *haham* in London, in a crushing pamphlet which is a masterpiece of polemic and was not without influence in weakening the prestige and destroying the influence of the Inquisition in Portugal. On the other hand, counterparts of these pamphlets were sometimes issued at Amsterdam and elsewhere, where the local rabbis and poets would mourn the death of their martyrs in sermons and elegies. A noteworthy example is the volume of collected pieces published on the occasion of the martyrdom of Abraham Nuñes Bernal at Córdoba in 1655. In the prayer books printed for the use of the Converso communities abroad at this period there is included a special *Ashkavah* beginning "God of Vengeance" to be recited in the synagogue in memory of "those burned for the Sanctification of the Name."

The Number of Victims

Spain. It is estimated that in Spain, from the establishment of the Inquisition down to 1808, the number of heretics burned in person was 31,912; those burned in effigy, 17,659; and those reconciled *de vehementi* (see Procedure, below), 291,450—a total of 341,021 i alla Even these immense figures are apparently exceeded by the usually careful Amador de los Rios, who estimates that up to 1525, when the Moriscos first began to suffer, the number of those burned in person came to 28,540; those burned in effigy to 16,520; and those penanced to 303,847—making a total of 348,907 condemnations for Judaism in less than half a century. On the other hand, Rodrigo, the apologist of the Inquisition, puts forward the impossible assertion that less than 400 persons were burned in the whole course of the existence of the Inquisition in Spain. H. C. Lea, the modern historian of the Spanish

Inquisition, hesitates to give any definite opinion. It was in the earlier and most ferocious period of inquisitional activity that the secret Jews suffered above all, and they furnished therefore a disproportionate number of the victims. In the later period, the number greatly diminished. Thus, from 1780 to 1820 out of 5,000 cases, only 16 were of Judaizing; but the majority of the charges at this period were light, and the sentences imposed in most cases comparatively negligible.

Portugal. As far as Portugal and its dependencies are concerned, the figures can be given with a much greater approach to precision. There are extant the records of approximately 40,000 cases tried before the Inquisition in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries in Portugal, the archives in this respect being virtually complete. The sentences were carried out at autos-da-fé numbering something like 750 in all. In these, as far as can be ascertained, upward of 30,000 persons were condemned, 1,808 of them being burned at the stake (633 in effigy and 1,175 in person) and 29,590 being penanced. In the two decades from 1701 to 1720, 37 persons were burned in person and 26 in effigy, while 2,126 were penanced. From 1732 to 1742, 66 persons were burned. From 1721 to 1771, 139 persons were burned in person, and 20 in effigy, while 3,488 were penanced.

Elkan Adler has compiled lists of a little less than 2,000 autos-da-fé which took place in the peninsula and its dependencies from 1480 to 1826. This number should, however, be further increased.

(*Encyclopaedia Judaica,* ed. Cecil Roth, Oxford/Jerusalem 1971)


HUNGARY
SLOVENIA
ITALY
BEFORE 1945
YUGOSLAVIAN
SINCE 1945
ZAGREB
SLAVONIA
BACHKA
(BREKA)
BANAT
SREM (SIRMIA)
BOSNIA
(BOSNA)
HERCEGOVINA
MONTENEGRO
SERBIA
DALMATIA
ADRIATIC SEA
BELGRADE
(BELGRADE)
SARAJEVO
LEGEND:
CROATIAN PUPPET STATE
STATE BOUNDARY
PROVINCIAL
USTASHI SO CALLED SUMMARY COURTS
USTASHI CAMPS
TERRITORY OCCUPIED BY ITALY
TERRITORY OCCUPIED

First-hand testimony of survivors and eyewitnesses is compiled in this shocking and graphic account of the crimes committed during World War II at the largest death camp in Yugoslavia. At the small Croation town of Jasenovac, the fascist "Independent State of Croatia" (a satellite state of the Nazi Third Reich) constructed a concentration camp where more than 200,000 people, mostly Orthodox Serbs, were systematically murdered. Among the participants in this genocide were members of the Roman Catholic clergy, from the Franciscan monk who became the camp commandant to the infamous Archbishop Stepinac, the spiritual advisor to the fascist state appointed by Pope Pius XII.

Vladimir Dedijer, a close associate of Tito, has collected irrefutable documentary and photographic evidence, attesting to thousands of atrocities and the complicity of the Catholic Church in these crimes. The events described in this important volume provide a historical context to the current conflict in Yugoslavia and shed light on the motivations behind the apparently senseless ethnic and religious strife which is tearing Yugoslavia apart. The massacre at Jasenovac was the terrible culmination of centuries-old animosities between Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats and a dark episode in the history of the Catholic Church, one that the Church has attempted to hush up for fifty years.

ISBN 0-87975-752-3

90000

9 780879 757526

Prometheus Books
59 John Glenn Drive
Amherst, New York 14228-2197

Ahriman-Verlag
Freiburg, Germany

The Yugoslav Auschwitz and the Vatican

Vladimir Dedijer

Foreword by Gottfried Niemietz
English Translation by
Harvey L. Kendall

THE • CROATION • MASSACRE • OF THE • SERBS • DURING • WORLD • WAR II