

Ovčara case

Trial for the war crimes against the war prisoners

War Crimes Chamber of the District Court in Belgrade, Serbia

Number of case: K.V. br.1/2003

Trial Chamber: Vesko Krstajić (the presiding judge), Gordana Božilović-Petrović (judge) and Vinka Beraha-Nikićević (judge).

Prosecutor: Deputy War Crimes Prosecutor Dušan Knežević.

Defendants: Miroљub Vujović, Stanko Vujanović, Jovica Perić, Ivan Atanasijević, Predrag Mađžarac and Milan Vojnović, Serbs from Croatia.

Report: Nataša Kandić and Dragoljub Todorović, victims representatives

11 February 2005

At the beginning of his testimony, witness **Đorđe Veličković** said that of all the defendants he knew only Slobodan Katić. In his words, he promised Katić's wife he would testify when he learned that Katić had been indicted, as the defendant had attended his *slava* (the celebration of his family's patron saint) in 1991. Veličković pointed out that his *slava*, the Holy Archangel, in 1991, was celebrated on 21 November and that the celebration took place in his restaurant and that there were between 40 and 50 guests there. The witness pointed out that defendant Katić had come to his house on 20 November, around 12:00 hours, with two persons in battle fatigues, in an ambulance with Vukovar license plates. They stayed together the whole night and the next morning a priest came to perform the ritual of the *slava* cake. The two uniformed persons who had come with Katić left that day and the defendant remained with him the whole day. The witness pointed out that he did not know where Katić had come from nor where he had gone afterwards. In his words, the defendant had never again come to the celebration of his *slava*, and remembered that he had met him in 1995 or 1996 in front of the Zemun municipality building. Describing the appearance of the defendant, the witness said that Katić had a beret on his head, that he wore battle fatigues, that he wore his hair rather long and that he had not shaved a couple of days. In his words, the defendant used to come once or twice a week for a drink or a cup of coffee. Veličković then said that together with the defendant he had watched, on 20 November, a TV program devoted to the liberation of Vukovar and that, on the occasion, Katić had told him: "It would be better for me not to talk about what happened there." Veličković pointed out that during the night of 20 and 21 November, together with him and Katić, there were between 10 and 15 friends, like Mihailović Beli, Damjanović and others and that his wife had gone.

At the beginning of his testimony, witness **Živko Naić** said that he had known defendant Katić from childhood, that they had grown up together and that they had been next-door neighbors. In his words, during the war, in 1991, he was 16 years old and was attending the vocational school "Zmaj", but at the time of the critical event (between 18 and 22 November) he was expelled from school and did not attend instruction. Naić pointed out that he remembered that time by the liberation of Vukovar and by defendant Katić's return to Zemun. Continuing his testimony, Naić stated that Katić had come in a van and that they together had gone to a car mechanic. In his words, the defendant, together with Mića Slon, on 19 and 20 November, went to visit Mali Džo in the hospital. After the visit, on 20 November, he returned to Zemun, and then Mića and Katić left the witness and went away. The witness pointed out that at that time Katić wore battle fatigues, that he wore a beret, that his hair was rather unkempt and that he needed a shave. In his words, on 18 and 19 November, he and defendant were in Katić's house where they watched a TV program about the fall of Vukovar. He then said that he had taken his leave from Mića and Katić in Zemun on 20 November, around noon, and that, after that, he had seen Katić again in

the afternoon of the next day. In his words, at the time Katić was hung-over and told witness that he had been in a pub and spoke something about a *slava*. He added that Katić had returned to Vukovar, together with Bakić, on 22 November.

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