

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: Miroljub Vujović, Stanko Vujanović, Jovica Perić, Ivan Atanasijević, Predrag Madžarac and Milan Vojnović, Serbs from Croatia.

Report: Nataša Kandić and Dragoljub Todorović, victims representatives

25 March 2005

At the beginning of his testimony, witness **Lazar Savić** said that in the fall of 1991 he was in the barracks in Vukovar, as his house was across the road and he did not feel safe in it. He pointed out that after the arrival of the Guards brigade Srećko Borisavljević was his immediate superior. He then said that on 19 November Vukovar was liberated from the Croats and that the Guards brigade had returned to Vukovar on 24 November. Savić pointed out that he did not have any knowledge about the evacuation of the hospital and added that he had seen the buses in the barracks and recognized dr. Njavra and dr. Vesna Bosanac, who were guarded by Karanfilov. In his words, he had seen four or five buses with civilian license plated and 10 to 20 persons in each of them. Those people were guarded by military policemen and nobody could approach the buses. He pointed out that, on the occasion, there were no problems whatsoever at the barracks and added that he did not remember having seen any of the defendants there. Continuing his testimony, Savić pointed out that he had heard about the events at Ovčara at the time of renovation of Vukovar and added that there were rumors about "some Croats having been killed at Ovčara". The witness confirmed the part of his statement given to the members of the Directorate for the Fight Against Organized Crime (DFAOC) where he said that he had heard that the defendants Vujović and Vujanović, Boro Krajišnik and Topola had killed the people at Ovčara, and added that everybody in Vukovar had been talking about it. Continuing his testimony, he said that beside Karanfilov, around the busses and the barracks, he had seen Šljivančanin, Lukić and Bajić who were at their command posts. The witness remarked that at the time of questioning by the employees of DFAOC in Šid voices had been raised, but there had not been any physical pressure. In his words, they asked him how he could remember what the Croats had done to the Serbs while forgetting what the Serbs had done to the Croats.

At the beginning of his testimony, witness **Miroljub Dačić** said that during the fighting in Vukovar he was a member of the 80th Guards brigade from Kragujevac and had the rank of a reserve captain first class. In his words, he had been at Ovčara twice. The first time, together with some 10 soldiers and officers, he had guarded the prisoners, members of NGC, who were transported to Sremska Mitrovica the following day, in buses. The second time witness Dačić had been at Ovčara together with Bakić, a couple of days later, when a new group of prisoners arrived. When they arrived there, it was already dark. Bukić had reported to someone and they were told to wait there. After waiting for two hours without an assignment, they decided to return to Negotlavci. The witness pointed out that he did not remember if he had seen Vezmarović, the commander of the company of military police from his brigade, and Vojinović, the brigade commander. Describing the situation in the hangar, Dačić said that there had been no electricity and that a vehicle was used to light the interior of the hangar. In the hangar, the prisoners were placed behind a rope and some of them wore bandages. Besides, some of them were in civilian

clothes and some in army clothes. On the other side were the soldiers, armed and dressed in different clothes. In his words, the soldiers spoke individually with the prisoners. Dačić pointed out that he had not seen Jan Marček, the commander of the Light Artillery Division of the Anti-Aircraft Defense in the hangar. Then he pointed out that he had heard about the shooting of the prisoners at Ovčara after three days.

The defense attorneys presented their motions concerning the evidence to be presented, namely, to hear the witnesses Slobodan Hranj, Željko Milovanović, Radojka Vučković, Branka Bančević and Vilem Karlović (a member of the Ministry of the Interior of Croatia who had been taken from Ovčara by a Serb), to ask the expert commission of the UN for the findings of their forensic team that had been at Ovčara in 1993, to get hold of the document of the County Court in Osijek, Nr. K-1/94, defendant Vuletić Ivica, sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for killing 50 to 200 persons, and to invite, in the capacity of a witness, Tomislav Merčep and Marin Vidić; to read in court the statement of witness Vilem Karlović, now in the possession of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia in Vinkovci, and to get hold of a video cassette, if one exists, of the massacre at Ovčara.

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