

Case: Branko Grujić *et al* – ‘Zvornik’
War Crimes Chamber
Belgrade District Court, Republic of Serbia
Case number: KV.5/05

Trial Chamber: Tatjana Vuković, Trial Chamber President, Vesko Krstajić, Judge, Trial Chamber Member, Olivera Anđelković, Judge, Trial Chamber Member

War Crimes Prosecutor: Milan Petrović

Accused: Branko Grujić, Branko Popović, Dragan Slavković a.k.a. Toro, Ivan Korać a.k.a. Zoks, Siniša Filipović a.k.a. Lopov, and Dragutin Dragičević a.k.a. Bosanac

Report: Nataša Kandić, Executive Director of the Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC), and Dragoljub Todorović, Attorney, victims representatives

30 March 2006

Examination of witness Zoran Jovanović

A civil engineering technician, the witness worked before the war at the Glinica factory in Zvornik. He was mobilized by the JNA as a reserve officer on 22 March 1992. He commanded the infantry unit attached to the armoured battalion under the JNA officer Dragan Obrenović that was stationed in Čelopek. After the JNA formally left Zvornik on 19 May 1992, the witness was assigned to the Zvornik TO to guard the Glinica factory.

The deportation of the Kozluk Bosniaks

The witness went to Kozluk in the company of his commander Dragan Obrenović before the JNA left Zvornik, that is, before 19 May. ‘We went to Kozluk. At the meeting down there, the gathering of people in Kozluk, it was said that if they had weapons they were to hand them over, and if they had none...So far as I know, that’s was what was discussed. The villagers asked “What’s this, what’s going on?” and I replied “To tell you the truth, I don’t know”.’ The residents talked with a man in uniform with a rank of major; the witness learned later that the man was Marko Pavlović, one of the Zvornik TO commanding officers. Consequent on the meeting, the residents began to hand over weapons. Other than learning later that all the Kozluk Bosniaks had moved out, the witness said he had no more information about Kozluk. While he could not tell when exactly he heard about the expulsion, he was sure it was after the event.

The ‘Ekonomija’ prison

The witness was well acquainted with Abdulah Buljubašić a.k.a. Bubica, who was murdered after the Serb forces captured Zvornik and proclaimed it a Serb municipality. He and Bubica worked together at the Glinica factory and lived in the same building. One day, a man by name Pivarski, who led a paramilitary formation in Zvornik, came to Čelopek and asked the witness to accompany him to ‘Ekonomija’. That was about mid-May and the JNA was still in Zvornik. As

to his acquaintance with Pivarski, the witness said, 'You see, I came to know him, but I couldn't tell under exactly what circumstances. But the moment we met and I saw him...he once came for me and told me: "Come on, commander, come and see your friends" and then he took me along.'

The witness went to 'Ekonomija' with Pivarski in a car he drove. They entered a small room in a single-storey building measuring about 20-25 square metres. He spotted Bubica as soon as he went in and saw that his hair was completely grey. Other than being in a very poor condition Bubica could hardly stand on his feet. In the dark room, seven or eight men sat on the concrete floor. The witness noticed no tap, lavatory, bed, or anything else. Pivarski kicked Bubica about the side as he stood there. With every blow, Bubica groaned and tried to kneel and squat in anticipation of the next kick. Pivarski having finished, the witness noticed that Bubica could hardly remain on his feet. He reported the incident his commander Dragan Obrenović.

The witness knew that the room served as a prison for Bosniak prisoners and that the guards were armed and wore olive drab uniforms. He could not say, however, who ran the prison, who had set it up, and who had brought the men there.

The witness heard that Abdulah Buljubašić was killed but did not know who killed him, when and where. He knew Bubica's wife Jasna and he saw her after the Serb capture of Zvornik but before his visit to 'Ekonomija' in Pivarski's company to see Bubica.

The Čelopek Cultural Centre camp

The witness said he heard of the existence of the Čelopek camp late in July or early in August. He heard that some Muslims were kept in the Cultural Centre and that some were killed and others wounded. He also heard that a volunteer nicknamed Repić forcibly entered the prison and murdered several Muslims, as well as that he was charged with the multiple homicide and tried by a court in Sremska Mitrovica or Šabac. He also heard that Repić was also indicted in the present trial before the Belgrade War Crimes Chamber but that he died before the trial opened.