

Case: *Skočić* (indictée Sima Bogdanović and others)
Higher Court in Belgrade
War Crimes Chamber
Case number: K.Po2. 42/10

Main trial: February 13, 2013

Report: Lawyer Marina Kljaić, attorney to injured party Zijo Ribić

The closing statement by the accused Bogdanović Damir

The accused Bogdanović Damir said that he played no part in this crime. A part of indictment, in which it was stated that he agreed with the actions of the others who were accused, he considered insulting, to say the least, because the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor tried in all possible ways to get him convicted, in order to justify the time he had spent in detention. The statement by the protected witness „Alpha“, who was accusing him, he considered false because the witness had made a „deal“ with the Prosecutor, in order to save her husband who was a member of the unit. He said that the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor was exercising pressure on his family, and the family of his wife in Bosnia. He emphasized that he saved the protected witnesses, which „Beta“ and „Gamma“ confirmed in their statements. He angrily stated that he was saving lives, while the Prosecutor wanted to destroy them.

The closing statement by the accused Zoran Stojanović

The accused Zoran Stojanović claimed that he did not commit the felony he was accused of, and that the protected witnesses accused him unreasonably, so he proposed he be acquitted of all charges.

The closing statement by the accused Tomislav Gavrić

The accused Tomislav Gavrić said in his closing statement that the Prosecutor tried to prove him guilty on the basis of testimonies from the protected witnesses, which were impassioned, untrue and full of hate. The statement by the witness „Alpha“ had to be according to the Prosecutor's desires, but she could not have made it herself, because she did not have the level of intelligence necessary for remembering everything that was told to her. He did not kill and did not rape anybody, and if he was guilty because he took part in the war, then a third of population in the country should be tried too. His wife survived even greater horrors than the protected witnesses, so if he was punished, his family, children and his wife, who would be stigmatized as a Moslem married to a Serb war criminal, would also be stigmatized.

The closing statement by the accused Đorđe Šević

The accused Đorđe Šević did not give a closing statement, but only asked that the court that it make its decision by an evaluation of the obviously false testimonies from the protected witnesses, and to neglect the fact that he was already legally sentenced. He asked to be acquitted, because the fact he was a unit member did not mean he necessarily committed a war crime.

The closing statement by the accused Zoran Alić

The accused Zoran Alić emphasized in his closing statement that he was a victim of the war too, enumerating the many illogical positions taken in their testimonies by the protected witnesses „Alpha“ and „Beta“, as well as complaining about the work of the Office of the War Crimes

Prosecutor and the trial chamber. He also said that the Prosecutor was playing a dirty game, because he based his indictment only on the false testimonies from the protected witnesses, who gave their testimonies under instruction from the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor and Nataša Kandić. The identification of the accused by the protected witnesses, during the trial proceedings, was not carried out according to the law. He had the impression at this trial that the judge and the jury were the same, because the Prosecutor, with permission from the court, acted against him personally. He considered himself innocent, that the Prosecutor had not proved his guilt, and so he proposed to be acquitted of all charges.

The closing statement by the accused Zoran Đurđević

The accused Zoran Đurđević emphasized in his closing statement that this trial against him was framed by police and devised „in the police kitchen“, as retaliation because he pressed charges against the police officers who kidnapped him. During the proceedings, the trial chamber deprived him of the right to have a fair trial, because they refused his proposal for presentation of items of evidence that he considered important. He quoted many parts from the testimonies of the protected witnesses, which he considers contradictory, and claimed they were instructed by the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor and Nataša Kandić. He said there was no legal ground that the court should accept as a witness the protected witness „Alpha“, as she did not possess a single valid personal document. There was an agreement between the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor and this witness, because the police, the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor, and maybe even Nataša Kandić, had promised her citizenship of the Republic of Serbia in return for the false testimony. Đurđević claimed that the police, the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor and the court violated the law, because they were aware that the witness „Alpha“ acted against the law and they did nothing about it, so he would have to press charges against her too. He did not do any of the things that he was accused for, because at the time of the critical events he was not on the territory of Republika Srpska, and his only fault was that he belonged to the Serbian people, which had been persecuted throughout the centuries by its neighbours, Moslems and Albanians, and even by NATO fascists. He complained that the Chair of the Trial Chamber expressed personal hatred toward him, and that he had already come up with a conviction against him, and that, only because he was a Serb.

The closing statement by the accused Dragana Đekić

The accused Dragana Đekić accepted the closing statement of her defense in its entirety, and said that she expected the right decision from the court.

The main trial was restarted in order to present evidence – an inspection of the documentation that was submitted to the court after the main presentation of evidence was completed. It was documentation submitted by the Office of the Cantonal Prosecutor from Tuzla, BiH, which was related to forensic reports on the discovery of the skeletal remains of some of the injured parties at the location of mass graves Crni Vrh and Šahbegovići.

After the presentation of evidence, the parties stated that they would stick to their closing statements given earlier.