



Humanitarian Law Center

Dossier: Crimes against Croats in Vojvodina

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Abbreviations

AP	Autonomous Provinces
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DSHV	Democratic Alliance of Croats in Vojvodina
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Union
HLC	Humanitarian Law Center
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
IRMCT	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals
JNA	Yugoslav People's Army
JSO	Special Operations Unit
KOS	Military Counterintelligence
MUP	Ministry of the Interior
MZ	Local Community
OWCP	Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor of the Republic of Serbia
RDB	State Security Department
RSK	Republic of Serbian Krajina
SAO	Serbian Autonomous District
SČP	Serbian Chetnik Movement
SDG	Serbian Volunteer Guard
SDS	Serbian Democratic Party
SFRY	Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia
SNO	Serbian National Renewal
SO	Municipal Assembly
SPO	Serbian Renewal Movement
SPS	Socialist Party of Serbia
SRS	Serbian Radical Party
SUP	Secretariat of Internal Affairs
TO	Territorial Defence Force
YUCOM	Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights



Number of Croatian nationals in the territory of Vojvodina in relation to the total number of inhabitants in the municipality

	1991.			2002.			Difference in the number of Croats compared to total population 2002/1991 %	Difference in number of Croats in the municipality
Total	Total in the municipality	Croats	%	Total in the municipality	Croats	%	-24,41	18262
Ada	21506	83	0,39	18994	66	0,35	-20,48	17
Alibunar	26535	85	0,32	22954	65	0,28	-23,53	20
Apatin	32999	4354	13,19	32813	3766	11,48	-13,50	588
Bač	17249	2026	11,75	16268	1389	8,54	- 31,44	637
Bačka Palanka	58835	1226	2,08	60966	982	1,61	-19,90	244
Bačka Topola	40473	522	1,29	38245	454	1,19	- 13,03	68
Bački Petrovac	15662	183	1,17	14681	120	0,82	-34,43	63
Bela Crkva	23707	130	0,55	20367	90	0,44	-30,77	40
Beočin	14848	894	6,02	16086	757	4,71	-15,32	137
Bečej	42685	413	0,97	40987	437	1,07	+5,81	+24
Vrbas	46405	885	1,91	45852	659	1,44	-25,54	226
Vršac	58228	357	0,61	54369	276	0,51	-22,69	81
Žabalj	25823	205	0,79	27513	177	0,64	- 13,66	28
Žitište	22811	98	0,43	20399	75	0,37	-23,47	23
Zrenjanin	136778	801	0,59	132051	677	0,51	-15,48	124
Indija	44185	4650	10,52	49609	1904	3,84	-59,05	2746
Irig	11696	403	3,45	12329	289	2,64	-28,29	114
Kanjiža	30668	108	0,35	27510	82	0,30	-24,07	26
Kikinda	69743	272	0,39	67002	240	0,36	-11,76	32
Kovačica	30469	72	0,24	27890	69	0,25	-4,17	3
Kovin	38263	150	0,39	36082	114	0,32	-24,00	36
Kula	49311	936	1,90	48353	806	1,67	-13,89	130
Mali Idoš	14394	74	0,51	13494	85	0,63	+14,86	+11
Nova Crnja	14538	44	0,30	12705	42	0,33	-4,55	2
Novi Bečej	28788	102	0,35	26924	89	0,33	-12,75	13
Novi Kneževac	13816	85	0,62	12975	64	0,49	-24,71	21
Novi Sad	265464	8848	3,33	299294	6263	2,09	-29,22	2585
Opovo	11384	492	4,32	11016	289	2,62	-41,26	203
Odžaci	37501	431	1,15	35582	282	0,79	-34,57	149
Pančevo	125261	1692	1,35	127162	1168	0,92	- 30,97	524
Pečinci	20077	148	0,74	21506	88	0,41	-40,54	60
Plandište	14581	103	0,71	13377	69	0,52	-33,01	34
Ruma	55087	3810	6,92	60006	1987	3,31	-47,85	1823
Senta	28779	117	0,41	25568	93	0,36	-20,51	24
Sečanj	18438	177	0,96	16377	148	0,90	-16,36	29
Sombor	96105	8693	9,05	97263	8106	8,33	-6,75	587
Srbobran	17365	135	0,78	17855	147	0,82	+8,89	+12
Sremska Mitrovica	85328	3695	4,33	85902	2547	2,97	-31,07	1148
Sremski Karlovci	7534	1364	18,10	8839	753	8,52	-44,79	611
Stara Pazova	57291	3094	5,40	67576	1615	2,39	-47,80	1479
Subotica	150534	16369	10,87	148401	16688	11,25	+1,95	+319
Temerin	24939	154	0,62	28275	196	0,69	+27,27	+42
Titel	16218	199	1,23	17050	160	0,94	-19,60	39
Čoka	15271	82	0,54	13832	87	0,63	+6,10	+5
Šid	36317	6047	16,65	38973	2086	5,35	-65,50	3961
Ukupno	2013889	74808	3,71	2031272	56546	2,78	-24,41	18262

Data taken from the Report of the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities "On the fluctuation in the number on Croatian ethnic minority in the AP Vojvodina, 1992-2002". The final column of this table was prepared by the HLC for the needs of the Dossier.

Summary

In the period 1991-1995, in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, there was a campaign of intimidation and pressure on Croatian civilians with the aim to force them to leave their homes, and Serbia as well. The campaign, the intensity of which changed and reached its highest peaks in the second half of 1991, from spring to autumn 1992 and in summer of 1995, resulted in the expulsion of several tens of thousands of Croats from Vojvodina. Violence against Croats in Vojvodina included attacks on their private property and religious buildings, as well as threats, physical attacks and murders.

Vojislav Šešelj and his Serbian Radical Party (SRS) were the main advocates and inspirers of the campaign of intimidation and pressure on the Croat population in Vojvodina. The persecution of Croatian families was carried out under the pressure of various groups close to the SRS, composed of the local population, a militant part of the Serbian refugees from Croatia, and of members of volunteer units from Serbia who had participated in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

This intimidation campaign took place with the awareness and tacit approval of the political structures of the Republic of Serbia. The evidence presented in this Dossier shows that in some acts of violence against Croats, persons from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) of the Republic of Serbia also took part.

In addition, in the forced eviction of Vojvodina Croats, the State Security Department (RDB) of the MUP of the Republic of Serbia played a significant role.

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The persecution of the Croat and other non-Serb populations was executed throughout Vojvodina in the same or very similar manner, suggesting that it was done according to a previously established plan. First, in the neighbourhoods inhabited by the Croat population, persons unknown to the locals would have appeared. They would visit the houses of local Croats and ask the owners about the possibility of exchanging property. Telephone threats followed, as well as the publication and sending of threatening leaflets and letters, writing of menacing graffiti, telephone calls to individuals and intrusions into their houses, as well as the placing of explosives and throwing of bombs. In addition, there were cases of physical violence against Vojvodina Croats, as well as murders of Croatian citizens. At public gatherings, most often under the direction of the SRS, Croats were threatened, and given eviction ultimatums.

Besides, the existence of a persecution plan is also indicated in an internal document of the RDB dated October 1995, stating that the activity of Serb militant groups was registered in Vojvodina, and intended as “encouraging ethnic cleansing” and “the eviction of persons of Croatian and Muslim nationality” [see page 43].

Also, in the judgement of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in April 1996, it was stated that the murder of a Croatian family and a citizen of Slovak nationality was committed as part of a plan



to “exert pressure on Croats and members of other non-Serb communities” in Vojvodina, using “serious threats and coercion” in order “to speed up the eviction of Croats, but also of other non-Serb ethnicities which are close to the Croats” [see page 63].

In the period between the two population censuses of 1991 and 2002, the number of Croats and members of other non-Serb populations in the territory of Vojvodina was noticeably reduced. The number of Croats was reduced in 39 out of 45 municipalities in Vojvodina; and across the territory of the entire Vojvodina, the number of Croats decreased by 18,262, i.e. by 24.41%.

In this Dossier, evidence of events in certain Vojvodina municipalities (Ruma, Šid, Stara Pazova, Indija, Petrovaradin and Apatin) has been presented, showing how strong the pressure on the Croats to emigrate was, and where the ethnic picture was changed the most. The Dossier is based on the testimonies of witnesses and families of victims given to the Humanitarian Law Center (HLC), RDB documents, judgments of the courts in Serbia, and documents presented to the ICTY, as well as media reports.



Introduction

During 1990, the first multi-party elections were held in Croatia and Serbia. Nationalist parties came to power in both countries, which initiated a political crisis within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).

Elections in Croatia were held in April 1990. The majority of the votes were won by the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). Next month, the HDZ president Franjo Tuđman became the President of Croatia.¹

In December 1990 elections were held in Serbia, as well. The Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) won the majority of votes, and its president Slobodan Milošević was elected President of the Republic of Serbia. Dragutin Zelenović of the SPS was elected Prime Minister.² In December 1991, after Dragutin Zelenović's resignation, Radoman Božović, also a member of the SPS, became Prime Minister.³

In June 1990, Vojislav Šešelj founded the Serbian Chetnik Movement (SČP), but the authorities in Serbia refused to register the SČP as a political party. For this reason, in the presidential elections in December 1990, Šešelj was nominated as an independent candidate,⁴ and in February 1991, the SRS was founded by merging the unregistered SČP committees with the local committees of the National Radical Party.⁵ Vojislav Šešelj was elected president of the party. One of the basic programme goals of the new party was advocating the idea of an ethnically pure Greater Serbia.⁶ In 1991 and part of 1992, Šešelj was the only deputy of the SRS in the National Assembly of Serbia,⁷ after which the party gradually strengthened and over the long term managed to win double-digit votes in the elections.⁸

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1 Order concerning the chronology of events in the indictment related to Croatia, *Milošević*, ICTY, available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/slobodan_milosevic/tord/bcs/mil-ord030408b.htm, accessed November 30, 2018.

2 The Governments of the Republic of Serbia from 1990 until present, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/tekst/24880/vlade-republike-srbije-od-1990-godine-do-danas.php>, accessed on November 29, 2018; Socialist Party of Serbia, History, *Istinomer*, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.istinomer.rs/stranka/30/Socijalisticka-partija-Srbije/>, accessed on November 29, 2018.

3 "All Serbian Governments from 1990 to 2012", *RTS*, from July 26, 2012, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/politika/1107744/sve-srpske-vlade-od-1990-do-2012.html> accessed on November 29, 2018.

4 ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Šešelj* Case, March 31, 2016, para. 54.

5 Expert report by Yves Tomić "The ideology of Greater Serbia in the XIXth and XXth centuries" exhibit no. P00164.B, *Šešelj*, para. 5.2, p. 81.

6 The first goal in the SRS programme is "Restoring a free, independent and democratic Serbian state in the Balkans that will embrace the entire Serb nation, all Serbian countries, which means that, alongside the current imposed Serbian federal unit, Serbian Macedonia, Serbian Montenegro, Serbian Bosnia, Serbian Herzegovina, Serbian Dubrovnik, Serbian Dalmatia, Serbian Lika, Serbian Kordun, Serbian Banija, Serbian Slavonia and Serbian Baranja". See at: Serbian Radical Party Programme Declaration, *Greater Serbia*, No. 9, May 1991, p. 6 available (in Serbian) at <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/izdavastvo/casopis-velika-srbija/?&pg=8>.

7 Testimony of Vojislav Šešelj before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case, April 20, 2005, p. 44324.

8 Elections for deputies of the National Assembly of the RS were held in December 1992, and in these elections the SRS won 22.58% of the votes, available (in Serbian) at: <http://www.rik.parlament.gov.rs/latinica/arhiva-izbori-za-narodne-poslanike-1992.php>; In the next elections for deputies, held in December 1993, the SRS won 13.85% of the votes, available (in Serbian) at: <http://www.rik.parlament.gov.rs/latinica/arhiva-izbori-za-narodne-poslanike-1993.php>; In September 1997, the SRS won 28.12% of votes in the elections for deputies, available at: <http://www.rik.parlament.gov.rs/latinica/arhiva-izbori-za-narodne-poslanike-1997.php>; at the December 2000 elections, the SRS won 8.59% of the votes, available at: <http://www.rik.parlament.gov.rs/latinica/arhiva-izbori-za-narodne-poslanike-2000.php>.



In the first half of 1991, the first armed conflicts in the country occurred, in Slovenia from June 27 to July 6, 1991, with the so-called Ten-Day War, after which the JNA withdrew from Slovenia.⁹

Armed conflicts in Croatia followed. Although it was until then a joint multi-ethnic army, the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) openly took Serbia's side, shelling Croatian towns and, together with the units of the Milicija [police] of Krajina and paramilitary units from Serbia, participating in offensive actions in Croatia.¹⁰ From 1991 onwards, the JNA was without any doubt under the control of the Serbian authorities.¹¹ During 1991, in the territory of Serbia, several camps were established for Croatian civilians and members of the armed forces who had been arrested and brought to Serbia after the conquest of towns and villages in Croatia by the JNA.¹²

Immediately after the outbreak of the conflict in Croatia, the SRS began recruiting, organising and directing volunteers from Serbia to the battlefield.¹³ These volunteer units participated in actions in Croatia together with JNA units. Vojislav Šešelj considered that between the SRS, the JNA and the TO there was no longer any difference, and that they were units of the same army, fighting for the same goals.¹⁴

On August 12, 1991, the leaders of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) of Western Slavonia declared the Serbian Autonomous District (SAO) of Western Slavonia, which included the municipalities of Pakrac, Podravska Slatina, Daruvar, Grubišno Polje, Virovitica, Bjelovar, parts of Orahovica and Okučani municipalities, and villages between Nova Gradiška and Novska.¹⁵

In the autumn of 1991, the Croatian Army carried out a number of military attacks in the territory of Western Slavonia in order to regain control of the positions held by Serb forces. On October 28, 1991, the Crisis Staff of the Croatian Municipality of Slavonska Požega issued an order to evacuate

9 Order of SSNO (Federal Secretariat for National Defence - translator's remark), for the transfer of forces and assets, the territory of the Republic of Slovenia from July 25, 1991, exhibit no. P01095, *Stanišić and Simatović*; Second Pre-Trial Brief of the Prosecutor's Office of the ICTY of May 31, 2002, *Milošević*, para. 303.

10 Dossier: The JNA in the Wars in Croatia and BiH, HLC, pp. 14-18, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=35208&lang=de>, accessed November 30, 2018.

11 Dossier: The JNA in the Wars in Croatia and BiH, HLC, p. 12, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=35208&lang=de>, accessed November 30, 2018.

12 Dossier: The JNA in the Wars in Croatia and BiH, HLC, p. 57, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=35208&lang=de>, accessed November 30, 2018.

13 Expert report by Yves Tomić, "The ideology of Greater Serbia in the XIXth and XXth centuries", exhibit no. P00164.B, *Šešelj*, para. 5.3. p. 83; ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, paras. 106-111, available at <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/seselj/tjug/bcs/160331.pdf>; An excerpt from Vojislav Šešelj's book "Filipike četničkog vojvode" - Basic Military Organizations of the SRS Volunteers, exhibit no. P00213, *Šešelj*, pp. 2-5.

14 Video report, *Šešelj: "I would shoot anyone who questions the Serbian Army!"*, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN3SL_HIVug, accessed January 3, 2018; "Politics as Challenge of Conscience, Vojislav Šešelj", <http://www.ictc.org/x/cases/trans/en/080130IT.htm> p. 2978, exhibit no. P01163, *Stanišić and Simatović*, pp. 4-8.

15 The proclamation of the SAO Krajina of Western Slavonia, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aaqNKvsHYKA>, accessed on November 29, 2018; Testimony of Veljko Džakula before the ICTY in the *Martić* Case of January 16, 2006, pp. 347-356.



several villages of the Požega valley inhabited by the Serb population.¹⁶ This led to the persecution of the Serb population from the Požega valley, namely from the area under Papuk and Psunj. The scarce Serb population still remaining in these villages was exposed to attacks by members of the Croatian National Guard Corps (ZNG) and armed Croatian extremist groups.¹⁷

From the Slavonian villages and towns where there were no war operations, part of the Serbian population withdrew, together with the JNA.¹⁸ Those who remained were subjected to threats, physical attacks and attacks on their property by armed Croatian extremists and members of the ZNG, especially from November 1991 onwards. Owing to the violence, a large number of Serb civilians were forced to leave their houses and lands in the municipalities of Grubišno Polje, Slavonska Požega, Podravska Slatina, Virovitica, and Daruvar.¹⁹

Between November 1991 and the middle of 1992, a large number of Serbian inhabitants of the said municipalities escaped to Vojvodina.²⁰

Thus, for example, by the beginning of May 1992, about 500 refugee families for whom temporary accommodation was provided came to Hrtkovci, a village in the municipality of Ruma. Up till the summer of 1992, another 800 Serbian families from Croatia were coming to Hrtkovci, about 400 families to Golubinci, and about 10,000 refugee families to the town of Ruma.²¹

I. Serbian Radical Party - Advocating Expulsion of Croats from Vojvodina

13

From the beginning of the war in Croatia, Vojislav Šešelj and the SRS advocated retaliation measures against Croats in Serbia or Vojvodina. Vojislav Šešelj, as deputy at the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia from June 1991,²² explicitly called in his speeches from not later than August 1991 for the persecution, forcible transfer and expulsion of Croats from Serbia.²³

Šešelj called the persecution and expulsion of Croats “voluntary exchanges”, or “civilized exchanges” of the populations and of the property of Croats from Vojvodina with Serb refugees from Croatia.

16 Order of the Crisis Staff of the Slavonska Požega Municipality, exhibit no. 00018, *Martić*.

17 Statement of the witness Đ.Z. given to the HLC; Statement of the witness Lj.S. given to the HLC, December 2012; Statement of Z.P. given to the HLC, December 2012; Testimony of Veljko Džakula before the ICTY in the *Martić* Case of January 18, 2006, pp. 556-557.

18 Statement of the witness A. K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness S.P. given to the HLC, September 1993.

19 The command of the 5th military district of the JNA informing the European Community, exhibit no. 00017, *Martić*; Testimony of Veljko Džakula before the ICTY in the *Martić* Case of January 18, 2006, pp. 536-538, 556-557.

20 Testimony C-037 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of September 30, 2002, p. 10507.

21 Harassment, intimidation and direct threat to personal and property security of non-Serb citizens, NK report, HLC archives.

22 Šešelj, Vojislav (MICT-16-99), available at <http://www.irmct.org/en/cases/mict-16-99>.

23 Partially Dissenting Opinion of Judge Flavia Lattanzi, Vol 3, ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, para. 101.



Šešelj justified this under the principle of retorsion,²⁴ thereby trying to reduce the expulsion of Croats from Serbia to a mere administrative measure.²⁵

Such an interpretation of retorsion, a term used in the international law, is actually a misuse of this right, and was used as a cover for ethnic cleansing, persecution and forcible transfers.²⁶

Vojislav Šešelj described his vision of the principle of retorsion as early as April 1, 1992, in his speech before the National Assembly of Serbia, saying that “if a state expels members of a national minority from its territory to another country, where the majority of that expelled people is living, under international law it is permissible to enforce the retaliatory counter-expulsion of the national minority of the country which has already enforced the original expulsion”. Further, Šešelj continues: “[...] by the same right under which Tudman has persecuted Serbs from Croatia, we will persecute Croats from Serbia. And we will not allow Croats to offer Serb refugees, like today in Slankamen, their old, destroyed houses, homes converted into stables, in exchange for the villas on the Adriatic coast which the Serbs all had to leave. The Croats in Slankamen, Zemun and other places will not beat peace until they move, because Serb refugees from Zagreb, Rijeka, Varaždin and other Croatian towns have to be accommodated, we have to find them a place to stay and to compensate for the damage they have suffered when they were excluded from their homes”.²⁷ Responding to the deputy of the Democratic Alliance of Croats in Vojvodina (DSHV), Antun Skenderović, Šešelj stated: “We will not kill you, of course, but we’ll put you into trucks and trains, so you find your way to Zagreb”.²⁸

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The principle of retorsion, enacted as the forcible expulsion of Croats, was also advocated by other members of the SRS. Thus Milan Bačević, then a deputy in the Federal Assembly of Yugoslavia, stated at the SRS Forum in Novi Pazar in July 1992 that Serbia should evict as many Croats as Serbs displaced from Croatia. As an example, he stated that there were 6500 retired Croatian officers in Belgrade, who enjoyed all privileges.²⁹ From May 2012 until July 2012, Milan Bačević was an advisor to then Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić, and today he is a member of the Serbian Progressive Party’s Presidency and its General Board, and currently Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to PR China.³⁰

24 Partially Dissenting Opinion of Judge Flavia Lattanzi, Vol 3, ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, para. 101.

25 Excerpt from Vojislav Šešelj’s book in Serbian, “Milan Panić mora pasti” [Milan Panić has to step down, t.r.], exhibit no. P00685, *Šešelj*, p. 23.

26 Partially Dissenting Opinion of Judge Flavia Lattanzi, Vol 3, ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, para. 104.

27 An excerpt from the Book (in Serbian) Poslaničke besede [Deputies’ words, t.r.] by Vojislav Šešelj, exhibit no. P00075, *Šešelj*, pp. 7 - 8.

28 An Excerpt from the Book Poslaničke besede [Deputies’ words, t.r.] by Vojislav Šešelj, exhibit no. P00075, *Šešelj*, p. 9.

29 “Raseliti Šiptare i Hrvate” [“Displace Siptars and Croats”, t.r.], *Večernje novosti*, July 29, 1992.

30 Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, Beijing - PR China <http://www.beijing.mfa.gov.rs/ambassador.php>, accessed October 9, 2018.



Former Vice-President and the Secretary-General of the SRS,³¹ Maja Gojković, who also served as the President of the SRS Vojvodina branch,³² was linked to the events in Hrtkovci during the trial of Slobodan Milošević. Namely, the protected witness C-047 stated in his testimony that she attended a meeting at the end of 1991 at which Šešelj and the local SRS leadership discussed the expulsion of Croats from Hrtkovci.³³

Referring to this testimony, the ICTY Prosecutor's Office challenged Šešelj's request to appoint Maja Gojković for his legal advisor. The Prosecution took the position that "Maja Gojković was a suspect, possibly a co-perpetrator of the accused", and that the security of the witnesses might be jeopardized if she was allowed access to material from the process against Vojislav Šešelj.³⁴ The ICTY Council adhered to these reasons and by its decision rejected the request of Vojislav Šešelj to appoint Maja Gojković for his legal advisor.³⁵

Maja Gojković today is the President of the National Assembly of Serbia³⁶ and a member of the Presidency of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party.³⁷

In March 1992, Serbian President Slobodan Milošević stated that for him, Šešelj was the most appreciated of all opposition leaders. Milošević emphasized that the SRS and Šešelj were financially independent from foreign sources, and that Šešelj was "consistent in expressing his political opinion."³⁸ After the elections in December 1992, the SPS, together with the SRS, formed a minority government, and during that period, the two parties cooperated intensively.³⁹

In September 1993, a political conflict between Slobodan Milošević and Vojislav Šešelj occurred, which led to the temporary dissolution of the SPS and the SRS.⁴⁰

Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, in his report on the state of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia in February 1994, pointed out that

31 Press Releases signed by Maja Gojković, *Greater Serbia*, no. 9, May 1991, p. 5, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/izdavastvo/casopis-velika-srbija/?pg=8>; Radicals' "Iron Lady", *Greater Serbia*, no. 16, May 1994, p. 10, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/izdavastvo/casopis-velika-srbija/?pg=8>.

32 ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, para. 59, available at: <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/seselj/tjug/bcs/160331.pdf>.

33 Prosecution Response to "Motion No. 19" to the Accused of September 12, 2003; Witness C-047 in the *Milošević* Case before the ICTY on June 3, 4 and 10, 2003, his testimony was partially closed to the public.

34 Ibid.

35 Decision on Motion No. 19 of September 30, 2003.

36 Maja Gojković, President of the National Assembly of Serbia <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/national-assembly/composition/speaker/biography-2420.html>.

37 Maja Gojković, biography, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.istinomer.rs/akter/185/Maja-Gojkovic>, accessed December 18 2018.

38 *Ilustrovana politika* of March 23, 1992, quoted as in „Povratak u Karlobag“ [“Return to Karlobag”, t.r.], *NIN*, January 27, 2000, available at <http://www.nin.co.rs/2000-01/27/11331.html>, accessed November 29, 2018.

39 Testimony of Vojislav Šešelj before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of August 25, 2005, pp. 43306-43307.

40 Testimony of Vojislav Šešelj before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of August 25, 2005, p. 43307.



leading political figures in Serbia, such as Vojislav Šešelj, were in public life and in the Serbian media calling for religious and national intolerance. He also said that encouraging intolerance and national prejudices was especially prevalent during the parliamentary pre-election campaign in December 1993, when a large number of Croats had already left Serbia under pressure.⁴¹

However, Vojislav Šešelj claimed that he and his party had not expelled the Croatian population, but with its “propaganda efforts had speeded up this exchange a bit”.⁴²

Despite the information the state leadership had about the activities of Vojislav Šešelj and his Serbian Radical Party in the National Assembly and outside of it, neither he nor his Serbian Radical Party were in any way sanctioned for the pressures and violence against Vojvodina Croats in the period between 1991 and 1995.

II. Violence against the Croat population in Vojvodina

i. Years 1990 and 1991

In Vojvodina, ethnically motivated incidents had been occurring sporadically even since autumn 1990. The first recorded incident was a planting of explosives at the Franciscan monastery in Bač in the autumn of 1990.⁴³ Afterwards, this monastery was damaged on two occasions.⁴⁴

From the beginning of 1991, Croats were being expelled from certain Vojvodina municipalities following the exertion of pressure, and intimidation of and threats to the Croat population were intensified in May of the same year [see page 16, 17 and 19].

The pressure exerted by extremist Serb groups on the Croat population continued after May, and the violence intensified in the autumn of 1991 [see page 19 and 20].

Indija Municipality, year 1991

For Labour Day, May 1, 1991, on the building of the Croatian Peasant House in Novi Slankamen, in the municipality of Indija, two flags were raised—the Yugoslav flag, and the new Croatian flag with a checkerboard, which had previously, by the decision of the Croatian Parliament, replaced the flag of the Socialist Republic of Croatia.⁴⁵

41 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1994/110 of February 21, 1994, para. 124.

42 Vojislav Šešelj and Aleksandar Vučić, Chetniks, Ethnic cleansing of the village of Hrtkovci, Serbia '92 / '93 2:59-3:05 available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy_P7IkavX8, accessed November 9, 2018. ”

43 “Izmišljena ugroženost Hrvata” [“The Imagined Endangerment of Croats”, t.r.], *Borba*, June 7, 1991.

44 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1992/S-11/9 of August 28, 1992, para. 62.

45 At the end of the year 1990, by Decree of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia, the former flag of the Socialist Republic of Croatia was replaced by a flag with checkerboard https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/full/1990_12_55_1067.html, (in Croatian), accessed December 5, 2018.



The practice of raising the flag for the work holiday had been respected in previous years. However, raising the flag with the checkerboard caused indignation among the inhabitants of Novi Slankamen of Serbian nationality. During the day, the employees of the Secretariat of the Interior (SUP) in Indija removed the checkerboard flag from the Croatian Peasant House building.⁴⁶ Shortly afterwards, the representatives of the DSHV, together with representatives of the Municipality of Indija, raised another flag also with a checkerboard, which was once again removed during the night.⁴⁷

Although there is no official explanation of what happened during that night, a member of the Serbian Volunteer Guard (SDG)⁴⁸ from Stara Pazova, Mihajlo Ulemek spoke about the event on several occasions.⁴⁹ According to him, on the evening of May 1, 1991, he came to Novi Slankamen at the invitation of inhabitants of Serbian nationality. Ulemek delivered an ultimatum to local Croats to take down the flag, adding that, “if not, ten Croatian houses will be burned”. After that, the flag with the checkerboard was removed from the Croatian Peasant House.⁵⁰

The events of May 1, 1991 in Novi Slankamen led to the decision of the Municipal Assembly (SO) of Indija that only the flags and other insignia of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and of the SFRY could be shown on the territory of the municipality on festive occasions. At the same time, the SO Indija submitted a proposal to the Assembly of Serbia to regulate this issue at the republic level.⁵¹

On July 23, 1991, the SO Indija Presidency issued a press release condemning the violence in Novi Slankamen. Municipal authorities appealed to citizens “to refrain from all expressions of revanchism towards other nations.”⁵²

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46 “Greške vlasti siju razdor” [“Government errors sow discord”, t.r.], *Vjesnik*, May 21, 1991; „Prijetnje Hrvatima” [“Threats to Croats”, t.r.], *Vjesnik*, May 4, 1991; Novi Slankamen - May 1, 1991, Removal of the flag by the Serbian police, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0ghz7RoV6o>, accessed December 18, 2018.

47 „Šahovnica podelila selo” [The checkerboard divided the village] *Večernje novosti*, May 4, 1991; „Pod teretom događaja i simbola” [Under a Load of Events and Symbols], *Borba*, May 11, 1991; „Greške vlasti siju razdor” [Government errors sow discord], *Vjesnik*, May 4, 1991.

48 The Serbian Volunteer Guard (SDG) was a paramilitary formation formed in October 1990 by Željko Ražnatović Arkan, who was the commander of the SDG during its entire existence. This unit was known as ‘Arkan’s Tigers’ or ‘Arkanovci’. From August 1991, the SDG had been present in eastern Slavonia and other parts of Croatia; the base of this formation was in Erdut. From spring 1992, the SDG was present on the territory of BiH. In 1997, the ICTY Prosecutor’s Office filed an indictment against Željko Ražnatović Arkan. Ražnatović was killed in Belgrade in 2000. More: http://www.icty.org/en/case/zeljko_raznatovic/4

49 Public redacted version of prosecution final trial brief, *Stanišić and Simatović*, February 28, 2013, para. 1015, available at: http://www.icty.org/x/cases/stanistic_simatovic/custom5/en/130228.pdf.

50 “Srbin sam tim se dičim” [I’m a proud Serb] *Interview*, November 21, 1995, available at http://www.yuorpe.com/zines/SAM/arhiva_1/0009.html, accessed on October 26, 2018; “Srbojem taman koliko je potrebno” [I am all that you could require of a Serb], *Sremske novine*, August 21, 1991; “Greške vlasti siju razdor” [“Government errors sow discord”] *Vjesnik*, May 21, 1991.

51 “Samo dve zastave” [Only Two Flags], *Večernje novosti*, May 26, 1991.

52 The announcement of the Presidency of SO Indija according to “Osuda nasilja” [Condemnation of Violence], *Sremske novine*, July 31, 1991.



In the following months, the Croats in Novi Slankamen were exposed to threats and intimidation by Mihajlo Ulemek and a group of people gathered around him.⁵³ They were threatening the Croats via telephone, throwing bombs into their yards and burning their houses and shops.⁵⁴

In June 1991, the Croatian woman B.V., an inhabitant of Novi Slankamen, was taken from her café in Slankamen to Novi Banovci in the Stara Pazova municipality, where she was raped. In 1998, the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica filed an indictment against Mihajlo Ulemek, a member of the SDG from Stara Pazova, for raping B.V. in 1991. However, in 2003, the District Public Prosecutor abandoned the criminal prosecution.⁵⁵ In the decision on the suspension of criminal proceedings, the District Public Prosecutor did not state the reasons for such a decision.⁵⁶

Ruma Municipality, year 1991

From the autumn of 1991, Croats in Ruma were exposed to frequent threats over the phone. Unknown people were telling them that they had a deadline of two or three days to leave their homes, or otherwise they would be killed.⁵⁷

In the first half of December 1991, a bomb was thrown at the building of the "Matija Gubec" Cultural and Educational Society in Ruma.⁵⁸ After that, bombs were thrown also at private houses in the neighbourhood of Breg, a part of Ruma predominantly inhabited by Croats. In the following year, about twenty bombs were thrown at Croatian houses in Ruma.⁵⁹ The police did not find any of the perpetrators.⁶⁰

The responsibility for the bombings, threats and intimidation, citizens of Ruma attributed to members of the local committee of the SRS, who usually gathered in the "Brlog" and "Stara Srbija" cafés.⁶¹ As the organizers of the intimidation campaign against Croats, the owner of the "Stara Srbija" café, Nenad Mušicki, and Ruma resident Đorđe Rogić, were named.⁶²

53 "Srбујем taman koliko je potrebno" [I am all that you could require of a Serb], *Sremske novine*, August 21, 1991; "Srbin sam tim se dičim" [I'm a proud Serb] *Interview*, November 21, 1995, available at http://www.yuope.com/zines/SAM/arhiva_1/0009.html, accessed on October 26, 2018.

54 "Srбујем taman koliko je potrebno" [I am all that you could require of a Serb], *Sremske novine*, August 21, 1991; "Osuda nasilja" [Condemnation of Violence], *Sremske novine*, July 31, 1991.

55 Decision on Suspension of Criminal Proceeding, District Court in Sremska Mitrovica no. K-20/98, of August 18 2003.

56 Ibid.

57 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

58 "Bomba u domu muzike" [Bomb in the House of Music], *Sremske novine*, December 11, 1991.

59 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

60 Statements of witnesses given to the HLC, September 1993.

61 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of M.M. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of T.G. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricaneprice.com/zrtva/tomislav-gajger/>, accessed on November 1, 2018; Marko Kljajić, "Kako je umirao moj narod" ["How My People Died"], Editions Hrid Subotica, pp. 68-69.

62 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Hrvati su "ugroženi" po receptu [Croats are "threatened" according to recipe], *Sremske novine*, September 23, 1992; Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on June 23 1992, exhibit no. P01104, *Šešelji*, p. 3.



Municipality of Šid, year 1991

On the territory of Šid municipality, threats and intimidation of Croats had been present since the beginning of the year 1991, when the first evictions were recorded.⁶³ At first, the targets were the more prominent, richer and better educated families in Šid. A number of Croats in the Šid municipality left their jobs under pressure, and there were also cases of dismissal of workers due to their nationality.⁶⁴

As organisers of threats and intimidation, the inhabitants of the villages around Šid pointed to members of the SRS - local Serbs, and in the first place Petar Živković, a former teacher and the SRS official from the village of Sot, and Zlatko Stjepanović, nick-named "Papiga" [Parrot], president of the SRS committee in Morović.⁶⁵

Croats received threatening letters and phone calls. Bombings were not recorded in the city itself, but in the villages around Šid, this type of pressure was also present.⁶⁶ In smaller places, intimidation and threats were preceded by the spread of rumours about the alleged relation of a targeted person with the Croatian authorities, primarily with the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ).⁶⁷ The pressure on the Croats was further increased after the shelling of Šid by Croatian armed forces from the territory of the villages of Nijemci and Lipovac in Croatia, in November 1991.⁶⁸

In May 1991, a special unit of the MUP of Serbia was stationed not far from the village of Kukujevcu in the municipality of Šid. This unit was in charge of securing the border with Croatia and had about a hundred members. The members of this special unit, led by Nenad Bućin, a police officer from Sremska Mitrovica, entered Kukujevcu on a daily basis with their transporter vehicle, searched the houses of local Croats and took them out of their houses. They were taken outside the village, to a

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63 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 10.

64 Statement of the witness B.M.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness J.K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness J.M. given to the HLC, September 1993.

65 Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness R.K. given to the HLC, October 1993; Statement of the witness Đ.Ž. given to the HLC, November 1993; Statement of the witnesses S.L. and J.M. given to the HLC, October 1993; Statement of the witness M.S. given to the HLC, October 1993.

66 Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of Z.S. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of M.S. given to the HLC, October 1993; Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, November 1993.

67 Statement of the witness D.Š. given to the HLC, September 1993.

68 „Granate na Šid“ [“Grenades on Šid”], *Večernje novosti*, November 6, 1991, p. 5, „Granate iz Hrvatske pogodile dečji vrtić“ [“Grenades from Croatia hit a kindergarten”], *Politika*, November 6, 1991; Statement of the witness J.K. given to the HLC, November 1993.



grain tank and hangar near the railway station, where they were beaten and subjected to other types of harassment.⁶⁹ Croats from Kukujevci were often taken to the police station in Šid.⁷⁰

Due to the everyday threats and harassment, the Croat inhabitants of Kukujevci formed a delegation in November 1991,⁷¹ requesting a reception by representatives of the SO Šid. However, the meeting in the municipality was never held, but the delegation was received by Nedeljko Makivić, the then chief of police in Šid.⁷² Only a few days after that conversation with him, unknown members of the MUP took Ilija Tomić, one of the members of the delegation, to the neighbouring village of Bačinci, to a railway track, and beat him with rifle butts and police batons on the legs and hands.⁷³

At the end of November 1991, members of special units of the Serbian MUP from Belgrade and Novi Sad were sent to Kukujevci.⁷⁴ After that, Nenad Bućin no longer came to the village, and the police in Šid told the inhabitants of Kukujevci that he had been arrested. However, this did not happen - he was sent back to Sremska Mitrovica, to serve in the position he had occupied previously.⁷⁵

69 Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, November 1993; Statement of the witness M.L. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness R.K. given to the HLC, October 1993; Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015. On September 6, 2018, the HLC sent a request for access to information of public importance to the PU Sremska Mitrovica, requesting information on the position the police officer Nenad Bućin held in the period from 1991 to 1995, and whether Nenad Bućin was still employed with the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia. On October 1, 2018, the Ministry of the Interior adopted Decision 02/4 No. 072/1-793/18-1, 2018, which linked the procedures of the two HLC requests for access to information and by which the request for free access to information was rejected. On October 25, 2018, HLC appealed against this decision to the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection.

70 Statement of the witness Jelena D, given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at: <http://www.neispricanepriprice.com/zrtva/jelena-kukujevci/>; Statement of the witness Josip Šorgić, given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at: <http://www.neispricanepriprice.com/zrtva/josip-sorgic/>; Statement of the witness Ilija Tomić, given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at: <http://www.neispricanepriprice.com/zrtva/ilija-tomic/>, accessed on November 23, 2018.

71 The delegation was comprised of Tihomir Todorović, then a primary school teacher, Antun Paradžiković, a former deputy in the Assembly of Serbia, Marijan Marošević, the then president of the local community of Kukujevci, Josip Rakovac, a waiter, and Ilija Tomić, manager of economy in the village. Available at: Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 10.

72 Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, November 1993.

73 Statement of the witness Ilija Tomić, given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricanepriprice.com/zrtva/ilija-tomic/>, accessed on September 11, 2018.

74 Report Under Spotlight (Serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 12.

75 During the research for the Dossier, the HLC filed numerous requests for access to information of public interest to the MUP of the RS in relation to persons employed in the Ministry of the Interior during the period 1991 to 1995, but the MUP refused to provide that information, stating that these data had already been submitted to the HLC. The MUP's reasoning is only partially accurate. Namely, the MUP had provided the HLC with requested data for some municipalities and for the year 1995, but not for the period 1991 to 1994. For the municipality of Šid, the MUP did not provide any data, not even for 1995. Available at: Decision 02/4 No. 072 / 1-793/18-1 of October 1, 2018, HLC Archives; Statement of the witness M.L. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, September 1993.



In the military hunting grounds near the village of Morović, a JNA unit from Novi Sad was stationed after August 1991, whose commander was Ilija Sudžum.⁷⁶ The task of the unit was to secure the border with Croatia. The members of the unit came to Morović every night. They gathered in the local café by name of “Sleter”. The president of the local SRS committee in Morović, Zlatko Stjepanović, nick-named “Papiga” [Parrot], reported to the soldiers where the Croats lived, after which they went into their houses and beat them.⁷⁷

Municipality of Apatin, year 1991

Apart from Srem, in 1991 Croats were the target of attacks in Bačka, as evidenced by events from Apatin.

In September 1991, Antun Siladev, a Croat from Sonta, together with Mate Horvat, a worker in the “Zapadna Bačka” water supply company from Sombor, worked on providing a pumping station near the Bogojevo bridge on the Danube, at the border with Croatia. Because of his job obligations, Antun Siladev also lived in the facility of the pump station. This borderline was secured by the JNA Novi Sad corps.⁷⁸

After midnight on September 30, 1991, two soldiers in JNA uniform called on Antun Siladev to come out from the facility in which he lived. When he did, one of the soldiers shot him. Siladev fell to the ground, hit in the right hip, after which the soldiers approached and started kicking him. As he was kicked, they were cursing him, calling him “Son of a Ustasha mother!” and “Blackshirt!”. They then ordered him to call out another employee, Mate Horvat, who then came out with his arms raised. Then both of them were beaten and harassed.⁷⁹

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The “Zapadna Bačka” water supply company, where Antun Siladev was employed, informed the Secretariat for National Defence of the municipality of Sombor and the National Defense Council of Sombor, Apatin and Odžaci about the incident, in which he was wounded.⁸⁰ In one document of the Inter-municipal Secretariat for the Interior Affairs of the municipalities of Sombor, Apatin and Odžaci, it is confirmed that the attack was carried out by members of the reserve force of the

76 On 11 October 2018, the HLC sent a request for information to the MoD regarding the professional engagement of Ilija Sudžum from 1991 to 1995. According to the reply of 26 December 2018, the MoD does not have any information on Ilija Sudžum. Answer MO No. 10297-4 of December 26, 2018, HLC Database.

77 Statement of the witness M. S. given to the HLC in October 1993.

78 Statement of the witness A. S. given to the HLC, March 2005, Judgment of the First Municipal Court in Belgrade, *Antun Siladev*, dated January 26, 2007, the HLC Archive; Request for compensation for damage caused by past human rights violations since November 15, 2005, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=13425>, accessed December 11, 2018.

79 Statement of the witness A.S. given to the HLC, March 2005; Notice of the incident while securing the facility “9-1”, Water Supply Company West Bačka of September 30, 1991, HLC Archive.

80 Statement of the witness A.S. given to the HLC, March 2005; Judgment of the First Municipal Court in Belgrade, *Antun Siladev* Case, dated January 26, 2007, HLC Archive; Letter from the Inter-Municipal Secretariat for Internal Affairs of October 16, 1991, HLC Archive; Notification of the incident while checking the ‘9-1’ facilities SO Sombor Secretariat for National Defence of September 30, 1991, HLC Archive; Notice, the National Defence Council of Sombor, Apatin and Odžaci from October 1, 1991, the HLC Archive.



JNA. However, an investigation into the incident has not been conducted to date, and no one has been found responsible for injuring Antun Siladev.⁸¹

In 2012, on behalf of Antun Siladev, the HLC launched a procedure for the recognition of his status as civilian invalid of war in accordance with the Law on the Rights of Civilian Invalids of War of the Republic of Serbia. The Provincial Secretariat rejected the request for recognition of this status, after which, in January 2013, the HLC filed a lawsuit with the Administrative Court in Novi Sad against the decision of the Provincial Secretariat.⁸² On November 22, 2014, the Administrative Court in Novi Sad ruled that the HLC's appeal was dismissed and confirmed the position of the Provincial Secretariat that the violations did not incur "at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Law". Namely, the ruling of the Administrative Court states that the violation was committed by members of the JNA, and the Law stipulates that civilian invalids of the war can only be considered as victims if violated by "enemy forces", while the JNA is not considered an enemy army. Also, the Law applies only to cases that took place during the war, and the official position of the state institutions of Serbia, and thus the Administrative Court, is that Serbia was not participating in the war at the time of the attack on Antun Siladev.⁸³

Reaction

Representatives of all levels of government in the Šid municipality denied that Croatian inhabitants had moved out because of the pressures they have experienced. The president of the Morović Local Community (MZ), Mirko Njegovan, claimed that, as regards the beginning of the emigration of the Croats: "First, young people were leaving. In great numbers. Some escaped owing to mobilisation. Now, they cannot come back, even if they want to. Otherwise, no pressure was exerted on the Croats. Bombs were not thrown at all. Maybe some did fall, but the Croats threw them themselves to attract attention and justify their desire to go to Croatia".⁸⁴ Nedeljko Makivić, the then chief of staff of the SUP in Šid, claimed that "the emigration was voluntary".⁸⁵

At the end of May 1991, the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia passed the Declaration on the Violation of the Rights of Members of the Croatian Minority in the Republic of Serbia and the Autonomous Provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo. In the part referring to the position of the Croats in Vojvodina, it is stated that explosive materials were placed in front of Croatian cultural and historical

81 Statement of the witness A.S. given to the HLC, March 2005; Letter from the Inter-Municipal Secretariat for Internal Affairs of October 16, 1991, HLC Archive.

82 Panel discussion - Who needs free legal aid: The deprivation of the rights of the most endangered persons, *Vreme*, December 17, 2015, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1350794&print=yes>.

83 Judgment of the Administrative Court Department in Novi Sad III-11 U.64/13 of October 22, 2014, HLC Archive; The legal and institutional framework in Serbia regarding the rights and needs of civilian victims of war, HLC report, August 2017, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=34194&lang=de>, accessed December 19, 2018.

84 Statement of the witness M.NJ. given to the HLC, September 1993.

85 Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, November 1993.



monuments and that Croatian national insignia were removed; and also, that Croats were exposed to threats, abuse, police brutality and terror, and that others were invited to murder them.⁸⁶

The declaration provoked the displeasure of the Serbian authorities and harsh reactions. For example, the president of the Executive Council of Vojvodina, Radoman Božović, assessed the allegations stated in the Declaration as malicious and unfounded.⁸⁷ Đorđe Nadrljanski, Provincial Secretary for Education and Culture, stressed that “the Declaration is merely a hypothetical fabrication, without any founded data or arguments, and conceived as a political statement of endangerment”.⁸⁸ The Provincial Secretary of Interior Affairs, Predrag Markov, said the Interior Ministry does not have information that some Croatian families emigrated under pressure.⁸⁹

ii. Year 1992

During 1992, violence directed at the Croat population in Vojvodina was intensified. Since May 1992, in a large number of national mixed settlements in Vojvodina, pressure was imposed on Croats by means of theft, throwing bombs, setting up explosions, breaking into and moving into their private homes.⁹⁰

From May to August 1992, the biggest waves of emigration of Croats from Vojvodina villages were noted, mostly from Hrtkovci, Kukujevc, Novi Slankamen, Beška, Petrovaradin. During this period, under pressure and threats, more than 10,000 Croats exchanged their property for the property of Serbs from Croatia.⁹¹

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Ruma Municipality, year 1992

From 1992, in the territory of the municipality of Ruma, pressures and violence against Croats increased.

In the town itself, bombs were thrown into courtyards belonging to Croats on several occasions.⁹² By August 1992, at least 12 bomb attacks had occurred on the houses and property of Croats in the Ruma

86 Declaration on violation of the rights of members of the Croatian minority in the Republic of Serbia and autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo of 31 May 1991, Croatian Parliament, p. 1, available (in Croatian) at https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/1991_06_27_746.html, accessed October 31, 2018.

87 “Pravdanje terora nad Srbima” [Justification of terror against Serbs], *Borba*, June 5, 1991.

88 “Izmišljena ugroženost Hrvata” [The Imagined Endangerment of Croats], *Borba*, June 7, 1991.

89 “Izmišljena ugroženost Hrvata” [The Imagined Endangerment of Croats], *Borba*, June 7, 1991.

90 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993.

91 Harassment, intimidation and the direct threat to the safety of the persons and property of non-Serb citizens, NK report, HLC archives; Report Under Spotlight (Serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 1.

92 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness S.G. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness M.M. given to the HLC, September 1993; „Pretnje pa bomba” [Threats, then a bomb] *Borba*, September 7, 1992; „Bombaška upozorenja” [Bomb warnings], *Borba*, September 8 1992.



neighbourhood called Breg.⁹³ The villagers of Ruma received threatening messages, such as, “Ustasha, now we will come to cut off your ears!”, “We will rape your daughter, and you are going to watch!”⁹⁴

Similar pressures were exerted in the village of Nikinci (Ruma), by means of telephone calls, telling inhabitants they should move out.⁹⁵ In August 1992, an explosive was set off on two Croatian estates in Nikinci.⁹⁶

The greatest wave of violence and pressure on Croats in the territory of the municipality of Ruma took place in May 1992 in the village of Hrtkovci.

On May 6, 1992 the SRS held a pre-election meeting in Hrtkovci in front of more than a thousand people, mostly Serb refugees from Slavonia.⁹⁷ At that meeting, Vojislav Šešelj said that there was no place for Croats in Srem, and that those who had left Srem could no longer return, since Serb refugees would occupy their homes.⁹⁸

He then said: “In this village, Hrtkovci, and in this place of Serbia, Srem, there is no place for Croats. Which Croats have a place among us? Only those Croats and their families who have left their blood on the front line with us.”⁹⁹ “Every Serbian refugee family should be given the address of a Croatian family. It will be given by the police, the police will work in the way the government decides, and we will soon be the government. All Serbian refugees will come to Croatian doors and give the Croats there their addresses in Zagreb and other Croatian towns. Yes, they will. There will be enough buses, we will take them to the border of the Serbian countries, and from there, they can go on foot; or, they can leave by themselves.”¹⁰⁰

Šešelj finished his speech with the following message: “I am convinced that you, the Serbs from Hrtkovci and other villages around, that you will know how to preserve the mutual harmony and unity, that you will quickly get rid of the remaining Croats in your village and the surrounding area[.]”¹⁰¹

Šešelj’s speech was accompanied by yellings of “Ustasha out!” and “Croats to Croatia!”¹⁰²

93 „Selim se ali samo u Srbiju“ [I’m moving, but only to Serbia], *Politika*, August 22, 1992.

94 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

95 Statement of the witness M.L. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness M.A. given to the HLC, September 1993.

96 The Report on the violation of the rights of non-Serb citizens to personal and property security was handed over to the then Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Momčilo Grubač, and the Minister of Justice, Tibor Varadi, on September 10, 1992, the HLC Archive.

97 „Ko pali vatre po Sremu“ [Who starts fires in Srem?], *Sremske novine*, May 13, 1992; Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on May 11, 1992, exhibit no. P00548, *Šešelj*, pp. 1-4.

98 Excerpt from the book *The Devil’s Apprentice* - crime thriller about the Villainous Roman Pope John Paul II by Vojislav Šešelj, exhibit no. P00547, *Šešelj*, pp. 1-4.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid, p. 5.

101 Ibid, p. 9.

102 Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on May 11, 1992, exhibit no. P00548, *Šešelj*, pp. 1-4; Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 10343.



At the same meeting, Milan Žilić, the local secretary of the SRS, read out the names of more than ten Croats from the village who, as he claimed, “run with the Ustasha dagger”. He stated the names of two more locals who were allegedly “Ustashes” and refused to provide assistance to Serb refugees.¹⁰³ Žilić also added that the local politics in Hrtkovci was under the control of Croats and that Croats and Hungarians were in leading positions in the public enterprises in the village. About the then president of the local community, Dobrosav Marković, Žilić said that “he was completely assimilated with the environment in which he lives”, which is why “the political life of the Serbs is under blockade”, and suggesting that Marković - although he was a Serb - represented the interests of the Croatian population.¹⁰⁴ The Croats whose names were called out at the SRS meeting soon moved out of Hrtkovci together with their families.¹⁰⁵

Following the SRS meeting, violence was organized against local Croats, which led to the mass eviction of the Croat population from Hrtkovci.¹⁰⁶

The local Croat population in Hrtkovci was subjected to intimidation, telephone threats, menacing flyers and public calls for eviction. Offensive graffiti were written on the houses of Croats, and their windows were broken.¹⁰⁷

In these attacks aimed at intimidating Croats and other non-Serbs in Hrtkovci, a number of Serb refugees from Croatia also participated, along with local Serbs who were close to the SRS. Organised into groups, they forcibly entered into Croatian houses and threatened to destroy the property, and asking owners at the point of a gun to hand over their houses to them.¹⁰⁸ The refugees were coming to

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103 At the SRS meeting, Milan Žilić said the following: “Tens of young men, the brothers Grdić, the brothers Stepić, the brothers Sindrić, Rašo Mladen, Markuš Mata. Šošarić Ivica, Mr. Fortnet and Mr. Nemet and others, despite the obligation of existence, have decided to enlist in the MUP and the National Guard of the Republic of Croatia. From here they run with the Ustasha dagger” - stated in the excerpt from the book “The Devil’s Apprentice - crime thriller about the Villainous Roman Pope John Paul II” by Vojislav Šešelji, exhibit no. P00547, *Šešelji*, pp. 1-4; „Ko bojkotuje izbore taj je izdajnik srpstva” [He who boycotts the elections, he is a traitor to Serbs], *Sremske novine*, May 13, 1992; Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on May 11, 1992, exhibit no. P00548, *Šešelji*, pp. 1-4.

104 Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on May 11, 1992, exhibit no. P00548, *Šešelji*, p. 2.

105 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 1, count 3; Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelji* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 10340.

106 “On the basis of the above data and findings, I conclude that the exceptional events in the village of Hrtkovci, Vojvodina, were seriously aimed at the departure of ethnic Croats and other non-Serbs from the village, especially from May to August 1992 [...]”, according to Expert Report of Ewa Tabeau - Emigration of Croats and other non-Serbs from the village of Hrtkovci exhibit no. P00565, *Šešelji*, p. 33.

107 „Mirna savest ojađena duša” [Peaceful conscience, grieved soul] *NIN*, May 22 1992, exhibit no. P00555, *Šešelji*; Harassment, intimidation and direct threat to personal and property safety of non-Serb citizens, NK report, HLC archives; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 2.

108 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 2; Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelji* Case of October 15, 2008, p. 10770.



houses with prepared lists of the addresses of the Croats in Hrtkovci. To the owners of those houses they were saying that their houses were intended for exchange.¹⁰⁹

According to the testimonies of the locals, firstly the richer people in the village were targeted, primarily those who had the bigger and more beautiful houses.¹¹⁰

The Croat population in Hrtkovci was exposed also to the setting off of explosives and throwing of bombs into yards.¹¹¹ In some cases, the bombings were preceded by visits from people inquiring about the exchange of houses, which was a kind of pressure so the population agreed to the exchange of property.¹¹²

In the period from May 10, 1992 to July 1, 1992, around 20 Croatian families were physically evicted from their homes in Hrtkovci, while a large number of the others succumbed to the pressure and agreed to exchange their property.¹¹³ In the period from May to August 1992, about 450 Croatian and nationally mixed families moved out of Hrtkovci under pressure.¹¹⁴

The form of the attacks on Croatian citizens in Hrtkovci is evident from the several examples that follow.

In mid-May 1992, a group of armed men in camouflage uniforms entered the house of Marko Fumić in the Ivo Lola Ribar Street in Hrtkovci; among them was Zvezdan Jovanović, a member of the Special Purpose Unit of RDB Serbia, later renamed as the Special Operations Unit (JSO).¹¹⁵ They ordered

109 Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 8, 2008, p. 10426; „Mirna savest ojađena duša” [Peaceful conscience, grieved soul], *NIN*, May 22, 1992, exhibit no. P00555, *Šešelj*; Harassment, intimidation and direct threat to personal and property security of non-Serb citizens, NK report, HLC archives.

110 Testimony of Katica Paulić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of November 19, 2008, pp. 11898-11899.

111 Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 15, 2008, p.10770; Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 8, 2008, pp. 10556-10557.

112 Second report on cases of threats to personal and property security of non-Serb citizens dated August 10, 1992, HLC Archive.

113 Testimony of Katica Paulić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of November 19, 2008, p. 11910-11913; Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* case p. 10635-10640; Forcibly inhabited houses, the OUP Ruma of May 17, 1992, exhibit no. D00414, *Stanišić and Simatović*; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 2.

114 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 1.

115 On November 12, 1992, the Public Prosecutor in Ruma issued an indictment against Zvezdan Jovanović, Miodrag Brašić and Slobodan Lešić for the criminal offence of false presentation and the unauthorized possession of weapons. On May 31, 2002, the Municipal Court in Ruma issued a decision to suspend the criminal proceedings due to the absolute obsolescence of prosecutions. Zvezdan Jovanović was a member of the special unit of the RDB MUP of the Republic of Serbia since 1991. Jovanović remained a member of the Special Forces Unit after the incident in Hrtkovci, although the RS Ministry of the Interior had information about the proceedings against him. In 2007, Jovanović was found guilty of the murder of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Zoran Đinđić, and sentenced to 40 years in prison. - Official note of the MUP RDB Center, DB Sremska Mitrovica, dated June 4, 1992, exhibit no. P00551, *Šešelj*, pp. 2-3, Decision on Suspension of Criminal Proceeding, District Court in Sremska Mitrovica no. XVII Kv-187/02, dated May 31, 2002, the Record of the Interrogation of the suspect Zvezdan Jovanović at the MUP of the RS Directorate for Combating Organized Crime of April 7, 2003, referred to the transcript of the audio record in the *Ulemek et al. Case* dated December 25, 2003, p. 16, Notice No. 153 of the OUP Ruma of May 17, 1992, doc. exhibit no. D00414, *Stanišić and Simatović*, Judgment of the Special Department of the District Court in Belgrade in the Case of *Milorad Ulemek et al.* of May 23, 2007.



Marko Fumić to move out within three days, with a ban on taking any of his belongings.¹¹⁶ At the invitation of the neighbours, the police arrived and took away the attackers, but the Fumić family was subsequently targeted by extremist Serb refugees.¹¹⁷ For this reason, the Fumić family left Hrtkovci.¹¹⁸

Julijana Molnar's family was the target of several attacks. Different groups of refugees came to their house demanding that the Molnar family move out from Hrtkovci. They threatened them and called them Ustasha. On one occasion, an unknown group of people entered the house of Julijana Molnar and threatened her with a knife which they plunged into the table in front of her.¹¹⁹

Andrija Đerd, an inhabitant of Hrtkovci who worked abroad, gave his mother's home to refugees. However, despite this, other refugees from Croatia - Rade Čakmak and Petar Pokrajac - forcibly moved into his house.¹²⁰ Soon, Andrija Đerd left Hrtkovci.¹²¹

As one of the organisers of this pressure and violence against the Croats in Hrtkovci a local man, Ostoja Sibinčić, stood out. He was an official of the municipality of Ruma and one of the founders of the local committee of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO). In the first half of 1992, Sibinčić was excluded from the SPO owing to his role in expelling Croats, and he then became close to the SRS.¹²² On the arrival of the first refugees in Hrtkovci, Ostoja Sibinčić contacted them, giving the members of the SRS the address of the Croats from the village and encouraging them to move in.¹²³

In June 1992, a new local authority was formed in Hrtkovci with the participation of Serbian refugees from Croatia who did not have a regulated residence in the village. The authority in Hrtkovci was concentrated around Ostoja Sibinčić, who was elected president of the assembly of the local community of Hrtkovci, and Rade Čakmak, a refugee from Croatia, and former commander of the Territorial Defence (TO) in Grubišno Polje. The local government was supported by Trivun Ivković, the governor

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116 Official police note of the OUP Ruma, May 17, 1992, exhibit no. D00414, *Stanišić and Simatović*, Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, on June 4, 1992, exhibit no. P00551, *Šešelj*, pp. 2-3.

117 Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 10391; The village of Hrtkovci is near Belgrade - Letter from the Civil Movement to the Assembly of Serbia and Helsinki watch, the HLC Archive.

118 Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 10391.

119 The village of Hrtkovci is near Belgrade - Letter from the Civil Movement to the Assembly of Serbia and Helsinki watch, the HLC Archive, TV show „Tu sasvim blizu” [Quite Close], TV Production, UrbaNS, 2001; „Mir i nemir Julijane Molnar” [Peace and discomfort of Julijana Molnar], *Borba*, July 7, 1992.

120 Forcibly inhabited houses, the OUP Ruma of May 17, 1992, exhibit no. D00414, *Stanišić and Simatović*; „Iz legende u zatvor” [From the legend to prison], *Sremske novine*, October 7, 1992.

121 Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 10381; Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 14, 2008, p. 10635.

122 Due to the role of Ostoja Sibinčić in the events in Hrtkovci, SPO chairman Aleksa Ejić decided to dismiss the board so that the party would not be linked to Sibinčić's actions. Ostoja Sibinčić was excluded from the SPO for violent behavior towards Croats in Hrtkovci - Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, pp. 10323-10324. Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 14, 2008, p. 10604; „Ko je promašio stranu?” [Who is on the wrong side?], *Sremske novine*, May 20, 1992.

123 Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 14, 2008, p. 10604; Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 4, 2008, p. 10324 and October 8, 2008, p. 104; „Mirna savest ojađena duša” [Peaceful conscience, grieved soul], *NIN*, May 22, 1992, exhibit no. P00555, *Šešelj*.



of the Correctional Center in Sremska Mitrovica and secretary of the “Solidarity”¹²⁴ association from Sremska Mitrovica. The goal of the newly established government was the expulsion of Croats and those who were considered disloyal to Serbs.¹²⁵

The new government made a decision on changing the names of streets and public institutions. The names of Croatian historical figures were replaced by the names of famous Serbs.¹²⁶

At the end of July 1992, a decision was made to change the name of the village of Hrtkovci, and in early August 1992, Ostoja Sibičić, together with Trivun Ivković, removed the board with the name of the village and replaced it with a new one, “Srbislavci”.¹²⁷ The police did not prevent the placement of the board, but one day later they removed the board with the name “Srbislavci”.¹²⁸

In early July 1992, a nationally mixed group of Hrtkovci inhabitants reacted and submitted to the authorities of Ruma the data on the eviction of Croats from Ruma. According to these data, “by 1 July 1992, about 200 Croatian and nationally mixed families had moved out: 80 families because of direct threats to them personally or threats by refugees toward Croats at public gatherings in the village; 18, owing to the refugees’ forcibly entering into their homes and forcing them to sign papers on the exchange and transfer of property; about 10 owing to physical eviction to the street, and 78 families out of fear that they would be subject to harassment”.¹²⁹

Serbs from Hrtkovci who stood in defence of their fellow Croats were also targeted by militant groups gathered around Ostoja Sibičić. Sibičić called the Serbs who helped Croats “low-grade Serbs” and “unfortunate Serbs”, while Serbs from Slavonia were considered to be “quality Serbs”.¹³⁰

Ostoja Sibičić, the then President of the Assembly of the local community of Hrtkovci, in the statement given to the HLC in September 1993, confirmed that there were lists of people who, in his opinion, should have left Hrtkovci. In the statement, Ostoja Sibičić says: “All Croats who left Hrtkovci,

124 One of the leaders of Solidarnost was Jovan Glamočanin, SRS vice-president, see in the Statement of Witness Jovan Glamočanin, exhibit no. P00688.B, *Šešelj*, pp. 4-5.

125 Official police note of the MUP RDB Center Sremska Mitrovica, department of Ruma on June 23, 1992, exhibit no. P01104, *Šešelj*, pp. 1-4.

126 „Hoće li Hrtkovci biti Srbislavci?“ [Will Hrtkovci be Srbislavci?], *Sremske novine*, July 15, 1992; Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 2008, p. 103836.

127 Putting up of a table with the name Srbislavci, footage available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy_P7IkavX8, accessed December 2, 2018.

128 „Hoće li Hrtkovci biti Srbislavci?“ [Will Hrtkovci be Srbislavci?], *Sremske novine*, July 15, 1992; „Selu ostaviti istorijsko ime“ [Leave the historical name to the village], *Sremske novine*, August 5, 1992; „Selu ostaviti istorijsko ime“ [Leave the historical name to the village], *Sremske novine*, August 12, 1992; „Na meti „mešoviti“ Srbi“ [Targeted “mixed” Serbs], *Sremske novine*, August 26, 1992; Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1994/47 of November 17, 1993, para. 215.

129 Testimony of Aleksa Ejić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 7, 1993, p. 10330; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8; „Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia“, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 2.

130 Testimony of Franjo Baričević before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of October 14, 2008, p. 10603; „Štrajk u fabrici kvalitetnih Srba“ [A strike in a factory of high-quality Serbs], *Duga*, March 13, 1993.



sorry, Srbislavci, and moved out, did not have a patriotic inspiration. Away went those families we had sussed. We had lists of all those who were supposed to leave. And they went unpunished. All were plotting with the Ustasha.”¹³¹ In an earlier statement for the media, he said that the Croats had left „because they are not good people. Now the quality ones remain”.¹³²

Municipality of Stara Pazova, year 1992

During the summer of 1992, the pressure on the Croats was intensified in Golubinci village. Letters circulated around the village, with the signature of the “Committee for the eviction of Croats.”¹³³ Aggressive exchanges over the telephone were frequent. In those letters and telephone calls, people were threatened and told to leave as soon as possible, with the words “What are you waiting for?”, “Why don’t you move out already, Ustasha?”¹³⁴ Bombs were thrown at the properties of local Croats and gun shots fired at their homes.¹³⁵ There were about 20 registered cases of bomb attacks in the village.¹³⁶

Some Croats from Golubinci were brought to informal interviews at the local police station in Ruma, where they were questioned and beaten up under accusations of collecting weapons for Croats.¹³⁷

According to the testimonies of the Croatians from Golubinci, the greatest pressure was exerted on them by Serb refugees.¹³⁸ Because of this, Croats from Golubinci exchanged their houses with Serbs from Virovitica, Podravska Slatina and Slavonski Brod.¹³⁹ By mid-1992, about 120 families had left Golubinci. As in Hrtkovci, the eviction took place in the established pattern. First of all, groups of four or five Serbian refugees would appear in the village, who would then visit Croat houses and inquire about the exchange of property. Then there would be pressures and threats by telephone, as well as the calling out of names of Croats in public, after which there was nothing left for them to do but to accept the exchange of property.¹⁴⁰

In Golubinci and Hrtkovci, it was also noted that in some cases, Serbian refugees arrived armed and in large groups of from 30 to 50 people; they entered houses of local Croats with threatening weapons

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131 Statement of the witness O.S. given to the HLC, September 1993.

132 „Mir i nemir Julijane Molnar“ [Peace and discomfort of Julijana Molnar], *Borba*, July 7, 1992.

133 Statement of the witness J.D. given to the HLC, September 1993.

134 Statement of the witness S.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

135 Statement of the witness J.D. given to the HLC, September 1993. „Tamo nije moja strana“ [There, it’s not my side], *Sremske novine*, July 29, 1992.

136 Statement of the witness Z.D. given to the HLC, September 1993.

137 Well know is the case of Ivan Budić, who hanged himself in his house in Golubinci in July 1992, after returning from a police interview in Ruma. See at: „Sukobe isprovocirao HDZ“ [The conflicts provoked by HDZ], *Glas Javnosti*, Decembar 11, 1999, www.glas-javnosti.rs/clanak/glas-javnosti-27-11-2007/sukobe-isprovocirao-hdz; Data of the Community of expelled Croats from Srijem, Bačka and Banat (1991) dated November 13, 2018; Dr Milan Bičanić, „Srijem krvavo krilo Hrvatske“ [“Srijem, Bloody Wing of Croatia], Mladost, Zagreb, 1994, pp. 255-257.

138 Statement of the witness J.D. given to the HLC, September 1993.

139 „Senka nad golubovim selom“ [The shadow over village of pigeons], *Borba*, July 21, 1992.

140 Harassment, intimidation and direct threat to personal and property security of non-Serb citizens, NK report, HLC archives.



and previously prepared property exchange agreements.¹⁴¹ In Golubinci, at least four families were thrown out in this way.¹⁴²

Municipality of Šid, year 1992

At the beginning of 1992, with the arrival of Serb refugees in the territory of the Municipality of Šid, a large number of Croats from Morović, Gibarac and Kukujevcı were under pressure and decided to exchange their property with that of Serbs from Croatia.¹⁴³ In the territory of Šid municipality, the greatest wave of emigration of Croats occurred in the summer of 1992.¹⁴⁴

In July 1992, a real estate exchange agency began operating in Kukujevcı; it was first called “Juga”, and then “Lasta”. The advertising slogan of the agency was “And the relocation is easier with us”.¹⁴⁵

The owner of the agency was Mileva Stegić, who moved with her family to Kukujevcı from Zagreb, in 1992.¹⁴⁶ At the Vojislav Šešelj trial, a former volunteer from several Serbian units, Goran Stoparić, testified that this agency was in charge of mediating the exchange of property of Serbs from Croatia with Croats from Vojvodina. These exchanges were the result of the violent entry of Serbian refugees into local Croat houses, after which the Croats were forced to property exchange their properties.¹⁴⁷

In his testimony, Stoparić linked the agency “Juga”, that is, “Lasta”, and Jovica Stegić, the husband of Mileva Stegić, with the SRS. According to him, Stegić was a member of the SRS and one of its donors.¹⁴⁸

Stoparić stated that the agency, besides in Kukujevcı, also had offices in Vinkovci and Šid.¹⁴⁹

141 Ibid.

142 Ibid.

143 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015.

144 Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

145 „Profiteri nacionalnih seoba“ [Profiteers of National Migrations], *Politika*, July 17, 1992; „I selidba je sa nama lakša“ [Migration is easier with us], *Borba*, July 20, 1992.

146 „Šta je „Juga“?“ [What is Juga?], *Sremske novine*, July 22, 1992; „Huškači iz prikrājka“ [Warmongers from the sidelines], *Večernje novosti*, July 23, 1992.

147 Testimony of Goran Stoparić before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of January 16, 2008, pp. 2447-2448.

148 Ibid, p. 2452.

149 Ibid, pp. 2448-2456.



Municipality of Petrovaradin¹⁵⁰, year 1992

During the entire 1992, Croats and other non-Serbs in the area of the Novi Sad settlements Sremska Kamenica and Petrovaradin were exposed to threats and intimidation.¹⁵¹

In the settlement of Sremska Kamenica in Petrovaradin municipality, Croats were exposed to phone threats and verbal provocations by a group of Serb refugees from Croatia.¹⁵² Cases of breaking into the houses of the local Croat population were reported, with threats that the owners had to move out. Bombs were thrown into their yards.¹⁵³

In September 1993, one Croatian from Sremska Kamenica told the HLC researchers that in the summer of 1992 she was warned that she should move out, and exchange her house in Sremska Kamenica for a house in Croatia. "Some man named Đuro, a refugee from Slavonska Požega, rang on the door. He used to work in the SUP there. I think he is now living in Veternik. He asked me if I wanted to exchange houses with him. He advised me to move out because, according to him, it would not be "good for me here," as a Croat. He told me about his house, which was supposedly big and modern. We talked for a few hours. I agreed on an exchange. The next day, we went to Petrovaradin, to see the lawyer. We agreed on everything there. But, when I arrived home, I was scared and decided not to do it. Basically, I did not believe in all his stories about his house, which he allegedly owned. I called him on the phone and told him my final decision. He became furious. He shouted that I was endangering a Serbian family and that he would report my 'case' to the SRS, which would take measures against me. Threatening phone calls again followed. I tried to tell everything to the local policeman Miloš, several times. He shrugged my words off."¹⁵⁴

In Petrovaradin, Croats were also exposed to telephone threats. At night, they were called by unknown people who cursed their "Ustasha mothers", threatening to set bombs to their houses and forcing them to move out.¹⁵⁵ In Petrovaradin, it was reported that bombs and other explosives were placed in the courtyards of the houses of local Croats.¹⁵⁶

150 In 1992, Petrovaradin and Sremska Kamenica were the urban settlements of Novi Sad. In the meantime, administrative changes in Novi Sad divided the city into two municipalities - the City of Novi Sad and the Municipality of Petrovaradin. Sremska Kamenica is a settlement that belongs today to the Municipality of Petrovaradin, available (in Serbian) at: Municipalities <https://skupstina.novisad.rs/opstine/>.

151 Due to their proximity to Novi Sad, Petrovaradin and Sremska Kamenica are classified as the narrower city area; Statement of the witness E.K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness V.K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness V.T. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness J.M. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness S.B. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

152 Statement of the witness E. K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness V.K. given to the HLC, September 1993.

153 Statement of the witness E.K. given to the HLC, September 1993.

154 Statement of the witness V.T. given to the HLC, September 1993.

155 Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.

156 Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness B.R. given to the HLC, September 1993.



At the Slobodan Milošević trial before the ICTY, the protected witness C-048, a former associate of the RDB, spoke about the role of the RDB itself in the eviction of Croats from Vojvodina. According to his testimony, the head of the RDB Center in Novi Sad, Milovan Popivoda,¹⁵⁷ told him in the summer of 1992 about the goal to “drive out from Vojvodina as many Croats as possible, and to form [...] a stable border in the border region between Vojvodina and Croatia” with “true Serbs from Krajina”.¹⁵⁸

According to witness C-048, Popivoda considered that this goal should be reached by intimidation of the richest and most influential people in the places where Croats were the majority population or a significant part of the population. This would result in their departures, after which the remaining population would emigrate.¹⁵⁹ Jovica Stanišić, the head of the RDB, held to the same thesis and mentioned it to Mihalj Kertes, then Deputy Minister of Interior Affairs, at a meeting in August 1992¹⁶⁰ [see page 35].

The head of the Novi Sad RDB Center, Popivoda, considered that violence and liquidation in the territory of Vojvodina should be avoided, but that such actions could be conducted in the war-torn territories of Eastern Slavonia and Baranja, because “it can always be attributed to the warfare and war anarchy that usually occurs in such situations”¹⁶¹ In practice, indeed, it happened that the Vojvodina Croats were arrested and taken to Eastern Slavonia and murdered there [see page 54 and 60].

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Witness C-048 also talked about the fact that he was enabled to listen-in on certain Vojvodina Croats for the Novi Sad RDB Center, such as priest Marko Kljajić from Petrovaradin, and Robert Čoban, then editor of the Novi Sad magazine “Nezavisni svet” (“Independent World”). The C-048 regularly reported to the Center on the movements of Kljajić and Čoban.¹⁶²

In April 1992, unknown persons throw a bomb into the yard of the family of Robert Čoban, whose family lived in Bač. The perpetrators have never been discovered.¹⁶³ At the end of December 1992, the head of the Novi Sad RDB Center, Milovan Popovoda, told witness C-048 that it was necessary to “put pressure on the priest to move out from Vojvodina”.¹⁶⁴

On January 6, 1993, two people intruded into the parish home at Petrovaradin and destroyed all the furniture with metal bars. They also attacked the mother of priest Marko Kljajić. Two Serbs,

157 Decision of the RDB MUP R Serbia on the appointment of Milovan Popivoda as head of the RDB Center in Novi Sad of April 13, 1992, exhibit no. P02491, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 1.

158 Testimony C-048 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of April 28, 2003, p. 19639.

159 Ibid, p. 19640.

160 Ibid, p. 19677.

161 Ibid, p. 19640.

162 Ibid, p. 19641.

163 Statements of L.Č. and J.Č. given to the HLC, September 1993.

164 Testimony C-048 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of April 28, 2003, p. 19642.



refugees from Croatia, were arrested and accused of this attack, but the proceedings against them were suspended in the following year, 1994.¹⁶⁵

Reaction

At the end of May 1992, while the Croats were leaving from Vojvodina, the then President of the Executive Council of AP Vojvodina, Jovan Radić, stated that there was no mass departure of Croats from Vojvodina, only individual cases, and that the departures of Croats from Vojvodina were voluntary and that there were no pressures being exerted.¹⁶⁶

On the other hand, in July 1992, the president of the local committee of the SRS in Golubinci, Radislav Lepšanović, said that “the situation has radically improved, because there are fewer and fewer Croats, they are emigrating more. Our political views are clear: all Croats should leave. Of course, not those who were with us on the front lines and fought for the freedom of the Serbs - they should remain in the Golubinci, because they are Serbs of the Catholic religion”.¹⁶⁷

During June 1992, a group of Belgrade intellectuals, gathered in the Civil Resistance Movement and in the Belgrade Circle, talked twice with locals and refugees in Hrtkovci. By mid-July 1992, they had organized seven press conferences in Hrtkovci and one in Golubinci.¹⁶⁸

In mid-July 1992, a delegation of Belgrade intellectuals handed over to the then Minister of Justice, Tibor Varadi, the first Report on the violation of the rights of non-Serb citizens to personal and property security, in which data on endangering non-Serbs in Hrtkovci, Golubinci and Ruma were presented.¹⁶⁹

In mid-August 1992, a delegation composed of Golubinci, Hrtkovci and Ruma inhabitants informed the Minister of Justice, Tibor Varadi, and the Minister for Human and Minority Rights of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Momčilo Grubač, about the violence against the Croat population in Vojvodina and the absence of police response.¹⁷⁰ This visit, along with campaigns and reports organised by civil groups and anti-war activists about endangering the safety of the persons and property of Croats in Vojvodina, as well as independent-media campaigns, only led to reactions from the authorities in August 1992.¹⁷¹

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165 Testimony C-048 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of April 28, 2003, p. 19642; Marko Kljajić, “Kako je umirao moj narod” [“How My People Died”], Editions Hrid Subotica, p. 103-105; „Petrovaradinski župnik: Znao sam da me prisluškuju početkom 90-ih” [Petrovaradin parish priest: I knew they were listening to me in the early 90’s], IndexHR, May 3, 2003, available (in Croatian) at <https://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/petrovaradinski-zusnik-znao-sam-da-me-prisluškuju-pocetkom-90tih/135375.aspx>, accessed November 22, 2018; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, “Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia”, Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 9.

166 „Veliki transport” [Big Transport], *NIN*, May 29, 1992.

167 „A bilo nam je tako lepo” [And it used to be so good], *Sremske novine*, July 1, 1992.

168 The first Report on the violation of the rights of non-Serb citizens to personal and property security was handed over to the then Minister of Justice, Tibor Varadi, on July 15, 1992.

169 Ibid.

170 „Na meti „mešoviti” Srbi” [“Mixed” Serbs targeted], *Sremske novine*, August 26, 1992.

171 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 1, „Hrtkovci - pritisak na Hrvate u Srbiji” [Hrtkovci - Pressuring Croats in Serbia], the Humanitarian Law Center, February 1993, p.1.



Then, Ostoja Sibinčić, the President of the Assembly of MZ Hrtkovci, was arrested, as well as Rade Čakmak, his son Milivoj Čakmak, Mirko Paunović and Dane Miletić - refugees from Croatia.¹⁷² This arrest was presented to the public as a guarantee of respect for the human rights of non-Serbs. The authorities had reacted with a delay, after a large number of Croats had already left Vojvodina, and did not deal with the responsibility of the main political ideologists and inspirers of the persecution of Croats from Vojvodina.¹⁷³

Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, in his report of August 1992, stated that there was information about the increase in cases of harassment and intimidation of the non-Serb population in the territory of Vojvodina.¹⁷⁴ The Special Rapporteur warned that there was a risk that the policy of ethnic cleansing, then present in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, would be transferred to Vojvodina as well.¹⁷⁵

In September 1992, an indictment was filed against Ostoja Sibinčić, Rade and Milivoj Čakmak, Mirko Paunović and Dane Miletić, for violence against the freedoms and rights of citizens of members of other ethnic groups, as well as for the illegal possession of weapons.¹⁷⁶

Sibinčić and Čakmak spent three months in custody after which they were released to await trial.¹⁷⁷ During their stay in custody, interethnic tensions and incidents were reduced in Hrtkovci.¹⁷⁸ However, after the court's decision to release the suspects from pre-trial detention, a group of Serb refugees rejoined Ostoja Sibinčić and Rade Čakmak, and again began to put pressure on Croats and ethnically mixed families, and also on those Serbs who demanded equal rights for all citizens of Hrtkovci, regardless of their nationality.¹⁷⁹

The trial of Ostoja Sibinčić and Rade Čakmak was completed in May 1993. Ostoja Sibinčić was found guilty of endangering security, while, jointly with Čakmak, he was also found guilty of the illegal

172 „Na meti „mešoviti“ Srbi“ [“Mixed” Serbs targeted], *Sremske novine*, August 26, 1992.

173 The Report on the violation of the rights of non-Serb citizens to personal and property security was handed over to the then Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Momčilo Grubač, and Minister of Justice, Tibor Varadi, on September 10, 1992, the HLC Archive.

174 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1992/S-11/9 of August 28, 1992, para. 32.

175 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1992/S-11/9 of August 28, 1992, para. 62.

176 Closing arguments at Ostoja Sibinčić trial and the verdict, exhibit no. P00554, *Šešelj*, p. 7; Indictment of the Municipal Public in Ruma against *Ostoja Sibinčić et al.* dated September 15, 1992, exhibit no. P560, *Šešelj*; In October 1992, Milan Vukelja, a member of the MZ Hrtkovci Assembly, Željko Vasić, the Vice-President of the Assembly of the MZ, Milan Žilić, President of the MC SRS, and Milorad Predojević, were arrested. After interviews with the police, they were released. See “Iz legende u zatvor” [From the legend to prison], *Sremske novine*, October 7, 1992.

177 „Ko je bio režiser pakla u Hrtkovcima“ [Who was the director of hell in Hrtkovci], *Sremske novine*, December 2, 1992.

178 „Štrajk u fabrici kvalitetnih Srba“ [A strike of high-quality Serbs in a factory], *Duga*, March 13, 1993.

179 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 1, „Hrtkovci - pritisak na Hrvate u Srbiji“ [Hrtkovci - Pressuring Croats in Serbia], the Humanitarian Law Center, February 1993, p.2.



possession of weapons. They were convicted only with conditional sentences.¹⁸⁰ Milivoj Čakmak, Mirko Paunović and Dane Miletić were acquitted of threats to endangering security.¹⁸¹ Despite the fact that he was convicted to a conditional sentence, Ostoja Sibinčić remained the leader of the Assembly of MZ Hrtkovci, after the end of the trial.¹⁸²

After the arrest of Sibinčić and a group of persons close to him, in August 1992 police surveillance of the operations of militant groups of refugees was reinforced.¹⁸³ Immediately afterwards, the Government of the FRY, led by Milan Panić, dismissed the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Mihalj Kertes, for his personal responsibility for ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina. The official explanation was that Kertes “opposed the government’s plan to prevent ethnic cleansing”.¹⁸⁴

At the Slobodan Milošević trial before the ICTY, a protected witness C-048, a former associate of the RDB, testified. One of the topics of the testimony was the meeting in August 1992, which included Mihalj Kertes and Jovica Stanišić, the then head of the State Security Service of the MUP of Serbia. On the basis of this witness’s testimony, Kertes reported to Jovica Stanišić that he was in constant coordination with Franko Simatović, the RDB operative, regarding the situation in Vojvodina and Eastern Slavonia, and that “a lot of Ustashas have left” Slavonia. Stanišić stressed that it was important for the eastern part of Croatia to join the Republic of Serbia, and that, for that reason, a stable Serbian majority was formed in the border region of Vojvodina.¹⁸⁵

According to the witness, Stanišić suggested to Kertes that in the territory of Serbia it was necessary to work “in a more subtle manner”, to avoid the mining of residential buildings, and to make sure “that there are no human victims – and, first, to scare off people in a certain region, just a couple of people, and then the others would follow after them”.¹⁸⁶

And Kertes maintained his contact with Ostoja Sibinčić all the time. In July 1992, Mihalj Kertes received Ostoja Sibinčić and Trivun Ivković on an official visit, together with, according to Ivković,

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180 Ostoja Sibinčić was convicted of a criminal offence of breaching security and for the unauthorised possession of weapons to four months of imprisonment for each crime, conditionally for six months. Rade Čakmak was sentenced to three months of imprisonment for a criminal offence of unauthorised possession of weapons, conditionally for three months. See at: Closing arguments at Ostoja Sibinčić trial and the verdict, exhibit no. P00554, *Šešelj*, pp. 5-6.

181 Closing arguments at Ostoja Sibinčić trial and the verdict, exhibit no. P00554, *Šešelj*, p. 6.

182 „Hoće miliciji da uskrate gostoprimstvo“ [Wanting to deny hospitality to police], *Politika*, February 3, 1993; „Bilo je seoba i biće ih večno“ [There were migrations and they will be forever], *Sremske novine*, February 10, 1993.

183 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 1, „Hrtkovci - pritisak na Hrvate u Srbiji“ [Hrtkovci - Pressuring Croats in Serbia], the Humanitarian Law Center, February 1993, p.2.

184 „Ko je ovaj čovek? Mihalj Kertes“ [Who is this man? Mihalj Kertes], *Glas Javnosti*, May 20, 2000, available at <http://arhiva.glas-javnosti.rs/arhiva/2000/05/21/srpski/P00052006.shtm>, accessed November 23, 2018; „Čudesni svet Bracike Kertes“ [The wonderful world of “Bracika” [Little Brother] Kertes], *Vreme* no. 520, December 20, 2012, available at https://www.vreme.com/arhiva_html/520/index.html, accessed November 23, 2018.

185 Testimony C-048 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of April 28, 2003, pp. 19676, 19677, 19680.

186 Testimony C-048 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of April 28, 2003, p. 19677.



a delegation of “honest Hungarians and Croats” from Hrtkovci.¹⁸⁷ In August 1992, Ostoja Sibinčić’s deputy, Željko Vasić, stated the following: “Perhaps we have had some misunderstandings with the Ustashas, but after the meeting with Mihalj Kertes, we managed to smooth everything out.”¹⁸⁸

In October 1992, owing to the more and more numerous claims of ethnic cleansing in the territory of Vojvodina, the Srem administrative district¹⁸⁹ issued a press release stating that there was no ethnic cleansing in Srem, and that “these processes represent the direct consequences of war events, in which someone made a profit, someone else expressed his feelings and someone else really left - out of fear.” In the same statement, the responsibility for the incidents in Vojvodina was transferred to the citizens of Serbia of Croatian nationality for allegedly providing support to the regime in Croatia, displaying flags with checkerboards and going into the Croatian army.¹⁹⁰

The head of the Srem County at that time was Žikica Dronjak from the SPS.¹⁹¹

iii. Year 1993

In the first half of 1993 there was an increase in the volume of forced emigration, however, and threats and intimidation towards the non-Serb population in the territory of Vojvodina continued to be applied by militant groups, all in order to force the exchange of houses. Pressures continue to be exerted through telephone threats, bombs and public naming of the “unsuitable” ones.¹⁹²

The killing of members of the Oskomić and Tomić families on July 30, 1993, in the village of Kukujevc, in the municipality of Šid, [see page 64], brought in a new wave of expulsion of Croats from the territory of Vojvodina.¹⁹³

187 „Hoće li Hrtkovci biti Srbislavci?“ [Will Hrtkovci be Srbislavci?], *Sremske novine*, July 15, 1992; „U Savu u ime naroda“ [To the River Sava, for the people], *Borba*, July 14, 1992; „Noći bez sna u selu bez imena“ [Sleepless nights in a village without a name], *Ekspres politika*, August 24, 1992; Afera Hrtkovci i ustaška kurva Nataša Kandić [The Hrtkovci Affair and the Ustasha bitch Nataša Kandić], Belgrade, Serbian Radical Party, 2007, p. 475.

188 „Noći bez sna u selu bez imena“ [Sleepless nights in a village without a name], *Ekspres politika*, August 24, 1992.

189 An administrative district is formed for the purpose of performing state administration affairs outside the headquarters of the state administration body, available (in Serbian) at: <http://www.mduls.gov.rs/latinica/dokumenta-upravni-okruzi.php>, accessed December 4, 2018.

190 Press release of the Srem district, stated according to „U Sremu nema etničkog čišćenja“ [There is no ethnic cleansing in Srem], *Sremske novine*, October 14, 1992.

191 Sremski upravni okrug [Srem administrative district], response no. 907-12-00001/2018-01 of 10 October 2018; „U Savu, u ime naroda“ [To the River Sava, for the people], *Borba*, July 14, 1992.

192 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1992/S-11/9 of August 17, 1993, paras. 213-215.

193 Statement of the witness J.D. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness Z.D. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness D.R. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness S.K. given to the HLC, September 1993; Statement of the witness Ž.I. given to the HLC, September 1993.



Ruma Municipality, year 1993

There were fewer threats to Croats in Ruma in 1993, but there were still cases of throwing bombs into the yards of Croats houses in the part of the city called Breg.

At the beginning of 1993, there were public posters in Hrtkovci, where the deadline for the emigration of the remaining Croats and Hungarians was set for February 12.¹⁹⁴ At the same time, Serbian refugees gathered around Ostoja Sibinčić, and on several occasions prevented the court and the police, by threatening the use of weapons, to move out people who had entered into the houses of evicted Croats.¹⁹⁵ For that reason, the eviction of refugees who had forcibly moved into Croatian homes lasted for months. The Municipal Court in Ruma sentenced six refugees to conditional sentences on the grounds of hindering the judicial authorities in their work.¹⁹⁶

Municipality of Šid, year 1993

On July 30, 1993, in the village of Kukujevc, municipality of Šid, the married couple Oskomić and their cousin Marija Tomić were killed. By October 15, 1993, when the suspects were arrested for this murder, more than 50 Croatian families had moved out from Kukujevc.¹⁹⁷ After this murder, new groups of refugees arrived in the village and continued to put pressure on Croats by lighting fires and throwing bombs at their properties.¹⁹⁸

According to the testimony of a Serb refugee from Croatia who moved to Kukujevc in late 1991, typical of the repression against the local Croat population was the arrival of Vojislav Šešelj, President of the SRS, at the invitation of the village authorities. In August 1993, Kukujevc consisted primarily of Serb refugees from Croatia. In his statement, he said that the Croats in Kukujevc had difficulties: "Bombs have been thrown at them, they have been threatened by telephone. And it's especially awkward when they get as a neighbour someone who is a member of SRS. Then there is no conversation." And he continues: "I do not agree with the bombings. I think that all this could have been done more smoothly."¹⁹⁹

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194 „Plakati oročili iseljenje“ [Posters set deadlines for Eviction], *Borba*, February 11, 1993; „Štrajk u fabrici kvalitetnih Srba“ [A strike in a factory of high-quality Serbs], *Duga*, March 13, 1993.

195 „Hoće miliciji da uskrate gostoprimstvo“ [Wanting to deny hospitality to police], *Politika*, February 3, 1993; „Štrajk u fabrici kvalitetnih Srba“ [A strike in a factory of high-quality Serbs], *Duga*, March 13, 1993; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 3.

196 Report Under Spotlight (Serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 3.

197 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1994/110 of February 21, 1994, para. 32; Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 12; Statement of the witness M.S. given to the HLC, September 1993.

198 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom)no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 12; Statement of the witness S.K. given to the HLC, September 1993.

199 Statement of the witness M.S. given to the HLC, September 1993.



As in Hrtkovci, so also in Kukujevc, the local community consisted of emigrant Serbs who submitted a request to change the name of the village, in this case, to that of “Staro Srpsko Selo” (Old Serbian Village). The Executive Board of the Šid SO rejected this request, on the grounds that the name of the village was of Latin, not Croatian origin. At the same time, changes to the names of the majority of streets in the village were accepted, where by the names of persons from Serbian history and culture replaced those of famous Croats.²⁰⁰

Indija Municipality, year 1993

In mid-August 1993, Vojislav Šešelj visited the hospital in the village of Stari Slankamen in the municipality of Indija.²⁰¹ During the visit, Šešelj stated that “the Serbian injured can only be treated by Serbs” and that employees at the hospital would receive a salary “when they clear the hospital of those who are not Serbs”. Šešelj himself confirmed to NIN journalists his statement from Stari Slankamen and added that “[t]hose, our disabled soldiers are in various ways tortured and bullied by Croatian nurses”.²⁰²

A few days after Šešelj’s visit, a list was sent to the hospital with the names of employees who, owing to ethnic and/or political affiliation, should be dismissed or transferred to less well paid jobs. The media then reported that the list of unsuitable persons was made by SRS members from Indija. At least one person was discharged after Šešelj’s visit to the hospital, while other employees suffered pressures through threats of dismissal.²⁰³

Reaction

In February 1993, the Special Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Commission, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, issued a report reiterating his concern over cases of intimidation of Croats in Vojvodina through verbal and physical threats, as well as the mining of houses. The report concluded “that in Srem,

200 „Kukujevci ostaju - Kukujevci“ [Kukujevci remain - Kukujevci], *Sremske novine*, July 14, 1993; The initiative to change the name to Kukujevci was renewed in 2007, when the majority of the Serb population sent a motion to the Municipal Assembly of Šid to change the name of the village to “Lazarevo”. Members of the Assembly of the Municipality of Šid this time accepted the initiative of the locals of the Srem village of Kukujevci to change the name, while the locals of the neighbouring Gibarac proposed the name “Dušanovo” for their village. Subsequently, the motions were forwarded to the Government. However, the proposals themselves came in for condemnation and a large number of other reactions from former residents of these two villages, Croats who were forced to leave, and the proposals were eventually withdrawn - see at „Ajde selo da krstimo“ [Lets baptise the village] *Danas*, October 31, 2007, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.danas.rs/drustvo/ajde-selo-da-krstimo/>, accessed November 20, 2018; „Dosta je kukanja“ [No more lamentation], *Blic*, November 5, 2007, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/vojvodina/dosta-je-kukanja/3c71k08>, accessed November 20, 2018; „Muka naša Gibaračka“ [Our troubles from Gibarac], *Hrvatski glas Berlin*, September 26, 2012, available (in Croatian) at <http://www.hrvatskiglas-berlin.com/?p=48015>, accessed November 20, 2018.

201 “Bacanje u Dunav” [Throwing into the Danube], *Sremske novine*, September 1, 1993, the article originally published in the *NIN* on August 27, 1993; TV show „Tu sasvim blizu“ [Quite Close], TV production UrbaNS, 2001.

202 Ibid.

203 Ibid, „Bolnica nakraj srca“ [Hospital heartbreak], *Sremske novine*, October 20, 1993, the article originally published in the *NIN*.



many people, especially Croats, have left the villages of Hrtkovci, Kukujevcı and Novi Slankamen, as a result of threats and the mining of houses”,²⁰⁴ as well as “that the police gave a tacit consent to these incidents that were later attributed to individuals.”²⁰⁵ The reports of the UN rapporteur and the increasing pressure from the public were the reason for the republic and provincial authorities reacting and trying to present the situation in Vojvodina in the best way possible. For this, various government delegations visited Croatian villages in Vojvodina on several occasions.²⁰⁶

In March 1993, Margit Savović, the then Federal Minister for Human and Minority Rights, Miroljub Mladenović, the then Vice-President of the Serbian Parliament, Stevan Vještica, the then Vice-President of the Assembly of Vojvodina, and Damjan Radenković, the then Vice-President of the Executive Council of Vojvodina, attended the meeting of the Council of MZ Novi Slankamen. The aforementioned representatives of the government then rejected allegations of pressure being exerted on the non-Serb population in Vojvodina and the vulnerability of local Croats, transferring the responsibility to the so-called “external factor”, and concluding that “it suits to the West to destabilise every village and then Serbia as a whole.” Damjan Radenković stressed that “[t]he theses about the alleged vulnerability of national minorities in Vojvodina are incorrect. No one got fired because of his/her nationality. And all the other fabrications are not true.”²⁰⁷

The same delegation, together with the Provincial Information Secretary, Ljubomir Lukić, and the President of the Ruma SO, Branislav Devrnja, visited Hrtkovci in the second half of March 1993.²⁰⁸ The delegation met with Hrtkovci representatives, including Ostoja Sibinčić, President of the Assembly of MZ Hrtkovci, and Rade Čakmak, who had previously actively participated in the organisation of violence against Croats and at that time been accused of violating security and unauthorised possession of weapons. The conclusion of the delegation was that “it is not a matter of devastation of the village and ethnic cleansing, but of individual cases.”²⁰⁹ After the visit, Ostoja Sibinčić stated: “For the first time, we feel that Mother Serbia needs us.”²¹⁰

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204 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights No. E/CN.4/1993/50 of February 10, 1993, para. 183.

205 Ibid, para. 184.

206 „Srbija je država svih koji u njoj žive“ [Serbia is the state of everyone living there], *Sremske novine*, March 31, 1993, p. 4.

207 Ibid.

208 Branislav Devrnja was a member of the SPS. Commenting on the events in Hrtkovci in February 1993 he assessed that it was an ideological conflict, negating the issue of human rights violations of non-Serb citizens. As Devrnja said, it was “confrontation with a deep political background. On one side there was a radical right-wing option, and on the other, one of the opposition options, which at this point of such dubiousity seem to be practically irreconcilable.” See at: „Plakati oročili iseljenje“ [Posters set deadlines for Eviction], *Borba*, February 11, 1993.

209 „Korak prema istini“ [Step Towards Truth], *Sremske novine*, March 31, 1993, p. 2 and 3; „M. Savović - Nema etničkog čišćenja“ [M. Savović - No ethnic cleansing], *Borba*, March 23, 1993; „Nema etničkog čišćenja“ [No Ethnic Cleansing], *Večernje novosti*, March 23, 1993.

210 „M. Savović - Nema etničkog čišćenja“ [M. Savović - No ethnic cleansing], *Borba*, March 23, 1993.



Ostoja Sibinčić did not consider the emigration of Croats from Hrtkovci to be problematic - quite the contrary. In April 1993, he said, "If something is nice in this war, it is the reception of people from the diaspora into the mother country, whether be it Croats or Serbs."²¹¹

In September 1993, Sava Žarkov, President of the SRS Municipal Committee in Ruma, claimed that the bombs in Ruma were planted by Croats themselves "in order to attract attention."²¹²

In July 1993, the Federal Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, led by Margit Savović, said in a statement that the status of Croats in Vojvodina would be solved by passing the Law on Minorities and "resolving the entire Yugoslav crisis". Citing examples of violence against Serbs in Croatia, the Ministry stated that such things "[in] FR Yugoslavia, the Republic of Serbia and the province of Vojvodina [have] never happened, nor will something like that happen."²¹³ However, by that time, the destruction of property, the forcible occupation of houses, the planting of explosives and the killing of Croats were being carried out on a large scale in the territory of Vojvodina. By July 1993, at least ten Croats from Vojvodina had been killed or disappeared [see page 53], and more than 10,000 Croatians evicted.²¹⁴

In July 1993, the Republic of Croatia sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General in which allegations of human rights violations suffered by Croats in Vojvodina were made.²¹⁵ The letter lists the evidence of harassment of Croatian citizens, searches of their houses, expulsions from their houses, and theft and destruction of their property, as well as data on the eviction of the Croat population from Vojvodina.²¹⁶

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The Provincial Secretariat for the Realization of the Rights of National Minorities, Administration and Regulations, rejected these allegations as inaccurate and sent a letter to the Security Council on 12 October 1993.²¹⁷ The letter was signed by Provincial Secretary Pavel Domonji, then a member

211 „Lepota rata“ [The beauty of the war], *NIN*, April 23, 1993, p. 31.

212 Statement of the witness S.Ž. given to the HLC, September 1993; In one of its reports, Center RDB (CRDB) in Sremska Mitrovica, designates Savo Žarkov as one of the holders of the "SRS extremist activity" in the territory monitored by CRDB Sremska Mitrovica. The same report states that this person is "in the 'care' of the RDB" - Report "Annex for the theme: 'The activity of extremists from the SRS with a special focus on paramilitary organization and arming'", RDB MUP RS, Center RDB Sremska Mitrovica, April 10, 1995, exhibit no. D01333, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 4.

213 "Ne zavidite Srbima" [Do not envy Serbs], *Večernje novosti*, July 5, 1993.

214 Report Under Spotlight (serb. Pod lupom) no. 8, "Population Transfer - Vojvodina Croats for Serbs from Croatia", Humanitarian Law Center, December 1993, p. 1.

215 Response of the Provincial Secretariat for the Realization of the Rights of National Minorities, Administration and Regulations of October 12, 1993, HLC Archive.

216 Ibid, p. 9.

217 Ibid.



of the SPS²¹⁸ who later became part of the SRS and a member of its highest party body - the Central Homeland Administration.²¹⁹

The Provincial Secretariat in its response took the position that charges of violation of the human rights of Croats in Vojvodina “are another contribution to the satanisation of Serbs, the attack on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and most of its citizens, and an attempt to mislead international public opinion and ensure the direct involvement of the wider international community in the internal affairs of our country.”²²⁰

Further, the Secretariat’s reply states that it is true that a certain number of Croats moved out of Vojvodina, but that this was not done under pressure from the authorities. The Provincial Secretary emphasised that this happened “under pressure from and the organization of the extreme nationalistic part of the citizens of Croatian nationality who lived or still live in AP Vojvodina and the FRY, of some religious dignitaries of the Catholic Church from the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but also of the Republic of Croatia, and, which is extremely important - under the influence of the leaders of the political party of the Democratic Alliance of Croats in Vojvodina.”²²¹

The Provincial Secretariat took the view that the replacement of the real estate of Serbs from Croatia for the property of the Croats in Srem was voluntary and that it was done legally with the mediation of the lawyers. They also emphasised that all contracts on exchange of real estate were concluded for the benefit of citizens of Croatian nationality, and at the expense of citizens of Serbian nationality.²²²

This position is fully in line with the views Vojislav Šešelj and his Serbian Radical Party had at the time of the violence against Croats.²²³

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218 Report on the election results for deputies of the Assembly of the AP Vojvodina on May 31 and June 14, 1992, p. 8, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.pik.skupstinavojvodine.gov.rs/sadrzaj/1jun%201992.pdf>, accessed October 24, 2018.

219 Pavel Domonji passed away on October 9, 2018, available (in Serbian) at: Prof. Mr. Pavel Domonji passed away (1940 - 2018) <https://www.rtvstarapazova.rs/sr/vest.php?id=8966>, accessed on October 24, 2019; Mr. Pavel Domonji buried, available at: <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/saopstenja/sahranjen-mr-pavel-domonji.html>, accessed on October 24, 2018.

220 Response of the Provincial Secretariat for the Realization of the Rights of National Minorities, Administration and Regulations of October 12, 1993, p.1, HLC Archive.

221 Ibid, p. 3.

222 Response of the Provincial Secretariat for the Realization of the Rights of National Minorities, Administration and Regulations of October 12, 1993, p. 6 and 7, HLC Archive.

223 “They always came in favourable conditions, and they always got better houses and apartments in Croatia that once belonged to Serbs, better than their property here which went to Serbs”, see in: Vojislav Šešelj interview, *Radio B92*, September 30, 1993, stated in the report of the expert Anthony Oberschall by the ICTY Prosecutor in the *Šešelj* Case of January 17, 2006, p. 68.



Vojislav Šešelj and SRS members repeatedly argued that during the exchange of property “it was better for the Croats, since they received much more valuable Serbian houses in Croatia”, and that they had exchanged their farm estates for houses and apartments in Zagreb and on the coast.²²⁴

In May 1994, the then SRS official Maja Gojković in Greater Serbia, the newspaper of SRS, stated that “[...] national minorities are feeling good in Serbia, and those who are emigrating from here do not do it because of the pressures, but to improve their economic position.”²²⁵

According to the data from the real estate exchange agreements, the HLC has found that a small number of Croats from the villages around Ruma exchanged their property for houses and apartments in larger Croatian cities and on the Adriatic coast. Of the 266 exchange agreements into which the HLC has had insight, only 16 contracts had property on the coast as the subject of the exchange, while eight contracts referred to the City of Zagreb. Most Croats from Vojvodina exchanged their property for rural estates in smaller towns in the municipalities of Slavonska Požega, Podravska Slatina, and Virovitica.²²⁶

In October 1993, several persons, members and sympathisers of the SRS and of the SČP²²⁷, were arrested in the territory of Srem, under suspicion of having perpetrated crimes against civilians, terrorist actions and murders committed in a cruel manner.²²⁸ Four persons were also arrested for the murder of members of the Oskomić and Tomić families [see page 64 and 65]. Among the arrested persons were Petar Živković, a teacher from Sot and an SRS official and former Deputy President of the Šid municipality, Milenko Petrić, Vice-President of the SRS for the area of Srem, and Gradimir Milošević, a member of the SRS from Sremska Mitrovica.²²⁹

224 The defence's closing arguments before the ICTY in the *Šešelj* Case of March 15, 2012, p. 17432; Vojislav Šešelj interview, *Radio Apatin*, November 24, 1993, stated by the ICTY Prosecution expert Anthony Oberschall in the *Šešelj* Case of January 17, 2006, p. 139; Šarović on the verdict on Šešelj: There was no persecution or deportation, *NI*, April 11, 2018 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScZD-55gDDM>, accessed December 10, 2018; Trivun Ivković, in the year of 2014 expressed the same attitude towards the expulsion of Croats, saying “They left poor houses here, and got houses in Rijeka, Zagreb, Virovitica, Osijek and everything else”, see: Interview Trivun Ivkovic Part 2, *Naked Life, TV Happy*, February 15, 2014, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=cFfN-44tzs, accessed December 11, 2018.

225 „Radikalska gvozdena ledi“ [Radicals' 'Iron Lady'], *Greater Serbia*, no. 16, May 1994, p. 14, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/izdavastvo/casopis-velika-srbija/?&pg=8>.

226 A large number of Croats from Hrtkovci exchanged their estates for rural estates in Jakšić and Kula, which in 1991 were part of the Slavonska Požega municipality. Jakšić is now an independent municipality, and the village of Kula is part of the Kutjevo municipality - Property Exchange Agreements, HLC Archive.

227 The SČP became a part of the SRS. Members of the SČP were also SRS members. Under the leadership of the SRS, the SRS performed its tasks within the framework of military activities whose main goal was recruitment, organisation and referral of volunteers, see at ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Šešelj* Case of March 31, 2016, para. 62.

228 „Grupni portret trinaestorice“ [Group portrait of the thirteen], *Sremske novine*, November 17, 1993.

229 „Grupni portret trinaestorice“ [Group portrait of the thirteen], *Sremske novine*, November 17, 1993; Annex for the theme: Results and Further Directions of Operational Work by OA Tomson“ MUP RS, Center RDB Sremska Mitrovica dated August 2, 1995, exhibit no. D00251, *Stanišić and Simatović*, pp. 2-8.



The RDB Ministry of the Interior has identified the arrested persons as “a major carriers out of extremist activity”.²³⁰

The internal report of the RDB from October 1995 states that these persons were responsible for “encouraging ethnic cleansing in the territory of Srem and beyond, through pressure to evict persons of Croatian and Muslim nationality. The base for executing that method and type of operation they found among the refugees of Serbian nationality from the Republic of Croatia, which particularly culminated in mid-1992. In that period, permanent pressures were imposed in the area of Srem on some places inhabited by the Croatian population, especially in the municipalities of Ruma and beyond.”²³¹ Most of those arrested persons, except for those arrested for the murder of members of the Oskomić and Tomić families [see page 64 and 65], were only indicted for the illegal possession of weapons.²³²

iv. Year 1995

After the Croatian Army’s Operation “Flash” at the beginning of May 1995²³³ and then Operation “Storm” in August 1995,²³⁴ a great number of Serb refugees came from Croatia to Serbia, from the territory of Western Slavonia and the territory of the so-called Republika Srpska Krajina (RSK). A large number of them came to Vojvodina, which again led to interethnic tensions.²³⁵

In 1995, the forced eviction and expulsion of the Croatian population from their houses again occurred, carried out by the militant part of the Serb refugees from Croatia, who were mostly armed and uniformed, and with the support of the local population close to the SRS.²³⁶ Citizens of Serb ethnicity who stood up to protect their neighbours, were themselves subjected to attacks.²³⁷ Although

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230 As the “main perpetrators of the extremist activities of the SRS” the RDB MUP included Nikola Vasić, then deputy of SRS in the RS Assembly from Šid, see in: Report “Annex for the theme: “The activity of extremists from the SRS with a special focus on paramilitary organization and arming”, RDB MUP RS, Center RDB Sremska Mitrovica, April 10, 1995, exhibit no. D01333, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 4.

231 Report “Annex for the theme: “The actions of militant groups from the positions of Serbian extremism - the SCM, the Serbian Guard, Beli orlovi (the White Eagles), Ravna Gora movement, and others”, MUP RS RDB, Centar RDB Sremska Mitrovica dated October 11, 1995, exhibit no. D01289, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 5.

232 „Grupni portret trinaestorice“ [Group portrait of the thirteen], *Sremske novine*, November 17, 1993.

233 Operation Flash The Ethnic Cleansing of Western Slavonia 1 May 1995, HLC Report, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=13797&lang=de>, accessed December 11, 2018.

234 Trial Judgment of the ICTY in Gotovina et al. from 15 April 2011 available at <http://www.icty.org/en/case/gotovina/4>, accessed December 11, 2018.

235 Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>; Miroslav Samardžić Position of minorities in Vojvodina, 1998, available (in Serbian) at: http://www.kczr.org/download/tekstovi/miroslav_samardzic_polozaj_manjina_u_vojvodini.pdf, accessed November 19, 2018, par. 3.1.

236 Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>; “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special forces didn’t prevent eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995.

237 „Zid ćutanja“ [The Wall of Silence], *NIN*, September 1, 1995, pp. 30 - 31.



to most incidents the police responded faster and more adequately than in previous years, from May to October 1995, another 5,000 Croats moved out of Serbia.²³⁸

Ruma Municipality, year 1995

In August 1995, Serb refugees from Croatia entered the houses of the Croats in Ruma and expelled the owners, issuing threats and setting an ultimatum for eviction within 48 hours. Between August 10 and 12, which was the period of the greatest wave of refugees coming from the territory of so-called RSK after Operation “Storm”, almost all Croatian houses in Breg in Ruma were the targets of attacks, some several times.²³⁹ According to the testimony of the locals of Croatian nationality and inhabitants of Breg, for information about Croat inhabitants, refugees referred to the owner of the “Brlog” café where sympathisers and members of the local SRS committee gathered.²⁴⁰

A Croatian citizen from Breg, in a conversation with HLC researchers, described an event from August 1995: “On the tenth of August, a crowd came across. They asked for the Croatian houses. We, the women who stood on the streets, escaped into our houses and locked the entrance gates. Then there was a knock on the door. They shouted “Ustashas!”. They knocked so hard that I had to go out and try to make a deal. Women rushed at me, saying that they had come from Knin without anything, and that I would have to do so too. My son went to the police and they forced them out. They came again after the police raid. But now they acted kindly, they asked for an exchange. We do not sleep, we are on call.”²⁴¹

In Ruma, there was a case where new refugees evicted Serb refugees from Pakrac, from the house they had received from a Croatian family in the previous years. “We have another house at Breg, where we previously received a Serb refugee family from Pakrac. On August 12 they were expelled by people from Knin. I tried to talk to them on the phone, to stop them, but in vain. I called the police. The police took them out and we accepted back the people from Pakrac. On the night of August 11 and 12, the police came and forced these people out. We had a hard time persuading them to leave them alone, that we had voluntarily let them in.”²⁴²

238 Miroslav Samardžić Position of minorities in Vojvodina, 1998, available (in Serbian) at: http://www.kczr.org/download/tekstovi/miroslav_samardzic_polozaj_manjina_u_vojvodini.pdf, accessed November 19, 2018; Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>.

239 Statement of K.V. given to the HLC, August 1995; Statement of R.M. given to the HLC, August 1995; „Krajišnici useljavaju, specijalci iseljavaju” [the Krajišniks immigrate, the Special forces evict], *Borba*, August 12, 1995.

240 Statement of the S.R. given to the HLC, August 1995.

241 Statement of the K.R. given to the HLC, August 1995.

242 Statement of the S.R. given to the HLC, August 1995.



Branislav Devrnja reacted to the events in Ruma, as the head of the Srem administrative district at that time. He condemned the violence and announced that the state authorities would react.²⁴³ The MUP in Ruma reacted by evicting the refugees from the occupied houses and returning the Croat owners.²⁴⁴

Municipality of Stara Pazova, year 1995

As of August 7, 1995, Serb refugees from Krajina came en masse to Golubinci village near Stara Pazova. In the beginning, they offered the Croats an exchange with their houses in Krajina. But, after the local Croat population refused the exchange, threats followed, that they would be killed if they did not leave their houses.²⁴⁵ According to the assessment of the locals, there were about 30 violent entrances into houses of Croats.²⁴⁶

Around 7 p.m., on August 11, 1995, a special unit of the federal police arrived in Golubinci and established order. All the refugees were evicted from the houses of the villagers.²⁴⁷ The authorities of the municipality of Stara Pazova did not deal with those responsible for inspiring the violent occupation of the houses of the Croats in Golubinci, although Golubinci residents pointed out that they were members of the SRS, the SPS and the Serbian National Renewal (SNO).²⁴⁸

Owing to a new rise in pressure, a large number of Croats from the village agreed to exchange property.²⁴⁹

By August 15, 1995, 1,377 Serb refugees from Croatia were reported in Novi Banovci after Operation “Storm”. Refugees were accommodated in houses in the village. In order to protect themselves, it was Croats who accommodated most of the refugees in Novi Banovci.²⁵⁰

On August 10, a large group of refugees, some of whom were wearing uniforms, came to Novi Banovci. This group, with the support of locals who were members of the SRS, tried to expel several Croats from their homes and forcefully move in. Most of these incidents occurred in Vojvođanska Street, in the part of Novi Banovci called Džervin.²⁵¹ The police reacted promptly and established order, but did not deal with the responsibility of SRS members in the organisation of these acts of violence.²⁵²

243 “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special forces didn’t prevented eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995.

244 „Krajišnici useljavaju, specijalci iseljavaju” [The Krajišniks immigrate, the Special forces evict], *Borba*, August 12, 1995.

245 „Krajiške izbeglice isteruju vojvođanske Hrvate iz kuća” [Krajina refugees expel Vojvodina Croats from their homes], *Telegraf*, August 16, 1995, pp. 36-37.

246 Report of the HLC researcher M.B., August 1995.

247 Report of the HLC researcher M.B., August 1995.

248 Report of the HLC researcher M.B., August 1995; Serbian National Renewal (SNO) was the first nationalist party in Serbia, founded in early 1990 in Nova Pazova. Its leader was Mirko Jović who organized volunteer groups during the war and sent them to the fronts in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

249 Report of the HLC researcher M.B., August 1995.

250 Report of the HLC researcher I.K. and A.R., August 1995.

251 Report of the HLC researcher I.K. and A.R., August 1995; „Ne upadaju izbeglice sa traktora” [The refugees on tractors are not the intruders], *Borba*, August 12, 1995.

252 „Da je Sloba bio tu” [If Sloba was here], *NIN*, August 18, 1995.



On a number of houses in the neighbourhood there were graffiti which suggested that the owners had already received Serbian refugees or exchanged property with them: “Knin occupied,” “Refugees,” “Vranješ busy,” “Ivetić Grahovo,” “Radojčić”.²⁵³

Municipality of Šid, year 1995

On August 8, 1995, uniformed and armed men arrived in the village of Kukujevcı and started breaking the front doors and windows on houses in Stjepan Radić Street. They threatened the locals and forced them to move. A larger group of Croatian citizens started heading towards the railway station in order to escape from threats and attacks.²⁵⁴

Soon a special unit of the MUP of Serbia came to the village, which evicted the attackers from the houses and returned them to the owners.²⁵⁵ However, immediately after the departure of a special unit of the MUP from Kukujevcı, the attacks by armed men to Croat houses continued.²⁵⁶

During the violence in August 1995, one Croat was killed in Kukujevcı. Živko Litrić was killed in his family house in the village [see page 66].

The President of the Kukujevcı MZ, Đuro Svorcan, denied the forced eviction of Croats, despite the killing of Litrić and numerous other incidents.²⁵⁷ However, violence in August 1995 led to a massive departure of Croats from Kukujevcı, but also from the neighboring village of Gibarac, despite the quick reaction of the police that tried to establish the order. Between 1991 and 1995 these two villages almost completely remained without the Croatian population [see page 70].²⁵⁸

253 Report of the HLC researcher I.K. and A.R., August 1995; „Sa strepnjom se čeka noć“ [Awaiting night with anxiety], *Borba*, August 11, 1995.

254 Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>.

255 “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special Forces didn't prevented eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995. During 1995, “Glas ravnice”, the DSHV newsletter publishes the Bulletin of Crisis Days, a daily follow-up of the attacks on Croatian citizens in Vojvodina, see: Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>.

256 “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special forces didn't prevented eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995; Teror glasan, država nema [Terror loud, state speechless] - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on ethnic cleansing in Vojvodina, *Dnevnik*, February 19, 2003, available (in Serbian) at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080211104555/http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/19-02-2003/Strane/spec.htm>.

257 “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special forces didn't prevented eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995.

258 “Ni specijalci nisu sprečili iseljavanje” [Special forces didn't prevented eviction], *Borba*, August 14, 1995; Report of the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities on the migration of the number of the Croatian national minority in AP of Vojvodina in the period 1991-2002, exhibit no. P00574, *Šešelj*, p. 18.



III. Camps in Serbia

From September 1991 to August 1992, in the territory of Serbia, the JNA set up several camps for Croats: in Stajićevo near Zrenjanin, in the JNA barracks in Zrenjanin, in Begejci near Žitište, in the Correctional Institution in Sremska Mitrovica, in the military prison in Šid, in the Correctional Institution and Military Prison in Niš and Aleksinac, as well as in the military detention facility in Belgrade and in the underground facilities of the Security Institute at Banjica (Belgrade).²⁵⁹ Croatian civilians and soldiers from Vukovar, Osijek and Vinkovci were brought to these camps. The total number of prisoners in these camps was around 7,000.²⁶⁰ Among them were a small undetermined number of Croats from Vojvodina.

The prisoners in these camps were subjected to torture, starvation and humiliation. They were forced to sleep on concrete, and their food was scarce and of poor quality. The guards kicked the prisoners and beat them with sticks, rifle butts and fists.²⁶¹

Ivan Paradžiković, a Croat from Kukujevc, was arrested on September 23, 1991 by unknown JNA members in the village of Ilinci, Šid. At that time, Ivan Paradžiković used crutches, owing to a traffic accident he had suffered a couple of months before his arrest.²⁶² Paradžiković was arrested at a local cafe in Ilinci on charges that he had come to spy on the JNA and send information to Croatia.²⁶³ The JNA members first pulled Ivan Paradžiković into the warehouse and beat him there. They punched and kicked him, and beat him with his own crutches, after which they put him in a car and drove to the police station in Šid.²⁶⁴

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That same night, JNA soldiers transferred Ivan Paradžiković to the Correctional Institution in Sremska Mitrovica, where he spent three days. He was not abused in Sremska Mitrovica. From the Correctional Institution, Ivan Paradžiković and some 150 prisoners were transferred to one agricultural property near Sremska Mitrovica.²⁶⁵ There, the guards beat him with chains and

259 ICTY Prosecutor's Indictment v. *Goran Hadžić* of May 21, 2004, para. 32; Prosecution Pre-Trial Brief in the *Hadžić* Case of July 3, 2012, para. 223-240; ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Mrkšić et al.* case of September 27, 2007, para. 580; Tatjana Tabački and Andrej Jakovljević „Camps in Serbia” http://yuhistorija.com/wars_91_99_txt01c2.html, accessed November 26, 2018.

260 Association Vukovar 1991 and the HLC on camps in Serbia, May 23, 2008, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=13756> accessed on November 26, 2018.

261 Prosecution Pre-Trial Brief in the *Hadžić* case of July 3, 2012, para. 223-240; Tatjana Tabački and Andrej Jakovljević „Camps in Serbia” http://yuhistorija.com/wars_91_99_txt01c2.html, accessed November 26, 2018.

262 Statement of the witness E.P. given to the HLC, November 2018; Statement of the witness I.P. given to the HLC, November 2018;

263 Statement of Ivan Paradžiković of March 8, 1994, according to Dr. Milan Bičanić, „Srijem krvavo krilo Hrvatske” [Srijem, bloody wing of Croatia], Mladost, Zagreb, 1994, p. 290.

264 Statement of the witness I.P. given to the HLC, November 2018.

265 Ibid.



pipes.²⁶⁶ He was held in the agricultural property for three days, after which he was returned to the Correctional Institution in Sremska Mitrovica, where he spent an additional five days.²⁶⁷

Early in the morning on October 3, 1991, along with other prisoners, Ivan Paradžiković was transferred to a camp in Begejci near Žitište. On entering the camp, JNA reserve forces soldiers forced prisoners to run with their heads down and their hands behind their backs. Ivan Paradžiković could not run because of his injured legs and was beaten for that.²⁶⁸

Ivan Paradžiković spent 79 days at camps in Serbia. On December 10, 1991, in Bosanski Šamac, BiH, he was exchanged for Serbian prisoners who had been arrested by Croatian forces in Croatia.²⁶⁹

In June 1991 Ljubomir Kuraja, a Croatian from Beška, got employment with the MUP of Croatia and moved to Croatia. In the period until the autumn of 1991, he regularly visited his family and family house in Beška.²⁷⁰

During his arrivals and stays in Beška, he was repeatedly brought for informative interviews at the village police station. On November 18, 1991, he was arrested at the entrance to the family house,²⁷¹ by the commander of the Beška police, Mladen Repić.²⁷² He first took him to the police station in Beška, whence he was transferred to the police station in Ruma.²⁷³

In the police station, Ljubomir Kuraja was examined about the structure of the DSHV and people connected to the party, as well as his engagement with the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. Two days later, Kuraja was transferred to the Correctional Institution in Sremska Mitrovica. He spent more than six months in Sremska Mitrovica. He was subjected to harassment and abuse by the guards, some from the reserve forces, others active soldiers in the JNA.²⁷⁴

266 Statement of Ivan Paradžiković of March 8, 1994, according to Dr. Milan Bičanić, "Srijem krvavo krilo Hrvatske" [Srijem, bloody wing of Croatia], Mladost, Zagreb, 1994, p. 291.

267 Statement of the witness I.P. given to the HLC, November 2018.

268 Statement of Ivan Paradžiković of March 8, 1994, according to Dr. Milan Bičanić, "Srijem krvavo krilo Hrvatske" [Srijem, bloody wing of Croatia], Mladost, Zagreb, 1994, p. 292.

269 Statement of the witness I.P. given to the HLC, November 2018; Statement of the witness E.P. given to the HLC, November 2018.

270 Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, March 2015; Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, November 2018.

271 Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, March 2015; Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, November 2018.

272 Mladen Repić was an employee of the MUP until 2016 when his employment contract was terminated - Response of the Ministry of the Interior, the Department for Data Processing, Complaints and Cooperation with Independent Bodies, at the HLC request of November 3, 2017, HLC Data base.

273 Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, March 2015; Statement of the witness Lj.K. given to the HLC, November 2018.

274 Ibid.



On May 22, 1992, Ljubomir Kuraja was exchanged at Lipovac in Croatia for Serb prisoners of war who had been arrested by Croatian forces.²⁷⁵

Mladen Lončar, a Croatian from Ilok, spent the autumn of 1991 in Novi Sad where he worked and specialized in neuropsychiatry at the Provincial Hospital.²⁷⁶ On October 1, 1991, he was arrested and taken to the premises of the SUP in Novi Sad.²⁷⁷ He was questioned for over 30 hours about his connections to the DSHV and the arrangement of Croatian units in Ilok. During the interrogation, the police beat him with a stick. After questioning, Lončar was released.²⁷⁸

In the next month, the police took him four or five more times for interviews. Usually, they would pick him up from his workplace and take him to the SUP for questioning. Each time, he was interrogated and again beaten.²⁷⁹

In early November 1991, Mladen Lončar was again arrested and taken for questioning. After interrogation at the SUP premises, Lončar was transferred to the JNA facility in Paragovo, not far from Novi Sad. There he spent three days with a dozen other arrested persons and was questioned every day.²⁸⁰

During the questioning, a JNA officer asked Lončar whether he wanted to be sent to a camp in the so-called territory of SAO Krajina or to a camp in Serbia. Lončar replied that he was living and working in Novi Sad, and that he should therefore remain on the territory of Serbia.²⁸¹

On the third day of his stay in Paragovo, the JNA Military Police transferred Lončar to a camp in Begejci. At Begejci at that time there were between 500 and 600 people, mainly from the area of Vukovar. Lončar, like other prisoners, was beaten and harassed every day.²⁸²

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275 Ibid.

276 Testimony of Mladen Lončar before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case on September 5, 2013, p. 8193.

277 Testimony of Mladen Lončar before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case on September 5, 2013, p. 8200; Letter of Helsinki Watch to Slobodan Milošević and Blagoje Adžić of January 21, 1992, exhibit no P00183.B, *Šešelj*, pp. 14-15.

278 Testimony of Mladen Lončar before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case on September 5, 2013, pp. 8201-8203.

279 Ibid, pp. 8203-8204.

280 Ibid, p. 8206.

281 Ibid, p. 8207.

282 Ibid, pp. 8209-8212. Letter of Helsinki Watch to Slobodan Milošević and Blagoje Adžić of January 21, 1992, exhibit no. P00183.B, *Šešelj*, pp. 14-15.



Mladen Lončar spent 34 days in Begejci.²⁸³ Lončar was in the group that was exchanged on December 10, 1991 for members of the „Labrador” group,²⁸⁴ made up of operatives of the JNA Military Counterintelligence (KOS).²⁸⁵

In November 1993, HLC researchers talked with the head of the SUP in Šid, Nedeljko Makivić. During the interview, the researchers repeatedly asked Makivić about the imprisonment of Croats from Vojvodina in the Begejci camp. Nedeljko Makivić did not want to confirm this information, but nor did he deny it.²⁸⁶

IV. Case of the Barbalić family in Zemun

The position of the Croats in the territory of the Municipality of Zemun was aggravated by the arrival of the SRS to power in this municipality in November 1996, and the pressures were intensified in 1997.²⁸⁷

On July 1, 1997, while the Barbalić family was on holiday, Ljiljana Mihajlović (then Mijoković), Vojislav Šešelj's secretary, moved into the municipal apartment where the family lived in the Belgrade municipality of Zemun, with the help of other members of the SRS.²⁸⁸ Things belonging to the Barbalić family were then thrown out of the apartment. Petar Panić Pana, the then bodyguard of Vojislav Šešelj, was among the people who threw their things out.²⁸⁹ According to information from the media, these

283 Testimony of Mladen Lončar before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case on September 6, 2013, p. 8243. Letter of Helsinki watch to Slobodan Milošević and Blagoje Adžić of January 21, 1992, exhibit no P00183.B, *Šešelj*, p. p. 14-15.

284 Operation Labrador was an operation of the KOS, whose activities were carried out from August 1991. Within this operation, the KOS operatives performed several actions on the territory of Zagreb, such as the action of mining the Jewish graves at the „Mirogoj” cemetery. Operation Labrador was led by the Chief of the Security Department of the RV and PVO, Colonel Slobodan Rakočević. A group of operatives who carried out Operation Labrador were arrested in Zagreb and exchanged for Croatian prisoners in December 1991. See at: Testimony of Mustafa Čandić before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of November 11, 2002, pp. 12734-12735; Statement of Radenko Radojčić from March 29-31, 1994, p. 72, available (in Croatian) at <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/119825>, accessed on December 21, 2018.

285 Testimony of Mladen Lončar before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case on September 6, 2013, p. 8257.

286 Note by HLC researchers, Statement of the witness N.M. given to the HLC, November 1993.

287 Human Rights Report in Serbia for 1997, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, p. 119; „Otimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti” [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm> accessed December 8, 2018.

288 Excerpt from the book *Dosije Zemun - Contribution to Contemporary History of Zemun*, Dragan Stojković, The Case of Barbalić, p. 11, available at <http://www.mostart.co.rs/pdf/dosije%20zemun/02-Slucaj%20Barbalic.pdf>; Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, “Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own”, *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018.

289 Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, “Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own”, *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018; „Otimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti” [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 8, 2018.



things were stored in a truck with registration plates indicating Beli Manastir, and then taken to the municipal depo.²⁹⁰

The Barbalićs returned to Zemun on July 3, 1997, but could no longer enter their apartment.²⁹¹

Two days after taking over the Barbalić family apartment, on July 3, 1997, Ljiljana Mihajlović signed a lease contract with the municipality of Zemun, whose president at that time was Vojislav Šešelj. Several days later she signed a contract for the purchase of the apartment with the municipality.²⁹²

The Barbalić family reported to the police in Zemun the case of a break-in, asking that the unknown people who had moved into the apartment be thrown out. At the police, the Barbalićs were told that “they are not unknown people, because they showed ID cards during the control.”²⁹³

The Barbalićs sought protection in court, and in July 1997, the Fourth Municipal Court in Belgrade issued a temporary measure ordering the return to the Barbalić family of the apartment they were forced to evict.²⁹⁴ However, with the public support of the representatives of the authorities in the municipality of Zemun, where the SRS had the majority, the police refused to assist in the execution of the temporary measure of eviction of the illegal occupants.²⁹⁵

Owing to the violent expulsion of the Barbalić family from their apartment, in July 1997 several protests by citizens of Zemun and Belgrade were held with the request for compliance with the court’s decision

290 „Otkimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti“ [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 8, 2018; TV duel Vojislav Šešelj - Nikola Barović July 16, 1997, TV show “Tet-a-tet” *BK TV* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGkNAdB2_Sk, accessed on December 8, 2018.

291 Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, “Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own”, *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018.

292 Excerpt from the book *Dosije Zemun - Contribution to Contemporary History of Zemun*, Dragan Stojković, The Case of Barbalić, p.11-12, available at <http://www.mostart.co.rs/pdf/dosije%20zemun/02-Slucaj%20Barbalic.pdf>; In November 1996, the Serbian Radical Party won the majority in the local elections in Zemun, and Vojislav Šešelj was elected as the president of the municipality. The SRS remained in power in the Zemun municipality until October 2000, see: Tamara Skrozza, „Oni se nisu promenili“ [They did not change], *Vreme*, January 15, 2004, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=364165> accessed December 8, 2018.

293 „Otkimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti“ [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 8, 2018; TV duel Vojislav Šešelj - Nikola Barović July 16, 1997, TV show “Tet-a-tet” *BK TV* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGkNAdB2_Sk, accessed on December 8, 2018.

294 „Otkimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti“ [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 8, 2018.

295 Annual Report of the Humanitarian Law Center on the state of human rights in the FR of Yugoslavia in 1998, para. 11.1.5., Human Rights Report in Serbia for 1997, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, p. 119.



to return the apartment to the Barbačićs. However, despite the protests, this did not happen.²⁹⁶ At the time of the protests against the eviction of the Barbačić family, Zemun citizens of non-Serb ethnicity were exposed to threatening phone calls in which unknown persons told them that they were on the eviction list, and that they should be careful what they were doing if they did not want something to happen to them as well.²⁹⁷

The SRS published the personal information of the Barbačić family, including the data of a minor family member, in the municipal newspaper “Zemunske novine”, as well as in party newspapers “Greater Serbia”, calling them “Ustashas” and “false citizens of Zemun”. The editor of “Zemunske novine” at that time was Ognjen Mihajlović, husband of Ljiljana Mihajlović.²⁹⁸ Also, on July 16, 1997, Vojislav Šešelj showed a passport of a minor member of the Barbačić family in a TV show on BK television, stating that it was a “Croatian Ustasha passport”.²⁹⁹

In 1997, the Barbačić family launched a court proceeding against Ljiljana Mihajlović for taking illegal possession of the property. At the beginning of 1998, the Zemun Municipality and Ljiljana Mihajlović, in two lawsuits, initiated procedures for annulment of the contract for renting an apartment and termination of the tenancy rights of the Barbačić family. Barbačić responded with a counter-complaint.³⁰⁰

The first verdict of the Fourth Municipal Court in Belgrade in 2004 was in favour of the Barbačićs. But the District Court in Belgrade revoked this judgment in 2005 and returned the case to the first instance court for a retrial.³⁰¹

296 Excerpt from the book *Dosije Zemun - Contribution to Contemporary History of Zemun*, Dragan Stojković, The Case of Barbačić, p. 11, available at <http://www.mostart.co.rs/pdf/dosije%20zemun/02-Slucaj%20Barbalic.pdf>; “Ivan Barbačić: Pravda za svu decu koja su ostala bez doma” [Justice for All Children Who Remained Without a Home], *Novi Magazin*, December 11, 2014, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.novimagazin.rs/vesti/ivan-barbalic-pravda-za-svu-decu-koja-su-ostala-bez-doma>, „Otimanje stanova pod patronatom vlasti” [Stealing Flats under the Patronage of Power], *AIM*, July 15, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70715-003-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 8, 2018.

297 “Buđenje pacova” [Awakening of Rats], *AIM*, July 22, 1997, available (in Serbian) at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199707/70722-012-pubs-beo.htm>, accessed December 22 2018. ““

298 “Cirkuske akrobacije Nikole Barovića” [Circus acrobatics by Nikola Barović], *Greater Serbia*, no 402, July 1997 <https://www.srpskaradikalnastranka.org.rs/lat/izdavastvo/casopis-velika-srbija/?&pg=7>; „Otišli na more, stan uzela funkcionerka SRS” [Went to the sea, apartment taken over by a SRS member], *NI*, November 6, 2016, <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a206302/Slucaj-Barbalic.html>; Excerpt from the book *Dosije Zemun - Contribution to Contemporary History of Zemun*, Dragan Stojković, The Case of Barbačić, p. 11, available at <http://www.mostart.co.rs/pdf/dosije%20zemun/02-Slucaj%20Barbalic.pdf>.

299 TV duel Vojislav Šešelj - Nikola Barović July 16, 1997, TV show “Tet-a-tet” *BK TV* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGkNAdB2_Sk, accessed on December 8, 2018.

300 Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, “Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own”, *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018.

301 Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, “Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own”, *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018.



In its decision, the District Court in Belgrade failed to take into account the testimony of the neighbours of the Barbalić family stating that they were living in the apartment in Zemun, nor did the Court accept paid bills for electricity and utilities, or confirmations that the minor member of the Barbalić family during several years of life in Zemun regularly attended kindergarten and school. Instead, the Court accepted the statements of three witnesses from the SRS who testified that there was dust in the apartment, which was evidence that the apartment was abandoned and that no one had lived there before Ljiljana Mihajlović moved in.³⁰²

The retrial court passed judgment in 2013, in which it was established that Barbalićs were not entitled to use the apartment. Two years later the Belgrade Court of Appeal upheld the 2013 verdict. Following this decision, the NGO Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) filed an appeal to the Constitutional Court for violation of the right to a fair trial or trial within a reasonable time, the right to a reasoned decision and the right to legal security, as well as a violation of the right to property. At the time of the publication of this Dossier, the Constitutional Court has not yet ruled in this case.³⁰³

Ljiljana Mihajlović has been a member of the SRS in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia since June 3, 2016. Mihajlović is a member of the Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality.³⁰⁴ When she became a deputy at the Assembly in 2016, Ljiljana Mihajlović reported the apartment of the Barbalić family as personal property to the Serbian Anti-Corruption Agency.³⁰⁵

53

V. Murders and disappearances of Croats in Vojvodina

During the campaign of intimidation and pressures against Vojvodina Croats, a number of ethnically motivated murders were committed from 1991 to 1995. These murders further contributed to the creation of an atmosphere of fear and the emigration of Croats from the area of Vojvodina.

The RDB had knowledge of the forced abductions and ethnically motivated killings of Vojvodina Croats. According to the RDB Centre from Sremska Mitrovica report, "[t]he cases of arrivals of armed members of the TO from the regions of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem and other paramilitary formations whose members have illegally taken Croats from our area and searched their

302 Sanja Kljajić and Vanja Đurić, "Radical deputy reported seized apartment as her own", *VOICE*, October 30, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://voice.org.rs/poslanica-radikala-prijavila-oteti-stan-kao-svoj/>, accessed October 12, 2018; Barbalić Case: „Otišli na more, stan uzela funkcionerka SRS“ [Went to the sea, apartment taken over by SRS member], *NI*, Novembar 6, 2016, available (in Serbian) at <http://rs.n1info.com/a206302/Vesti/Vesti/Slucaj-Barbalic.html>, accessed October 12, 2018.

303 Ibid.

304 National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, deputies, available at <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/Ljiljana+MIHAJLOVIC%2086.946.891.html>, accessed October 12, 2018.

305 Search for a register of officials, Anti-Corruption Agency, available at <http://www.acas.rs/pretraga-registra/>, accessed on October 12, 2018.



homes were recorded". The same report states that "[t]he pressures have been exerted in various ways, ranging from anonymous telephone threats to physical liquidations".³⁰⁶

Although during the research for the purpose of writing this Dossier, the HLC came across indications that a number of Croats were murdered, the following are just examples that are confirmed from several different sources.

i. The disappearance of Stevan Đurkov

Stevan Đurkov (b. 1956), a Croatian from Sonta, was arrested on September 27, 1991 in Sonta, and allegedly was last seen on the same day in the village of Dalj³⁰⁷ in Croatia.

On September 27, 1991, the "Ronta" café, owned by Stevan Đurkov in Sonta, was surrounded by a dozen unidentified armed persons in camouflage uniforms with white belts. They took Đurkov out of the café and drove him in the van in an unknown direction.³⁰⁸

Shortly afterwards, Stevan Đurkov's wife found out that Stevan was seen in Dalj, a village in the municipality of Osijek in Croatia, 24 kilometres away from Sonta. She received information that Stevan was seen at the entrance to the police station in Dalj, in the territory at that time controlled by the Serbian armed forces of the so-called SAO Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem.³⁰⁹

Stevan Đurkov's wife reported his disappearance to the Red Cross in Apatin, and after three or four days she also went to TO headquarters in Dalj to ask about Stevan.³¹⁰ There, from a member of the Serbian TO, Milorad Stričević³¹¹, she learned that Stevan was at the TO headquarters and that he was being held because "Stevan was a Croatian spy".³¹²

306 Annex for the theme: "The actions of militant groups from the positions of Serbian extremism - the SCM, the Serbian Guard, Beli orlovi (the White Eagles), Ravna Gora movement, and others", MUP RS RDB, Centar RDB Sremska Mitrovica, exhibit no. D01289, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 5.

307 In 1991, Dalj was a part of the municipality of Osijek, while today it belongs to the municipality of Erdut.

308 Statement of the witness S.Đ. given to the HLC, December 2012; Decision of the Municipal Court in Apatin to declare missing persons dead, February 14, 2002, HLC database.

309 Ibid.

310 Ibid.

311 Statement of the witness S.Đ. given to the HLC, December 2012; Confirmation of persons taken from the Dalj police station on behalf of the Defence Staff of Dalj, Milorad Stričević dated 5 October 1991, exhibit no. P00315, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 1; Testimony of C-1175 before the ICTY in the *Milošević* Case of August 27, 2003, p. 25464.

312 Statement of the witness S.Đ. given to the HLC, December 2012.



Milorad Stričević, who was known as “Staljin” from Dalj was a member of the so-called “space police” or security unit within the Dalj TO. This unit was in charge of detaining and investigating the non-Serb population in Dalj.³¹³ Stričević was directly subordinate to Željko Ražnatović Arkan, the SDG chief commander.³¹⁴

During the conversation, Milorad Stričević told the wife of Stevan Đurkov that she could come the next day and that she would then be able to see her husband.³¹⁵

The next day, Stevan Đurkov’s wife went again to the TO headquarters in Dalj, but she did not find Stričević there. The people who were there pretended to have never heard of Stričević.³¹⁶

According to the report of the SDB Department in Sombor of October 15, 1991, Milorad Stričević passed to the security organs of the JNA inaccurate information that some Sonta citizens were preparing an assassination of a colonel of the JNA and the therefore members of the JNA military police came to Sonta and arrested several citizens.³¹⁷

At the trial of Goran Hadžić before the ICTY, Zlatko Antunović testified that a man from Sonta was reported to Stričević because he had raised a Croatian flag at his café.³¹⁸

For the crimes in Dalj, several proceedings were undergoing before the courts in Croatia in which the Dalj TO members were charged; however, none of the proceedings were regarding the disappearance of Stevan Đurkov.³¹⁹

Milorad Stričević was killed in Dalj in 1992.³²⁰

Stevan Đurkov is currently on the ICRC list of missing persons.³²¹

313 Information, Unauthorized murders of captured members of the ZNG and other persons, General Major Milan Babić of October 18, 1991, exhibit no. 00718, *Hadžić*, pp. 1-2; Judgment of the Osijek County Court in the *Željko Čizmić* Case of December 27, 2011, p. 4.

314 Public redacted version of Prosecution final trial brief February 28, 2013., *Stanišić and Simatović*, para. 993.

315 Statement of the witness S.Đ. given to the HLC, December 2012; Decision of the Municipal Court in Apatin to declare missing persons dead, February 14, 2002, HLC database.

316 Statement of the witness S.Đ. given to the HLC, September 2012.

317 Information from SDB Sombor, Provincial SUP APV, dated October 15, 1991, exhibit no. P00334, *Stanišić and Simatović*, p. 2.

318 Testimony of Zlatko Antunović before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case of October 17, 2012, p. 240.

319 Crime in Dalj, available at <https://www.documenta.hr/en/zlo%C4%8Din-u-dalju.htm>, Crime in Dalj 2, available at <https://www.documenta.hr/en/crime-in-dalj-2.html>, Crime in Dalj 3, available at <https://www.documenta.hr/en/crime-in-dalj-3.html>, Crime in Dalj 4, available at <https://www.documenta.hr/en/crime-in-dalj-iv.html>, accessed October 19, 2018.

320 Crime in Dalj, Discussion Reports, Center for Peace Osijek of June 2, 2011, available at <http://www.centar-za-mir.hr/en/ps/zlocin-u-dalju/>, accessed October 5, 2018; Testimony of Gorana Rakić before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case of November 20, 2012, p. 1526; Testimony of Višnja Bilić before the ICTY in the *Hadžić* Case of April 11, 2013, p. 3838.

321 National Record of Missing Persons MUP RH, available at http://www.nestali.hr/default.aspx?id=22&osoba_id=2406, accessed on October 5, 2018; Persons missing in connection with the armed conflict in the Republic of Croatia ICRC, available at <https://familylinks.icrc.org/croatia/hr/pages/person-details.aspx?cid=76213>, accessed on October 5, 2018.



ii. The disappearance of Mato and Ivica Abjanović

Croats Mato (b. 1950) and Ivica (b. 1952) Abjanović, brothers from the village of Morović, were taken away on October 23, 1991. And that is when they were last seen alive.

On October 23 1991, four uniformed and armed men arrived at the house of the Abjanović family in the village of Morović, in the municipality of Šid. They came with two gray cars bearing JNA registration marks. At that moment, there were in the house Mato Abjanović, his mother Marija, his wife Gordana, and their minor children.³²²

After the uniformed persons had surrounded the house, they entered in and asked Mato Abjanović to come to the police station in Šid for an interview. They said that they had a warrant for his arrest, but they did not show it to the Abjanović family.³²³ Mato Abjanović did not resist, although he said that he did not feel guilty for any reason and that he did not want to go to the police station. At that moment Mato's brother, Ivica Abjanović, came in from the neighbouring yard to the house.³²⁴

When it became clear that the uniformed persons would not give up their intention to take Mato to a hearing, Ivica Abjanović decided to go with them. After that, Mato and Ivica entered the official JNA cars and were driven towards Šid. That was when they were last seen.³²⁵

That same evening, on October 23, 1991, Mato's wife and son went to the Šid police station to inquire about what had happened. His wife spoke with the then Chief of Police in Šid, Nedeljko Makivić, who told her that he had not issued an official order for the arrest of the Abjanović brothers.³²⁶

The next morning, Gordana Abjanović went again to the SUP building, this time with Marija Abjanović, mother of Mato and Ivica. Police Chief Makivić then told them that the Abjanović brothers had been taken away by "the other side". When asked by Marija Abjanović which side that was, and what was going on, the chief told her - "The Ustashas took them", suggesting that the Croatian side was responsible for their fate.³²⁷

The Abjanović family have never received official information about what happened to Mato and Ivica. In an attempt to reach an answer, they visited the camps for the Croats in Serbia that they

322 Statement of V.A. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricanepribe.com/zrtva/vesna-a/>, accessed on December 9, 2018; Submission of the attorney of the injured parties submitted to the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive.

323 Submission of the attorney of the injured parties submitted to the District Public Prosecutor's Office Sremska Mitrovica on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive.

324 Statement of V.A. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricanepribe.com/zrtva/vesna-a/>, accessed on December 9, 2018; Submission of the attorney of the injured parties submitted to the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive.

325 Statement of V.A. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricanepribe.com/zrtva/vesna-a/>, accessed on December 9, 2018.

326 Ibid.

327 Ibid; Report by M.Z. from April 23, 2007, HLC Archive.



had heard off, they went to Niš, Zrenjanin, Stajićevo, Begejci and Sremska Mitrovica. Different information has been received, among other things, that they were handed over by the SUP in Šid to Serbian paramilitary units from Tovarnik.³²⁸ That information has never been confirmed.

The Abjanović family stayed in Morović until 1993, when their two family houses were exchanged for properties in Croatia and they moved away.³²⁹

After last being seen in a house in Morović, Mato and Ivica Abjanović are still filed as missing persons in the ICRC records.³³⁰

Their fate is still unknown and no one has been found responsible for their disappearance, although the Abjanović family filed a criminal complaint in the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica in 2004. The prosecution rejected the criminal complaint, stating that an instance of relative obsolescence for prosecutions had occurred.³³¹

iii. Murder of Krešimir Herceg

Krešimir Herceg (b. 1938), a Croatian from the village of Višnjićevo, was murdered on November 7, 1991. The murder took place at the bridge on the Šarkudin Canal at the entrance to Višnjićevo from the direction of the village of Morović.

The murder of Krešimir Herceg was committed by Đorđe Dvoranac from Višnjićevo, by his own confession.³³² The circumstances of the murder itself have not been fully clarified and there are two versions of the event.

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328 Statement of V.A. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center available at <http://www.neispricanepribe.com/zrtva/vesna-a/>, accessed on December 9, 2018.

329 Ibid.

330 National Record of Missing Persons MUP RH, available at <http://www.nestali.hr/default.aspx?id=21>, accessed on September 20, 2018; Persons missing in connection with the armed conflict in the Republic of Croatia ICRC, available at <https://familylinks.icrc.org/croatia/hr/pages/search-persons.aspx>, accessed on September 20, 2018.

331 In its research, the HLC found that the prosecutor dismissed the application without justification based in law; the prosecutor, when calculating the statute of limitation, proceeded from the criminal offence of murder, but in this particular case it was a grave murder, since the applicable Criminal Code of RS predicts that the intentional deprivation of life of several persons is severe murder, and the punishment is longer, and therefore the time for the statute of limitation is also longer. The HLC notified the District Public Prosecutor's Office, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the War Crimes Prosecutor's Office of this. Stated according to: Report of M.Z. from April 23, 2007, HLC Archive; Report on the disappearance of the Abjanović brothers, M.V., from October 13, 2008, HLC Archive; Submission of the attorney of the injured parties submitted to the District Public Prosecutor's Office Sremska Mitrovica on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive; Submission of the attorney of the injured parties in the case before the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica submitted to the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive; Submission of the attorney of the injured parties in the case before the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica sent to the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor on October 31, 2008, HLC Archive.

332 Criminal complaint KU 945/91 for the murder in Višnjićevo, Đorđe Dvoranac, November 9, 1991, p. 1.



Dorđe Dvoranac was a member of the Višnjićevo TO. In the evening of November 7, 1991, Dvoranac remained alone at the guard's position at the entrance to Morović from the direction of Višnjićevo, near the bridge on the Šarkudin Canal. At around 8 p.m., Dvoranac informed the MZ Višnjićevo that he "shot at an unknown person who did not stop at any of his warnings."³³³

On the same day, duty officers of Višnjićevo local community informed the Šid SUP that the body of NN was not found because it had fallen into the water, and that they could not with certainty claim that the NN person was murdered. That evening, the police performed an investigation at the bridge on the Šarkudin Canal where the casings were found. The body of Krešimir Herceg was found the next day, November 8, 1991, in the canal.³³⁴

Dorđe Dvoranac was arrested on November 7, 1991 at around 11 p.m. Two days later, a criminal complaint was filed against him with the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica. In the criminal complaint it was stated that "[a]ccording to the statements of villagers of Višnjićevo, several times and repeatedly Herceg spoke about himself as a great Croat, insulted his acquaintances and neighbours, and directed threats at the Roma people of Višnjićevo, saying that he would bring the Ustasha to cut their throats, and similar provocations. It is assumed that at this time Krešimir also wanted to prove that, without anybody's knowledge or approval, and whenever he wanted to, he could come in and out of the village, unseen; but when he was spotted, he tried to escape - and then, on this occasion, he lost his life."³³⁵

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Dorđe Dvoranac was released from custody after two days. The following year, the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica rejected this criminal complaint.³³⁶

On December 12, 2005, at 9 p.m., on B92 television, an "Insider" show was broadcast about the murder of Krešimir Herceg in Višnjićevo. According to what the locals told the "Insider" journalists' team, Dorđe Dvoranac brought Krešimir Herceg out from the FC "Hajduk" café in the center of the village, led him through the village beating, insulting and dragging him along the way to the Šarkudin Canal, where he killed him.³³⁷ These allegations were not new, since several witnesses during the investigation stated that they had heard about it that evening when Krešimir Herceg was killed, or just after the event; but this information was never confirmed.³³⁸

After broadcasting the "Insider" show, an additional investigation was conducted by Ratko Galečić, District Public Prosecutor in Sremska Mitrovica, who concluded that no new data and evidence had been collected on the basis of which criminal proceedings could be initiated. Prosecutor Galečić

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid, p. 2.

³³⁵ Ibid, p. 3.

³³⁶ Official Note, District Public Prosecutor's Office, Sremska Mitrovica, April 13, 2006, HLC Data Base, p. 1.

³³⁷ "Murder in Višnjićevo," *Insider*, December 12, 2005, available (in Serbian) at <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/tema/616/>, accessed October 17, 2018.

³³⁸ Official Note, District Public Prosecutor's Office, Sremska Mitrovica, April 13, 2006, HLC Data Base, p. 11.



found in the investigation that there were no direct witnesses of the event, and that everyone who was questioned regarding the event had heard about it either from someone else or from a person who was no longer alive. He assessed the “Insider’s” claims as unfounded.³³⁹

iv. Murder of Živan Marušić

On February 23, 1992, Živan Marušić (b. 1939), a Croat from the village of Jamena in the municipality of Šid, was murdered in the courtyard of his family house. An inhabitant of Jamena, Zoran Filipović, was convicted of this murder.³⁴⁰

Zoran Filipović had been mobilized into the reserve forces of JNA since the beginning of the conflict in Croatia. When he returned to the village, he was a member of the TO in the village of Jamena. In early February 1992, Filipović heard rumours that Marušić had a radio station and that he kept up communication with the Croats. He suspected Marušić of “belonging to the Ustasha organization and having a radio station with which he maintains communications with the said organization.”³⁴¹

In the first half of February 1992, Filipović went armed to Živan Marušić’s house, in an attempt to search for the radio station he had heard about. In the house he found Marušić’s wife, and he asked her whether they had a radio station. When she said they did not, Filipović searched the auxiliary buildings, but found nothing. After this, he left the house.³⁴²

In the evening hours of February 23, 1992, Zoran Filipović, armed with a semi-automatic rifle, drove his car to Živan Marušić’s house. He jumped over the fence and walked into the courtyard, where he hid in the dark. When Marušić came by, Filipović fired several shots at him, three of which hit him. Živan Marušić died on the spot. After the murder, Zoran Filipović walked out of the yard and headed in an unknown direction with his car.³⁴³

A day later, on February 24, 1992, Zoran Filipović was arrested.³⁴⁴

In September 1992, Zoran Filipović was sentenced to six years in prison for the murder of Živan Marušić.³⁴⁵

339 Ibid, pp. 11 and 12.

340 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Zoran Filipović* Case of September 8, 1992; Statement of the witness I.M. given to the HLC, November 2018.

341 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Zoran Filipović* Case of September 8, 1992, p. 7.

342 Ibid.

343 Ibid.

344 Ibid.

345 Ibid.



v. Murder of Franjo, Ana and Jozo Matijević

Members of the Croatian family Matijević - Ana (b. 1932), Jozo (b. 1931) and their son Franjo (b. 1971) - from the Kukujevci village in Šid municipality, were killed in the village of Mohovo in Croatia on an unknown date sometime after April 20, 1992, when they were taken away from their family home.

On April 20, 1992, Ana and Jozo Matijević, together with their son Franjo, a minor, were preparing to move out from Kukujevci. Several members of their family had already moved out of Kukujevci because of the threats and pressures Croats suffered in the village. The Matijevićs' possessions were loaded onto a truck in the yard of a family house in Proleterska Street.³⁴⁶

According to the testimony of the neighbours, in the courtyard of the Matijević family on the same day, there was a man from Žlebina, in the municipality of Virovitica, with whom they had exchanged houses. Then dozens of people came into the yard – people who at that time were going through the village and taking things from the Croats who were moving away. Among them there was a man nicknamed “Major” [the Major], a Serb who had moved to Kukujevci. The people asked Matijević to hand over the cement mixer that had already been loaded into the truck. Jozo Matijević paid them 400 deutsche mark to permit him to keep it. Then the man nicknamed “Major” slapped Ana Matijević, there in the yard. After that, “Major” and the other attackers left.³⁴⁷

60 The Matijevićs planned to go to Croatia on April 20, 1992 late in the evening.³⁴⁸ But, at around 11 p.m., the home of the Matijević family was surrounded by a dozen armed persons who came to the house in two cars –a white *Citroen* and a yellow *Mercedes*. According to the testimony of the locals, among these people there were Nikola Krtinić, a taxi driver from Šid, a man with the nickname “*Golub*” [Peageon] who had a liquor store in Šid, and Petar Živković from Sot.³⁴⁹ One neighbour of the Matijević family heard that something was happening and went out of her house to see what was going on. One of the armed men told this woman to return to her house, and added „Do you want to be finish?” [Translator’s note: “Do you want to be sent away or killed as well?”].³⁵⁰

After that event, Franjo, Ana and Jozo Matijević were never seen again. A day later, on April 21, 1992, the driver of the truck took the possessions of the Matijević family to Slavonski Brod, saying to Ana and Jozo’s sons, who were waiting for their parents, that their parents were being held up at the border.³⁵¹

346 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015.

347 Ibid; Statement of the witness M.C. given to the HLC, April 2013.

348 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015.

349 Ibid; Petar Živković, teacher from Sot, was the fourth accused in the case concerning the murders of the Oskomić family in Kukujevci and Stevan Krošlak in Sot. In this process, Živković was acquitted of provoking racial, religious and national hatred, discord and intolerance. See: The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996.

350 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015.

351 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015 and October 2018.



The bodies of Franjo, Ana and Jozo Matijević were exhumed on April 30, 1998 from a mass grave in the village of Mohovo near Ilok in Croatia, about 35 km from Kukujevac.³⁵² Jozo and Franjo were found with their hands tied behind their backs. During the identification, it was discovered that they had been killed at close range by bullets from a hunting rifle. No visible injuries were found on the mortal remains of Ana Matijević.³⁵³

No one was prosecuted for the murder of the Matijević family. The HLC does not have information on whether an investigation into the murder of the Matijević family was conducted. On October 16, 2018, the HLC filed a criminal complaint with the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor (OWCP) of the Republic of Serbia against several unknown persons for the murder of three members of the Matijević family.³⁵⁴

On November 14, 2018, the OWCP dismissed the HLC's criminal complaint, on the grounds that the criminal offence of crimes against humanity was not prescribed as a criminal offence at the time of the 1992 events.³⁵⁵

vi. Murder of Mijat Štefanac

Mijat Štefanac (b. 1951), a Croat from the village of Hrtkovci, was killed on June 28, 1992, in the place called Golomača, between Nikinci and Hrtkovci, in the municipality of Ruma in Vojvodina.³⁵⁶

The body of Mijat Štefanac was found on the following morning, June 29, 1992, by the SUP in Ruma. On the same day, six people were arrested for murder. They were detained. On September 22, 1992, the District Public Prosecutor's Office in Sremska Mitrovica filed an indictment against Mladen Kekerović, Momčilo Vidaković, Branislav Kalinić, Pera Lukač, Petar Žegarac and Dragan Lazarević. All these persons are Serbs who had fled from Croatia prior to that event.³⁵⁷

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352 The mortal remains of Martin Panković, a Croatian civilian from Bogdanovci in Croatia, were found in the same grave, see: Mass graves in Croatia, Center for Peace Osijek, available at http://www.centar-za-mir.hr/uploads/masovne_grobnice_u_RH_1995_2005_karta.pdf, accessed September 18, 2018; Opening of the memorials at the location of the "Mohovo" mass grave of victims from the Homeland War, available (in Croatian) at: <http://pozega.sdp.hr/aktualno/otkrivanje-spomenobiljezja-na-lokaciji-mohovo-masovne-grobnice-zrtava-iz-domovinskog-rata/>, accessed September 18, 2018.

353 Statement of the witness A.M. given to the HLC, September 2015.

354 Criminal charges for the murder of the Matijević family in April 1992, October 16, 2018, the HLC, available at <http://www.hlc-rc.org/?p=35719&lang=de>, accessed October 23, 2018.

355 War Crimes Prosecutor's Office Notice on the dismissal of the criminal charges of November 14, 2018, HLC Database. The HLC's position is that the existing legal framework in Serbia allows criminal proceedings to be conducted for crimes against humanity.

356 "Uhapšeni osumnjičeni za ubistvo u Hrtkovcima" [Suspects arrested for murder in Hrtkovci], *Politika*, July 2, 1992; „Ubistvo u Hrtkovcima“ [Murder in Hrtkovci], *Sremske novine*, July 8, 1992; Judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Mladen Kekerović et al.* Case dated November 18, 1992, pp. 2-3.

357 "Uhapšeni osumnjičeni za ubistvo u Hrtkovcima" [Suspects arrested for murder in Hrtkovci], *Politika*, July 2, 1992; „Političko ili obično nasilje“ [Political or common violence], *Borba*, July 3, 1992; „Ubistvo u Hrtkovcima“ [Murder in Hrtkovci], *Sremske novine*, July 8, 1992; Judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Mladen Kekerović et al.* Case dated November 18, 1992, p. 8.



During the trial against the six indictees, it was established that on June 28, 1992, at about 5 p.m., Mladen Kekerović, a refugee from Grubišno Polje, brought Mijat Štefanac to Nikinci. During the drive from Hrtkovci to Nikinci, Štefanac, who was drunk, pronounced his dissatisfaction with the arrival of Serbs from Croatia in Hrtkovci, cursed the Serbs for forcing him out of his house, and kept saying that he was a Croat.³⁵⁸

Kekerović told him to cease, because he was a Serb. After that, they went together to the “Točak” café in Nikinci, where they sat in the company of several more persons. Štefanac kept saying that he was Croat, that he would go to Hungary, and that the Serbs would see bad times when the Croats returned. After that, the persons in whose company they had been sitting took off, smashing glasses and pouring drink over his head.³⁵⁹

At around 8 p.m., Štefanac left the “Točak” café and asked Mladen Kekerović to drive him to Hrtkovci. Kekerović accepted. Besides the two of them, Momčilo Vidaković, a Serb from Grubišno Polje, also entered the vehicle. During the drive, the argument continued, after which Kekerović stopped the car and told Štefanac to get out of the car. When he did, Kekerović kicked his head and body several times. Then Kekerović started up the engine and drove over Mijat Štefanac’s body with the car twice, which led to Štefanac’s death.³⁶⁰

Kekerović was sentenced to four years and six months in prison for the murder.³⁶¹ The other persons included in the indictment were acquitted.³⁶²

Although the indictment charged all those persons with the criminal offence of violence and violation of the freedoms and rights of citizens of other ethnic groups or nationalities,³⁶³ the court still ruled that Mladen Kekerović committed manslaughter and reasoned that it was not established that the accused had offended, humiliated or abused Mijat Štefanac.³⁶⁴ “Objectively looking at the facts, it has been concluded that the injured person was insulting Serbs, and especially Serb refugees; bearing in mind the situation and atmosphere in the café, and the fact that the injured person was in the company of the accused who were refugees from the territory of the former Republic of Croatia, for a normal man it could not have been expected that the accused would behave differently than they did behave; better said, it was not to be expected that the indictees would remain indifferent in such a situation and not manifest against their being insulted.”³⁶⁵

358 Judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in *Mladen Kekerović et al.* Case dated November 18, 1992, pp. 2-3.

359 Ibid, p. 3.

360 Ibid.

361 At the time, Kekerović was also convicted of unauthorized procuring, holding, carrying, and exchanging of weapons and ammunition to 6 months in prison, and was sentenced to a single prison sentence of 4 years and 9 months.

362 Judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Mladen Kekerović et al.* Case dated November 18, 1992, p. 27.

363 Indictment by the District Public Prosecutor’s Office against *Mladen Kekerović et al.* dated September 22, 1992, Count 1.

364 Judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Mladen Kekerović et al.* Case dated November 18, 1992, pp. 25 and 26.

365 Ibid, p. 25.



vii. Murder of Nada and Stevan Guštin

The husband and wife Nada and Stevan Guštin³⁶⁶ were murdered in their family house in the town of Bač, in Vojvodina, in the night of 2nd and 3rd of August, 1992.³⁶⁷ Stevan was a Croat, and Nada a Serb.³⁶⁸

Stevan Guštin was a photographer in Bač. On August 2, 1992, he was engaged to take pictures at a village celebration in the neighbouring village of Mali Bač. His wife, Nada, stayed alone at home.³⁶⁹

Unknown perpetrators entered the house that night and killed Nada. They were waiting for Stevan to return, and then killed him too. On the basis of the testimony of the witness, it was ascertained that the Guštins were slaughtered.³⁷⁰

Criminal police from Novi Sad conducted an investigation, but the perpetrators were never found and nobody was held responsible for this murder.³⁷¹

viii. Murder of Stevan Krošlak

On April 9, 1993, in the evening, Stevan Krošlak (b. 1940) was killed in the village of Sot, Šid municipality. Krošlak was Slovak by nationality, but was perceived as someone who had helped the “Ustashes”, and was killed within the context of the plan “in the territory of FR Yugoslavia, in the villages of Western Srem predominantly inhabited by Croats and other non-Serbs, with serious threats against and pressure on Croats and other non-Serbs, to intimidate them in order that they leave those villages, thereby speeding up the eviction of Croats and other pro-Croat non-Serb nationalities.”³⁷²

The murder was committed by Pavle Drašković from the village of Vrapce in the municipality of Medveđa in the south of Serbia, and Goran Vuković, nicknamed *Šojka*, from Đuriselo in the municipality of Kragujevac, who were members of a volunteer unit from Serbia that fought on the territory of Croatia.³⁷³

366 The year of birth unknown to the HLC.

367 Statement of the witness M.G. given to the HLC, November 2018; Data of the Community of Croats expelled from Srijem, Bačka and Banat (1991) dated November 13, 2018.

368 Statement of the witness M.G. given to the HLC, November 2018.

369 Statement of the witness M.G. given to the HLC, November 2018; Data of the Community of Croats expelled from Srijem, Bačka and Banat (1991) dated November 13, 2018.

370 Ibid.

371 Criminal police from Novi Sad conducted an investigation, but the perpetrators were never found and nobody was found responsible for this murder.

372 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996, pp. 1 and 3.

373 Statement of the witness J.K. given to the HLC, December 2012; The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996, p. 1 - 3.



The murder of Stevan Krošlak was part of the plan that Drašković and Vuković had agreed with the commander of their volunteer unit, Milan Nikolić, known as *Đeneral* (The General) from the village of Ranilović near Arandelovac.³⁷⁴

On April 9, 1993, Drašković and Vuković came to the village of Sot with the intention of pressuring Stevan Krošlak to move out. Previously, they had collected information from Krošlak's neighbour, school teacher Petar Živković, who was also an SRS official, and who had previously participated in the intimidation of the non-Serb population of Šid municipality [see page 19, 42 and 60].³⁷⁵

Drašković and Vuković came armed to Stevan Krošlak's property. When they saw him in the yard, Pavle Drašković fired three bullets, two of which hit Krošlak in the back. Shortly afterwards, Stevan Krošlak died.³⁷⁶

Pavle Drašković, Goran Vuković, Milan Nikolić and Petar Živković were tried before the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in a joint proceeding for the murder of Stevan Krošlak and members of the families Oskomić and Tomić [see page 64]. Drašković, Vuković and Nikolić were convicted for provoking and inciting racial, national and religious hatred, discord and intolerance. Drašković was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the murder of Stevan Krošlak.³⁷⁷ The verdict was confirmed by the Supreme Court of Serbia on September 13, 1999.³⁷⁸

ix. Murder of Marija Tomić, Agica and Nikola Oskomić

Husband and wife Nikola (b. 1940) and Agica (b. 1943) Oskomić, and Nikola's aunt Marija Tomić (b. 1906), inhabitants of Kukujeveci village in the municipality of Šid, were murdered in their family house on the night between 29th and 30th of July 1993.

That night, Milan Nikolić, known as *Đeneral* (The General), drove Pavle Drašković and Goran Vuković, nicknamed *Šojka*, to the house of the Oskomić family in Vladimir Nazor Street in Kukujeveci.³⁷⁹

At that moment, there were Agica and Nikola Oskomić and Nikola's aunt Marija Tomić in the house. Drašković and Vuković came armed into an auxiliary building and found Nikola Oskomić in the kitchen. Vuković pointed a *Scorpion* pistol at Oskomić, and Drašković held a crowbar in his hands. Vuković and Drašković asked Nikola Oskomić whether it was true that his son was in Zagreb and why he had not yet moved out of Kukujeveci. During that conversation, Drašković repeatedly hit Nikola Oskomić on the head with the crowbar. After that, Drašković and Vuković cut two cables and

374 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996, pp. 2-3.

375 Ibid, p. 3.

376 Ibid, pp. 3 and 4.

377 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996, pp. 84 and 85.

378 The judgment of the Supreme Court of Serbia in Belgrade in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of September 13, 1999.

379 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* Case of April 26, 1996, p. 4.



tied his arms and legs, and put a cloth in his mouth so that he could not shout. Still tied, Nikola was dragged into the pantry to the kitchen. There they pushed him down the stairs.³⁸⁰

Drašković and Vuković then headed to the main house, where Agica Oskomić and Nikola's aunt Marija Tomić were. Upon entering the house, Pavle Drašković hit Agica several times with the crowbar, after which Vuković shot her with the *Scorpion* gun in the back of the head. Agica Oskomić died on the spot. At that moment Nikola's aunt, Marija Tomić, came out into the hallway, so Vuković killed her in the same way.³⁸¹

Vuković then left the house and returned to the ancillary building, where he killed the still bound Nikola Oskomić with three gun shots.³⁸²

After the murder of the Oskomić family, Drašković and Vuković fled Milan Nikolić was supposed to wait for them in the agreed place, but he did not show up, so they left Kukujevci on foot.³⁸³

Goran Vuković was sentenced for the murder of members of the Oskomić and Tomić families. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison for other crimes as well (provoking national, racial and religious hatred, discord and intolerance)³⁸⁴ [for more about the process in which Pavle Drašković and Milan Nikolić were convicted alongside him, see page 64].

x. Murder of Marija Purić

Marija Purić (b. 1966), a Croat from Golubinci village in Stara Pazova municipality was murdered on February 6, 1994, in her family house.

From 1992, the Purić family had been exposed to telephone threats. Usually, after midnight, someone would call up and curse "their mother of Ustasha" and threaten to slaughter them. One month before the murder of Marija Purić, an unknown person called the Purić family over the phone and asked them to leave 2,000 DM the next day, under the brick at the entrance of their house. The Purić family refused to do so.³⁸⁵

On February 6, 1994, in the late evening hours, an unknown person entered the house of the Purić family and killed Marija Purić in the dining room. She was stabbed. In other rooms of the house at that moment were Marija's mother and brother. Marija's father was in the barn. When they heard the noise, Marija's mother and brother rushed to the dining room where they found Marija covered in blood. They immediately drove her in a private car to the Stara Pazova Health Center, where it was concluded that Marija had died.³⁸⁶

380 Ibid, p. 4.

381 Ibid, pp. 4-5.

382 Ibid, p. 5.

383 Ibid, p. 5.

384 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Pavle Drašković et al.* case of April 26, 1996, p. 6-8.

385 Statement of the witness M.P. given to the HLC, October 2018.

386 Ibid; Data of the Community of expelled Croats from Srijem, Bačka and Banat (1991) dated November 13.



On the same evening, police from Stara Pazova conducted an investigation in the house of the Purić family. In the following days, police repeatedly questioned the father and brother of Marija Purić. The questioning was conducted in a tendentious manner, which, among other things, was indicated by the question posed to them: Why did they hate Serbs? For this reason, the brother of Marija Purić concluded that the police suspected him of the murder of his sister, for which reason he left Serbia.³⁸⁷

For the murder of Marija Purić no one has ever been prosecuted.

xi. Murder of Živko Litrić

Živko Litrić (b. 1936), a Croat from Kukujevc, was killed on August 12, 1995 in his family house in this village in Vuk Karadžić Street. Vilim Virt, refugee from Croatia, a Croat married to a Serb woman, who came to Kukujevc in 1992, was sentenced for this murder.

After his immigration into Kukujevc, Vilim Virt has been engaged to take care of Serb refugees. As he himself was saying, he was prepared to threaten the Croats to move out from Kukujevc. Before the investigating judge and at the Litrić murder trial, he said that he killed Litrić because “he behaved as pro-Croatian, or rather, as a great Croat, he listened Radio Zagreb when drunk, and cursed their ‘mother of Chetniks’”. Virt also claimed that he was mostly hit because Litrić broadcasted music at a time when refugees came to Kukujevc.³⁸⁸ Virt was, according to his own admission, a member of the SRS since coming to Serbia.³⁸⁹

On August 12, 1995, late at night, Vilim Virt entered Živko Litrić’s house between 11 p.m. and midnight and found him sleeping. He punched him twice in the head causing Litrić lost consciousness. Virt then pulled out his trouser belt, made a loop and strangled Litrić.³⁹⁰

Two days after the murder, Vilim Virt, with the support of the SRS deputy head in Kukujevc, Petar Marković, went to Zvornik and registered as a volunteer in the Serbian units in BiH.³⁹¹

387 Ibid; Statement of the witness M.V. given to the Vojvodina Civic Center, available at <http://www.neispricanepribe.com/zrtva/milan-vidakovic/>, accessed November 23, 2018.

388 Amendments to the KU-203/95 criminal complaint regarding the KD committed against Litrić Živko from the Kukujevc dated August 15, 1995, stated according to: Vojislav Šešelj, Afera Hrtkovci i ustaška kurva Nataša Kandić [The affair of Hrtkovci and Ustasha bitch Nataša Kandić], Belgrade, Serbian Radical Party, 2007, p. 984-986; the judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Vilim Virt and Stevo Mrmoš* case of June 5, 1996, p. 4-5.

389 Statement of Vilim Virt given on August 15, 1996 in SUP Sremska Mitrovica, stated according to: Vojislav Šešelj, Afera Hrtkovci i ustaška kurva Nataša Kandić [The affair of Hrtkovci and Ustasha bitch Nataša Kandić], Belgrade, Serbian Radical Party, 2007, p. 987.

390 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Vilim Virt and Stevo Mrmoš* case of June 5, 1996, p. 1-2.

391 Statement of Vilim Virt given on August 15, 1996 in SUP Sremska Mitrovica, stated according to: Vojislav Šešelj, Afera Hrtkovci i ustaška kurva Nataša Kandić [The affair of Hrtkovci and Ustasha bitch Nataša Kandić], Belgrade, Serbian Radical Party, 2007, p. 987.



Upon his arrival in Zvornik, Virt acknowledged that he had killed Litrić in Kukujevc. The military authorities of Zvornik immediately informed the SUP of Sremska Mitrovica, after which Virt was arrested.³⁹²

In 1996, Vilim Virt was sentenced for the murder of Živko Litrić to ten years in prison, while Stevo Mrmoš, who helped him conceal evidence, was sentenced for the criminal act of assisting the perpetrator to six-month in prison.³⁹³

VI. Trial of Vojislav Šešelj before the ICTY and reactions to the verdict

On January 15, 2003, the ICTY Prosecution issued an indictment against SRS leader Vojislav Šešelj for crimes against humanity and violation of the laws and customs of war in the area of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina, that is, the village of Hrtkovci, Vojvodina. The indictment alleges that in his public statements, Šešelj called for expulsion of the Croat population from Vojvodina, specifically from the village of Hrtkovci in the municipality of Ruma, which encouraged his followers, as well as representatives of local authorities, to conduct a campaign of persecution of the Croats.³⁹⁴

On March 31, 2016, the ICTY Trial Chamber acquitted Vojislav Šešelj from all counts of crimes against humanity and violations of laws or customs of war.³⁹⁵

The Appeals Chamber of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (MICT) partially revoked the acquittal of Vojislav Šešelj and found him guilty of inciting persecution (forced displacement), deportation, and other inhumane acts (forcible transfer), as a crime against humanity, and for the commission of persecution (violation of the right to security) as a crime against humanity in Hrtkovci in Vojvodina. The Appeals Chamber sentenced Vojislav Šešelj to 10 years in prison.³⁹⁶

The verdict of Vojislav Šešelj is also the only verdict issued before international and domestic courts for the forced eviction of Croats from Vojvodina and Hrtkovci.

It was established in the verdict that a large number of Croats were forced to leave the village immediately after the speech of Vojislav Šešelj on 6 May 1992 in Hrtkovci [see page 24]. Following the conclusion of the ICTY Appeals Chamber, this speech triggered violence against the Croatian population of Hrtkovci, which resulted in their departure.³⁹⁷ Further it was said that pressure was

392 The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Vilim Virt and Stevo Mrmoš* case of June 5, 1996, p. 9.

393 After the murder of Živko Litrić, Stevo Mrmoš gave Virt some clothes to change and took his clothes away, see: The judgment of the District Court in Sremska Mitrovica in the *Vilim Virt and Stevo Mrmoš* case of June 5, 1996, p. 3.

394 ICTY Prosecutor's Indictment v. *Vojislav Šešelj*, of January 15, 2003, available at <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/seselj/ind/bcs/ses-ii030115b.htm>, accessed December 22, 2018.

395 ICTY Trial Judgment in the *Šešelj* case of March 31, 2016, p. 104-105.

396 IRMCT Appeal Judgment in the *Šešelj* case of April 11, 2018, para. 181.

397 Ibid, para. 146-147.



exerted on the Croats to exchange their properties for the property of Serbs from Croatia, that they were subjected to harassment and intimidation. It was also established that the local authorities did nothing to protect the Croatian population and prevent their eviction.³⁹⁸

After the acquittal in the first instance verdict of the ICTY, Aleksandar Vučić, at that time the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, and former SRS deputy and member of the expert defence team in Vojislav Šešelj trial, said that the trial of Vojislav Šešelj was a political process from the beginning, and he added: “I am proud of the fact that the Government of Serbia protected the laws, that the Government of Serbia protected the dignity of the Republic of Serbia, that it protected the dignity of the citizens of the Republic of Serbia and the dignity of the citizen Šešelj.”³⁹⁹

After the verdict of the Appeals Chamber was pronounced, none of the highest state officials spoke to the public. One of the few who gave his opinion was Marijan Rističević, a deputy at the Assembly of Serbia member of the list *Aleksandar Vučić - Serbia Wins*, who said: “From I live in Srem, I can confirm that Mr. Šešelj did not commit any crime, either in Hrtkovci or in Slankamen, except for a verbal offense.”⁴⁰⁰

The SRS Deputy at the Assembly Nemanja Šarović, after the verdict to Vojislav Šešelj told that “nobody from Hrtkovci was deported” and that the Croats from Hrtkovci exchanged their property for the property of the Serbs from Croatia “because they could obtain multiple valuable for their properties” from Serbs from Zagreb, Split, Pula, Osijek and other major cities.⁴⁰¹

Vojislav Šešelj himself stated the following after the verdict: “I will now take some legal measures to oppose this judgment, but what is most important in the end is that I am proud of all my said war crimes and crimes against humanity, and in the future I am ready to repeat them.”⁴⁰²

Immediately after the pronounced verdict, civil society organizations and some members of the National Assembly asked the President of the National Assembly of Serbia and former SRS Vice President Maja Gojković to confirm the termination of the mandate of Vojislav Šešelj, from Article 88 of the Law on the Election of Members of Parliament envisages that a deputy’s mandate is terminated

398 Ibid, para. 148-150.

399 „Vučić: Štitili smo dostojanstvo građanina Šešelja” [Vučić: We were protecting the dignity of the citizen Šešelj], *NI*, available (in Serbian) at <http://rs.n1info.com/a148076/Vesti/Vesti/Vucic-o-presudi-Seselju.html>, accessed November 21, 2018.

400 „Podeljene reakcije na presudu Šešelju u Hagu” [Different Reactions to the Šešelj Verdict in The Hague], *NI*, April 11, 2018, available (in Serbian) at: <http://rs.n1info.com/a379014/Vesti/Podeljene-reakcije-na-presudu-Seselju-u-Hagu.html> accessed November 21, 2018; Deputy Marijan Rističević http://www.parlament.gov.rs/MARIJAN_RISTI%C4%8CEVI%C4%86.598.891.html

401 „Šarović on Šešelj’s Verdict: Nikakvog progona niti deportacije nije bilo”, [There was no persecution or deportation], *NI*, April 11, 2018 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScZD-55gDDM>, accessed December 10, 2018; Deputy Nemanja Šarović http://www.parlament.gov.rs/NEMANJA_%C5%A0AROVIC%C4%86.523.891.html.

402 „Šešelj osuđen na deset godina za zločine u Hrtkovcima” [Šešelj sentenced to ten years for crimes in Hrtkovci], *Radio slobodna Evropa*, April 11, 2018, available at <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/pocelo-izricanje-drugostepene-presude-seselju/29159032.html>, accessed November 22, 2018.

if, by a final court decision, the deputy is sentenced to a prison term of at least six months.⁴⁰³ However, Vojislav Šešelj's mandate is not terminated, he is still a member of the Serbian Parliament.⁴⁰⁴ Moreover, in November 2018 Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić criticized the Tribunal's work in the Šešelj case and stressed that the Tribunal "owed" Šešelj at least three years of his life because he was sentenced to ten years in prison and spent thirteen years in detention.⁴⁰⁵

403 Press Release of the HLC: "With Appeal Judgment on Vojislav Šešelj, Justice is Partially Achieved" of April 13, 2018, available at <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=35055&lang=de>; „Ne zaslužujemo da nas predstavlja ratni zločinac” [We do not deserve to be represented by a war criminal], of April 2018, available at <http://www.yihr.rs/bhs/ne-zasluzujemo-da-nas-predstavlja-ratni-zlocinac/>; „Čanak: Stigla presuda, Šešelju oduzeti mandat” [The verdict arrived, Šešelj should be without mandate], *Danas*, April 20, 2018, available at <https://www.danas.rs/politika/canak-stigla-presuda-seselju-oduzeti-mandat/>; „Radikali okružili, pretili i vređali Aleksandru Jerkov” [Radicals surrounded, threatened and insulted Aleksandra Jerkov], *Danas*, April 17, 2018, available (in Serbian) at <https://www.danas.rs/politika/jerkov-kada-ce-seselju-biti-oduzet-mandat/>.

404 Deputy prof. dr. Vojislav Šešelj, <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/narodna-skupstina-/sastav/poslanicke-grupe/predsednici-poslanickih-grupa/prof-dr-vojislav-seselj.2415.html>

405 Serbian PM: 'We are not ready' to join EU" *DW Conflict Zone*, 20:45-21:40 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-e80BQw83g> and the transcript of the interview „Brnabić to the DW journalist: „Can I say or will you be conducting an interview with yourself?” <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/ceo-transkript-intervjua-brnabic-novinaru-dw-mogu-li-ja-da-kazem-ili-cete-vi-da/vg42mmc>



Epilogue

In the period between the two population censuses, in 1991 and in 2002, the number of Croats and other non-Serb population in the territory of Vojvodina was noticeably reduced. The decrease in the Croatian population in Vojvodina is largely a consequence of the persecution of the Croatian population in the period from 1991 to 1995.⁴⁰⁶

In the report of the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities of AP Vojvodina from year 2003, it is stated that in 39 of the 45 municipalities in Vojvodina, the number of Croatians was decreased. According to the 1991 census, there were 74,808 Croats in Vojvodina, while 56,546 were registered in the 2002 census. This means that the number of Croats in Vojvodina has decreased by 18,262, that is, 24.41%.⁴⁰⁷

At the municipalities' level, the largest decrease in the share of the Croatian population in the total number of inhabitants was recorded in **Šid**, amounting to 65.5%.⁴⁰⁸

At the settlements level, the largest decrease was recorded in **Kukujevc**, village in Šid municipality, where, according to the 1991 census, 1,622 Croats lived and they accounted for 89% of the total population of the village. In 2002, the number of Croats in Kukujevci dropped to 72, or 3.2% of the total number of inhabitants of the village.⁴⁰⁹ A similar trend was observed in the neighbouring village of **Gibarac**, where the share of the Croatian population decreased from 91.4% to 7.8% of the total population, or from 768 to 91 between the two censuses.⁴¹⁰

In the territory of the municipality of **Indija**, in 1991, there were 4,650 Croats, and 1,904 of them were registered in the census in 2002, a decrease of 59.05%.⁴¹¹

The largest change in the territory of the Municipality of Indija occurred in the village of **Novi Slankamen**, where the number of Croats in 1991 was 1.953, ie 65.60% of the total population, and in 2002, the number of Croats decreased to 544, ie, to 15.74% of total population.⁴¹²

In 1991, there were 3.810 inhabitants of Croatian nationality living in the municipality of **Ruma**, while in 2002 this number was reduced to 1.987 inhabitants, that is decreased by 47.85%.⁴¹³

406 Report of the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities on the migration of the number of the Croatian national minority in AP of Vojvodina in the period 1991-2002, exhibit no. P00574, *Šešelji*, p. 2.

407 Ibid.

408 Ibid.

409 Ibid, p. 8. and 18.

410 Ibid, p. 18.

411 Ibid, p. 8.

412 Ibid, p. 12.

413 Ibid, p. 8. and 15.



As for settlements in the municipality of Ruma, the biggest change occurred in the village of **Hrtkovci**, where the number of Croats between the two censuses decreased from 1,080 to 256⁴¹⁴, i.e. by 76,3%.⁴¹⁵

In 1991, there were 3.094 inhabitants of Croatian nationality living in the municipality of **Stara Pazova**, while in 2002 this number was reduced to 1.615 inhabitants, that is decreased by 47.80%.⁴¹⁶

In 1991, 1.780 inhabitants of Croatian nationality lived in the village of **Golubinci** in Stara Pazova municipality, and in 2002 this number dropped to 799, which is a decrease of 55.16%.⁴¹⁷

The decrease in the number of Croatian population was also recorded in the following municipalities of Vojvodina: **Sremski Karlovci** by 44.79%, **Opovo** by 41.26%, **Bački Petrovac** by 34.43%, **Plandište** by 33.01%, **Bač** by 31.44%, **Sremska Mitrovica** by 31.07%, **Pančevo** by 30.97%, **Bela Crkva** by 30.77%, **Novi Sad** by 29.22% and others.⁴¹⁸

On February 27, 2004, the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina passed a Declaration calling for the return of all citizens who were forced to leave Vojvodina in the period 1990-2000.⁴¹⁹ In this Declaration, the Assembly of AP Vojvodina called upon all citizens „who were forced to leave Vojvodina in the period 1990-2000, due to political, economic and ethnic reasons, to return to Vojvodina”.⁴²⁰

The call, however, did not lead to the return of the Croats to Vojvodina, but, on the contrary, their number further decreased. In the 2011 population census, there were 47,033 Croats registered in Vojvodina, which means that their number in relation to the 2002 census was reduced by another 9,513.⁴²¹

At the time of publication of this Dossier, the events described herein are no longer a public issue in Serbia. Politicians in power rarely talk about this, media reports almost do not exist, and no crimes against Croats in the territory of Vojvodina have been memorized. Apart from the civil sector, nobody recalls the crimes committed against Vojvodina Croats.

414 Ibid, p. 15.

415 Expert Report of Ewa Tabeau - Emigration of Croats and other non-Serbs from the village of Hrtkovci, exhibit no. P00565.B, *Šešelj*, p. 31.

416 Report of the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities on the migration of the number of the Croatian national minority in AP of Vojvodina in the period 1991-2002, exhibit no. P00574, *Šešelj*, p. 2. and 8.

417 Ibid, p. 17.

418 Ibid, p. 2.

419 Declaration calling for the return of all citizens who were forced to leave Vojvodina in the period 1990-2000; the Declaration was published in the "APV Official Gazette", no. 3/2004 dated March 4, 2004.

420 Ibid.

421 Population Census 2011, national affiliation, p. 21, available at: <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2012/Pdf/G20124001.pdf>, accessed December 22, 2018.



The most represented party in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is currently the Serbian Progressive Party, whose leading positions include a large number of people who were members and officials of the Serbian Radical Party during the campaign of expulsion of Croats from Vojvodina, who advocated and led the campaign of expulsion of Croats from Vojvodina. Together with the Serbian Progressive Party, in the ruling coalition is the Socialist Party of Serbia, which was in power in the 1990's when the Croats from Vojvodina were expelled. These two political parties today form the ruling coalition in the Republic of Serbia. Serbian Radical Party of Vojislav Šešelj is the strongest opposition party in the Serbian parliament.⁴²²

422 National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia - deputies, available at <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%81%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0/%D1%81%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%B2/%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8/%D0%B0%D0%BA%D1%82%D1%83%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D1%81%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%B8%D0%B2.11.html>, accessed Decembar 22, 2018.



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REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
STATE SECURITY /DB/ DEPARTMENT
SREMSKA MITROVICA DB DEPARTMENT CENTRE
11 October 1995

Serbian Extremism

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF "ACTIVITIES OF MILITANT GROUPS EXERCISING SERBIAN EXTREMISM, SUCH AS THE SČO /Serbian Chetnik Organisation/, SERBIAN GUARD, *BELI ORLOVI* /White Eagles/, RAVNA GORA MOVEMENT AND OTHERS"

The policy of secession pursued by some federal units of the former SFRY /Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ and the ensuing war, especially in the Republic of Croatia and later in the former Republic of BH /Bosnia and Herzegovina/, gave rise to the formation of paramilitary and "volunteer" units particularly in the area of Srem and the Republic of Serbia in general, which were in most instances attached to the TO /Territorial Defence/ of Eastern Slavonia, Western Srem and Baranja.

The first such militant group emerged under the auspices of the SNO /Serbian National Renewal/ political party and was named *Dušan Silni*. It was later joined by the *White Eagles* who became an integral part of it as a so-called youth organisation. This militant formation had already become involved in combat operations by August 1991. A group numbering between 50 and 70 men was organised in the Belgrade head office and sent to the then Republic of Croatia, within the AVNOJ /Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia/ borders, where they were given infantry weapons belonging to the TO of Tovarnik, Lovas, and other places.

In October 1991, while carrying out their regular duties in the zones of responsibility of the JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/ units deployed in the territory of the RSK /Republic of Serbian Krajina/ as stipulated by their mandate, the JNA security organs gathered substantial intelligence and other information about serious crimes (murder, looting, abuse, rape, etc.) committed by volunteer units which, at the time when these crimes were committed, were in most cases attached to the Eastern Slavonia TO. However, since the JNA was primarily focused on carrying out tasks related to combat operations, and since there was no defined judicial jurisdiction, and since the majority of the perpetrators of these crimes would immediately leave their respective units (either in an organised manner or individually), these crimes were merely registered and only partially documented.

In view of the above, and in order to undertake proper measures to detect the perpetrators, our Centre forwarded all the available intelligence relating to these and

other crimes to the DB Department of the MUP /Ministry of the Interior/ of the Republic of Serbia, and particularly the crime committed on 18 October 1991 in the village of Lovas.

On that day, members of the *Dušan Silni* Detachment and members of the Valjevo TO anti-sabotage detachment committed a crime against the Croatian civilian population. They first lined up some 50 or 60 captured villagers to clear the ground of remaining ZNG /National Guard Corps/ members. The villagers were then ordered to walk in front of the TO and *Dušan Silni* members so as to serve as a human shield against ZNG fire. During reconnaissance they allegedly came across a minefield on the village road. The local guide advised the civilians to try and go around it, but they stumbled across a minefield that had been laid by members of the Valjevo Brigade. One of the captives threw himself on a mine. The mine exploded wounding three members of the *Dušan Silni* Detachment and killing some seven or eight villagers. Terrified by the explosion, several villagers started running and activated a number of mines in the process. Members of the TO and *Dušan Silni* Detachment responded by opening small-arms fire, killed 17 villagers, and wounded several others.

With regard to the above incident, our Centre has provided a list of names that might be used in criminal proceedings with relation to the said crime and be of assistance in identifying individuals from our area as potential perpetrators.

The following individuals have been identified as responsible for criminal activities in our Centre's area. These are:

- Slavko STUPAR, son of Petar, born on 3 September 1963 in Zemun, residing in Nova Pazova, Stara Pazova municipality, at 80 Đure Đakovića Street;
- Aleksandar SKOKO, aka Aca, born on 24 April 1958 in Zemun, residing in Nova Pazova, Stara Pazova municipality, 12 Pionirska Street. He changed address in 1987 and moved to Belgrade.
- Milimir ĐURIČIĆ, son of Milivoje, born on 26 April 1949 in Nova Pazova where he lives at 11 Lenjinova Street.
- Milorad BASTA of Pančevo. He was living in Nova Pazova in 1991. Following the Lovas crime, he was appointed commander of the *White Eagles*.

In the wake of this incident, the *Dušan Silni* Detachment was "disbanded" out of fear of retaliation. As we said earlier, this abandonment of TO or JNA units was done either in an organised manner or by individuals at their own initiative. They either went into hiding in the FRY /Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ or crossed over into the territory of Republika Srpska.

One cannot say that either of the two militant groups - *Dušan Silni* and *White Eagles* - had any specific political agenda in the true sense of the word. The mastermind and the architect of these groups and their actions was the SNO who attempted to score political points by relying on these units and by playing the card of patriotism. What played into their hands was the initial euphoria that prevailed among the people of the

RSK and the FRY throughout 1991 and all the way until the end of 1992. During this period they received donations from abroad, particularly from Western Europe and the USA. For the most part, the donations were provided by Serbian émigrés, with whom the SNO extremists still maintain and contacts from whom, notably those living in the UK, they have been receiving money.

Through the process of monitoring the activities of these paramilitary formations, the Sremska Mitrovica CRDB /State Security Department Centre/ has discovered that the Serbian Guard was also operating in the area in the period from 1991 to 1993. By implementing the political party platform of the SPO /Serbian Renewal Movement/, their goal was not only to become engaged in combat operations in the RSK and Republika Srpska, but also, if necessary, by working together with the SPO leadership, to topple the constitutional order of the Republic of Serbia by force. (In the said period, it was noted that members of the Serbian Guard took part in nearly all rallies organised by the SPO). The militant group set up in Srem included dozens of individuals (mainly those looking for adventure or seeking to benefit from war-profiteering). Their travels to war-torn zones were organised by the extremists' headquarters in Belgrade, while their only connection with the SPO was in terms of financial support.

In the said period, our Centre conducted an initial processing, which served as a means of monitoring these activities.

In addition to the above-mentioned militant groups, since 1993 and 1994 our Centre has been monitoring the activities of the SČO that stemmed from the political platform of the National Party. According to the information available to our Centre, the number of these individuals in our territory is negligible. They are mainly interested in war profiteering and their members act independently, mostly in the war zones in the former Republic of BH. The most prominent extremist from this group is currently being processed by the RDB.

It is characteristic of these militant organisations that they concentrate their activities outside of the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the FRY. The main purpose of their activities carried out within the territory of our Centre is to encourage the ethnic cleansing of Srem and other areas by exerting pressure on the Croats and Muslims to move out. This methodology and the mode of operation received the backing of Serbian refugees from the Republic of Croatia, which culminated in mid-1992. In that period certain places in Srem populated by Croats, particularly the municipality of Ruma and others, were under constant pressure.

Various forms of pressure were applied, from anonymous telephone threats to killings. Incidents were recorded in which armed members of the Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem TO, as well as members of paramilitary formations, came and unlawfully removed Croats from our area and then proceeded to search their houses. This caused insecurity among the citizens and mistrust in the authorities of the Republic of Serbia.

All of these acts were carried out in partnership between the militants from the above named organizations from the area of this Centre and their like-minded "fellow combatants" from the RSK and Republika Srpska.

In an effort to prevent such incidents, our Centre undertook all the measures available and took actions at the disposal of the RDB. It was done in cooperation with the RJB /Public Security Department/ and OBJV /expansion unknown/. Through assessments, our Centre offered suggestions as to how to overcome these occurrences. These assessments made by our Centre contained suggestions that judicial organs should act in a more efficient way in solving the cases relating to the pressure on people to leave their homes. It also made reference to the institutions engaged in providing for refugees. All of this was undertaken in order to implement more efficient measures for solving their problems by legal means.

In the afore-mentioned period our Centre was faced with a particular problem relating to the conduct of members of the SDG /Serbian Volunteers' Guard/ who acted in contravention of legal rules and orders issued by the MUP of the Republic of Serbia. They behaved in an arrogant and brazen manner and would not hesitate to use firearms in defiance.

If one is to view all these militant organisations in the context of the current situation, one may say that no militant organization (with the exception of the SČP who has been the subject of a separate analysis) exists in an organised form in the territory covered by the CRDB. The Sremska Mitrovica CRDB is currently conducting two operative and one initial processing of individuals from the two above-mentioned groups in relation to Serbian extremism. Each of them is covered by intelligence /?items/ coupled with the application of the OTM /operative and technical measures/.

Even though the situation in the paramilitary organizations in the period 1994-1995 can be described as latent and conditioned by both the developments in the war zones and the strategies of their founders (the opposition parties such as the SNO, SPO and NS /New Serbia/), when it comes to the domestic political arena, the focus of our Centre in the forthcoming period will be to monitor the activities not only of these organizations but of the Serbian Guard as well since it is anticipated that the activities of the SPO extremists will gain momentum and that they will continue to resort, as they did throughout this year, to perfidious methods of winning over a large number of extremists from other opposition parties, which is the subject of our timely monthly reports sent to the relevant Administration within the RDB /State Security Department/ of the MUP of the Republic of Serbia.

Made out in two copies.

Sent to:

One copy to the MUP of the RS /Republic of Serbia/, DB – 5th Administration

One copy to OE /Operative Records/

/handwritten: T4./

Republic of Serbia
 Autonomous Province of Vojvodina
 PROVINCIAL SECRETARIAT FOR
 REGULATIONS, ADMINISTRATION
 AND ETHNIC MINORITIES
 Number: 101-90-00412/2003
 Date: 20 September 2003
 N O V I S A D

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 Date 7 October 2003 Time 1000 hours
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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE AP /Autonomous Province/ OF VOJVODINA
 - Office of the Secretary -
Novi Sad

Enclosed we are sending you a REPORT ON FLUCTUATION IN THE NUMBERS OF THE CROATIAN ETHNIC MINORITY IN THE AP VOJVODINA 1991-2002 with the recommendation that it be included in the agenda of one of the forthcoming sessions of the Executive Council of the AP Vojvodina.

The report was compiled in the Provincial Secretariat for Regulations, Administration and National Minorities and its discussion is envisaged under the Work Programme of the Executive Council.

Before the session of the Executive Council of the AP Vojvodina, the Report should also be reviewed by the Commission for Inter-Ethnic Relations.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY
/a signature/
 Dr. Tamas KORHECZ
/stamp/

FLUCTUATION IN THE CROATIAN POPULATION ACCORDING TO COMPARATIVE DATA FROM THE 1991-2002 CENSUSES

According to data from the 2002 population census, 56,546 Croats lived in the AP Vojvodina, which is 2.19% of the population of the Province. Compared with the data from the 1991 census, when the number of members of this ethnic minority was 74,808, the current figure shows that the number of Croats in the Province has declined by 18,262, or 24.41%.

When comparing the data from these two censuses, we can see that there was a decline in the number of members of the Croatian ethnic community in 39 of the 45 municipalities in the AP Vojvodina, while an increase occurred in only six municipalities (Bečej, Mali Idoš, Srbobran, Subotica, Temerin and Čoka). The biggest decline in the Croatian population, which was mostly the result of a policy of persecution of the Croatian population during the years of the war in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, especially in 1991 at the time of the war operations in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, occurred in the municipality of Šid. As a municipality bordering with Croatia, Šid's Croatian population fell to only a third of that in the previous census, i.e. from 6,047 to 2,086, or, expressed in percentages, a drop of 65.50%. It is followed by the municipalities of Indija, with 59.05%, Ruma with 47.85%, Stara Pazova with 47.80%, Sremski Karlovci with 44.79%, Opovo with 41.26%, Pečinci with 40.45%, Odžaci with 34.57%, Bački Petrovac with 34.43%, Plandište with 33.01%, Bač with 31.44%, Sremska Mitrovica with 31.07%, Pančevo with 30.97%, Bela Crkva with 30.77%, Novi Sad with 29.22% etc. The greatest increase in the Croatian population was registered in the municipalities of Temerin, from 154 to 196 inhabitants, which on average amounts to an increase of 27.27%, but the greatest increase in absolute numbers was registered in the municipality of Subotica, where their number rose by 319, i.e., from 16,369 to 16,688 inhabitants.

Members of the Croatian ethnic minority live in all 45 municipalities in the Province, from the Nova Crnja municipality, where they number the fewest, i.e. 42 inhabitants, to 16,688 in Subotica, where they number the most, according to the latest census from 2002.

The municipality with the highest percentage of Croats in the Province according to the 2002 census was Subotica, with 11.25% Croats, while according to the previous census, this was Sremski Karlovci, with 18.10%.

Viewed by individual municipality, according to the latest population census, in relation to the total population of the municipality, Croats were numerically best represented in the municipalities of Subotica, with 16,688, Sombor with 8,106, Novi Sad with 6,263, Apatin with 3,766, Sremska Mitrovica with 2,547, Šid with 2,086, Ruma with 1,987, Indija with 1,904, Stara Pazova with 1,615, Bač with 1,389 and Pančevo with 1,168. Expressed in percentages, the biggest number of Croats lives in Apatin, 11.48%, Subotica, 11.25%, Bač, 8.54%, Sremski Karlovci, 8.52%, Sombor, 8.33%, Šid, 5.35% and Beočin, 4.71%.

If we view the concentration of the Croatian population from the territorial and regional aspect, both the last censuses, like those preceding them, show a more significant grouping in the north and northwest of Bačka, the west, east and north of Srem, and in the towns of Novi Sad and Pančevo.

Numerical representation of the Croatian ethnic minority in individual municipalities in relation to the total number of Croats in the Province shows that the population is distributed quite unevenly. So only four municipalities (Subotica,

Sombor, Novi Sad and Apatin) have a Croatian population which comprises more than 5% of the total number of members of this ethnic minority in the AP Vojvodina, or together, these four municipalities account for 61.59%, or nearly two thirds of the total Croatian population of the Province. Seven such municipalities were registered in the previous census and, besides the ones mentioned, include the municipalities of Šid, Ruma and Indija. According to the 2002 census, there are 11 municipalities where their share is more than 2% and they are: Subotica 29.51%, Sombor 14.34%, Novi Sad 11.08%, Apatin 6.66%, Sremska Mitrovica 4.50%, Šid 3.69%, Ruma 3.51%, Indija 3.37%, Stara Pazova 2.86%, Bač 2.46% and Pančevo 2.07%. According to the 1991 census, more than 2% of the total number of Croats also lived in these 11 municipalities: Subotica 21.88%, Sombor 11.62%, Novi Sad 11.83%, Šid 8.08%, Indija 6.22%, Apatin 5.82%, Ruma 5.09%, Sremska Mitrovica 4.94%, Stara Pazova 4.14%, Bač 2.71% and Pančevo 2.26%. All these municipalities registered a decline in the number of members of the Croatian ethnic minority, but expressed in percentages, the 2002 census registered a 0.46% increase in the number of Croats in these municipalities in comparison to the total number of Croats in the AP Vojvodina according to the 1991 census, i.e. 85.05 compared with 84.59.

According to the 1991 census, Croats lived in 423 settlements in the Province. In the next census in 2002, this number of 423 was reduced by 19 areas which had only 29 Croats between them, most often one per area. However, according to the 2002 census, there are 13 new settlements in which Croats live, with a total of 41 inhabitants of the Croatian ethnic minority, so that according to the latest census, members of the Croatian ethnic minority live in 417 populated areas in the AP Vojvodina. According to the 2002 census, Croats lived in 76 settlements in which they numbered more than 100, while in the previous census, there were 86 such populated areas.

Compared with the situation from 1991, a numerical drop was registered in the number of members of this ethnic minority in 267 settlements, and an increase in 107 settlements. In both censuses, we find the same number of members of the Croatian ethnic minority in a total of 30 populated areas in the AP Vojvodina.

The settlements with the highest number of Croats, i.e. more than 1,000, viewed in absolute numbers, are: Subotica 10,424, Novi Sad 3,519, Sombor 3,197, Senta 2,966, Sremska Mitrovica 2,130, Bački Monoštor 2,043, Petrovaradin 1,364, Donji Tavankut 1,234 and Ruma 1,027. That is in total 49.38% of the total Croatian population of the Province.

A major decline in the number of Croats in the AP Vojvodina in relation to the 1991 census is evident in all the municipalities where a significant number of members of this minority used to live. This drop is seen as a consequence of the 1991 war in the immediate neighbourhood, and related to it, certain political forces at the time which were heavily engaged in expelling the Croatian population, especially in those populated places where they comprised a prominent or relative majority of the population or represented a significant percentage. These are primarily populated places in the municipalities of Šid, where for example in Gibarac and Kukujevi, the Croat population fell from 91.43% to 7.86% and 80.07% to just 3.20% respectively, Šid from 8.83% to 4.44%, and Indija, where the number of Croats in Novi and Stari Slankamen was reduced from 65.60% to 15.74% and from 40.52% to 16.02% of the total population of the settlements respectively, or in Beška, where it went from 23.50% to 8.11%. In the municipality of Ruma, in the populated places of Hrtkovci, this ratio was 40.23% to 7.47%, Nikinci 18.84% to 9.47%, and Platičevo 19.54% to

13.08%. A similar situation was registered in the municipality of Novi Sad, where the share of the Croat population in the populated place of Petrovaradin fell from 19.81% to 9.76%, in Sremska Kamenica, where it went from 9.45% to 5.00%, and the municipality of Sremski Karlovci, where the settlement of the same name registered a decline in the Croat population from 18.10% to 8.52% of the total number of inhabitants of the municipality. This category of a drastic decline in the share of members of the Croatian ethnic minority in the population also includes Golubinci in the municipality of Stara Pazova, with 39.58% Croats according to the 1991 census compared to 15.58% according to the 2002 census. A somewhat lesser drop was registered in the municipality of Bač, with the number of Croats in the village of Plavna falling from 32.31% in 1991 to 22.41% in the latest census, in Vajska from 16.99% to 11.14%, in Bač from 10.55% to 8.36%, and in Bodani from 22.67% to 15.45%.

On the other hand, a slight increase was registered in the number of Croats in certain populated places where they represented a significant percentage of the population. So in the municipality of Apatin, in the populated area of Sonta, the Croatian population increased when expressed in percentages from 57.78% to 59.41%, even though the total number of Croats declined by nearly 500, while the total number of inhabitants declined by nearly 1,000. In the municipality of Sombor, there is a similar situation in the populated place of Svetozar Miletić, where, although the number of Croats in the new census showed an insignificant drop compared with the previous one, their share in percentage terms rose from 18.10% to 18.33%. In the populated place of Bikovo, Subotica municipality, it also rose from 29.30% to 30.86%, and in Gornji Tavankut, also Subotica municipality, from 23.52% to 37.91.53%, which is an evident example of a part of the population of the *Bunjevci* ethnic minority /Bačka Croatian ethnic minority/ from 1991 declaring themselves as Croats. The number of inhabitants who declared themselves as members of the Croat ethnic minority also went up in Ljutovo, from 15.73% in the 1991 census to 26.08% in the 2002 census, in Mala Bosna from 41.33% to 49.88%, Stari Žednik from 27.63% to 32.60%, and Donji Tavankut from 32.36% to 46.90%. In the municipality of Sombor, in addition to two populated places with a significant percentage of members of the Croat ethnic minority which registered a minor decline in the population of this minority (Stanišić, Sombor), two other populated places with a similar share of the population registered an increase. They are Bački Breg and Bački Monoštor. The first, because its total number of inhabitants declined by more than 300 while the number of Croats fell by only three in relation to the previous census, registered a significant increase in the Croat population expressed in percentages, that is, from 46.75% to 53.17%. The second populated area, Bački Monoštor, shows an interesting trend, and that is a drastic drop in those who declared themselves as Yugoslavs. Although this was also registered in other populated areas as well, the difference is that in this multi-ethnic populated place, according to the 1991 census, their number was strikingly high and amounted to 1,709 inhabitants, making it the only settlement in the AP Vojvodina where Yugoslavs comprised the most numerous ethnic community. According to the 2002 census, owing to the decline in the total number of inhabitants, and especially those who declared themselves as Yugoslavs, i.e. from 1,709 to 570, the number of Croats rose from 1,563 to 2,043, so that, expressed in terms of percentage, the number of inhabitants increased appreciably from 37.17% to 52.12%.

From the above, we can see that the largest percentages of Croats in the total number of inhabitants of individual populated areas are in Sonta, 59.41%, Bački Breg,

53.17%, and Bački Monoštor, 52.12%. In the other populated places where they have a majority in relation to the other ethnic communities, it is a relative majority, i.e. below 50% of the population. In the three populated places mentioned, this comprises only 5,747 inhabitants, or 10.16% of the total number of members of the Croatian ethnic minority in the AP Vojvodina.

In the places which registered a slight increase in the percentage of the Croatian population, which is otherwise a markedly, often negligibly low percentage of members of this minority in those populated places, it was most frequently the consequence of an overall drop in the number of inhabitants in these settlements.

In this village, too, in Hrtkovci, in this place in Serbian Srem, there is no room for Croats. Who are the only Croats for whom there is room among us? Only those Croats and their families who have shed blood together with us on the frontlines. They were called Croats in name only, anyway. They have already awakened to the fact that they are, in fact, Catholic Serbs. Some of them even served with our volunteers. They will stay here with us, while all the rest must clear out of Serbia. Including those from here, from Hrtkovci, who locked up their houses and left, reckoning, I suppose, that they would come back one day, but our message to them is: no, you have nowhere to return to. Serbian refugees will move into their houses.

Serbian brothers and sisters, now that TUDMAN has expelled more than two hundred thousand Serbs, a part of them will return to the area of Serbian Krajina, but another part cannot settle there. We have to give those Serbs a roof over their heads and feed the hungry mouths. We have no money to build new housing. We do not have the capacity to create new jobs for them. Very well, then, if we cannot do that, then we should give every Serbian family of refugees the address of one Croatian family. The police will give it to them, the police will do as the government decides, and soon we will be the government. Fine, then. Every Serbian family of refugees will come to a Croatian door and give the Croats they find there their address in Zagreb or other Croatian town. Oh, they will, they will. There will be enough buses, we will drive them to the border of Serbian territory and they can walk on from there, if they do not leave before of their own accord.

I firmly believe that you, Serbs from Hrtkovci and other villages around here, will also know how to preserve your harmony and unity, that you will promptly get rid of the remaining Croats in your village and the surrounding villages, that you will know how to appreciate the fruits of freedom and democracy, that united we shall win, unite all the Serbian lands and overcome the economic and social crisis. To conclude today's promotion event of the Serbian Radical Party, I salute you with the traditional Serbian greetings: "All for the Serb cause – the Serb cause for all", "Serbia will live on as long as her children are true to her". Cheers!

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THE PROVINCIAL SUP APV /Secretariat of the Interior of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina/

SDB /State Security Service/ DEPARTMENT

15 October 1991

OFFICIAL SECRET

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Sombor

INFORMATION

As part of follow-up contacts with our reliable source, we interviewed him at his request on 12 October from 1800 hours to 2100 hours at the *Šumice* Motel in Odžaci.

The source described the situation in Slavonia as very serious, and gave us the following details about the key persons involved:

1. Željko RAŽNATOVIĆ, aka Arkan, a criminal from Belgrade, and his 40 to 50 well armed men are based in Erdut. He has completely taken over the buildings and the compound where his men are billeted. Some twenty days ago, he, a group of his men, and Goran HADŽIĆ, Prime Minister of the SAO /Serbian Autonomous District/ of Slavonia, Baranja and West Srem /SBZS/, took 13 people from the prison in Dalj run by the Slavonian police and shot them on the bank of the river Danube. On 3 October, RAŽNATOVIĆ and his men killed 15 detainees in the same prison. On the Saturday, 5 October, he killed another 13 people, and on the Sunday, 6 October, he killed one person. Some ten days ago, he snatched a lorry full of leather jackets belonging to an entrepreneur from Slovenia. The jackets were then sold on the black market, and the lorry was given to Pavle MILOVANOVIĆ, aka Paja, commander of the defence forces in Dalj, as a present from RAŽNATOVIĆ.

2. Captain Kole, leader of a group of 17 men, contributed by his incompetence to the death of the *Večernje Novosti* correspondent ŽEGARAC some ten days ago. Kole had told ŽEGARAC and his escort to stick to the left side of the Trpinska Cesta road, while at the same time he gave an order to his men to shoot at anything that moves. In order to establish who actually killed ŽEGARAC, our source suggested an examination of his fatal wound. If the bullet trajectory in the entry-exit wound runs diagonally in relation to the journalist's shoulder, then he was killed by the ZNG /National Guard Corps/, but if it runs parallel, his death was accidental. The source described Kole as a very confused person who lacks the authority among his men that a leader should have. His men often get killed unnecessarily, due to which their numbers are steadily dwindling. News reports about Kole's men recovering the bodies of journalists who were killed are dismissed by the source as a lie because a TO /Territorial Defence/ unit from Dalj took part in the action in which JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/ vehicles were used.

3. Milorad STRIČEVIĆ, a repeat offender, is the leader of a group attached to the security organ of the Dalj Defence Staff. STRIČEVIĆ's group of investigators is made up of Dragoljub TRBOVIĆ, Đorđe MILINKOVIĆ, Mićo ORLOVIĆ, and Goja GOJSOVIĆ. By employing maniacally cruel investigating techniques, they managed

to extract confessions by unidentified prisoners that, alongside the citizens of Sonta (Apatin municipality), they had planned an assassination of Colonel TASIĆ, commander of the unit that took control of the area of Dalj. This made-up information elicited from the prisoners by torture was then passed on to the JNA security organs as confirmed and credible, which resulted in their crossing over to Sonta and arresting several citizens. STRIČEVIĆ, who had spent six and a half years in prison, is so brutal that he murdered an elderly woman from Dalj called Mjazga simply because her daughter Snežana from Osijek appeared a month ago on a HTV /Croatian Television/ show. About ten days ago, in the yard of the staff headquarters in Dalj where there is a prison run by the "space police", as they are known in Dalj, STRIČEVIĆ used a steel rod to kill an old couple from Aljmaš in front of a group of citizens. Stjepan PAP, owner of a pallet manufacturing company who lives near the railway station in Dalj, was first arrested by the "space police" three weeks ago, but was released a few days later. They arrested him again a few days ago and forced to hand over all of his moveable and immovable property to members of the "space police". The source has seen that they have permits to carry rifles and handguns within the territory of the First Army District. They are also equipped with handgun silencers.

4. Bora BERKOVIĆ, also known as Boško ORLOVIĆ, a criminal from Borovo Naselje, had lived for many years in the SRN /Federal republic of Germany/ where he was involved in armed robberies and worked as a bodyguard for Čenta, a criminal from Belgrade. In a conversation, BERKOVIĆ claimed that Bora MILINKOVIĆ, Minister for Religions of the Slavonia, Baranja and West Srem SAO, had offered him a certain amount of money in German marks to kill our source. BERKOVIĆ also boasted about being asked to assassinate a JNA captain working for the KOS /Counter-Intelligence Service/, a black-haired man of Muslim ethnicity, aged about 35, about 170 cm tall, and with a big belly, who travels to the field in a white Fiat 101. BERKOVIĆ became relaxed during the conversation with our source and started bragging about having done some jobs for the Service in Germany. The source says that he saw 100,000 German marks in his possession, but he does not know where the money came from. The Service has allegedly changed BERKOVIĆ's identity. His name now is Boško ORLOVIĆ, and he has a passport in that name.

We assess the information provided by the source as very interesting because it paints a detailed picture of the situation prevailing in Slavonia, particularly in the village of Dalj. We believe that the source was sincere in talking to the SDB and that the information he gave about certain individuals is accurate. The source is one of the organisers of resistance to the Ustasha authorities in Slavonia and he knows a lot about the people who are now holding crucial offices in the SAO SBZS, due to which they probably perceive him as a kind of threat to their positions.

We shall continue to work with the source as agreed in July 1991 with the APV USDB /State Security Service Administration/ of the PSUP /Provincial Secretariat of the Interior/.

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