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CROATIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

**MILITARY
OPERATION
STORM**

**AND IT'S AFTERMATH-
REPORT**

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Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights

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*Croatian Helsinki Committee
for Human Rights*

MILITARY OPERATION STORM AND IT'S AFTERMATH

REPORT



HHO

Zagreb 2001.

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PART ONE

Former UN Sector South

"Everybody sees,
but not a lot of them hear!"
(Machiavelli)

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**“Everybody sees,
but not a lot of them hear!”**

(Machiavelli)

Introduction

The military operation of the Croatian Defence Forces (which took place with the participation of the Croatian Council of Defence and the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina) called operation "Storm" was a co-ordinated action, by which the former UN Sectors North and South were reintegrated into the territory and constitutional and legal order of the Republic of Croatia. Also the Serb blockade of Bihać in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was finally broken. How is it possible to depict and describe the course of the entire operation and the events occurring later as a separate thing, when the issue concerns such a unique territory? There are several reasons!

1. In spite of the joint co-ordination of the action from *the Main Headquarters of the Croatian army (CA)*, the military operation Storm was in fact carried out under the co-ordination of separate teams of high military officials, according to different UN Sectors¹. The officials in charge of the UN Sector South had an easier job, because civilians and the Serb army withdrew on time and were better prepared for it. Civilians and the Serb army from UN Sector North left the region later.
2. UN Sector South was burdened by a grave conflict at the beginning of the war, when the Serb side committed serious violations of humanitarian law in the region of Zadar and the Šibenik hinterland (for example in Škabrnja). Later the Croatian military carried out several operations of limited character such as "*Maslenica*", "*Miljevački plato*" and "*Medački džep*". The destiny of several dozens of civilians from "*Miljevački plato*" is still unknown today, while the Croatian military committed serious human rights violations in Medački džep. They cleansed the region of Divoselo, Čitluk and Počitelj and completely destroyed it. The mass, organised executions of Serbs (and unsuitable Croats) in Gospić, during 1991 and 1992 were carried out.
3. The Croatian army, during military operation Storm and in the period of the following 100 days (or armed persons in civilian and police uniforms) in Sector South killed several hundreds of civilians (at least 410 civilians). Group executions were reported in Radljevac, Uzdolje, Grubori, Gošić, Varivode, Korenica. There had not been a village in that region with at least one or even several victims. Most civilian-victims in the UN Sector North were reported in the region of Banija where the refugee columns were cut and shelled. Members of the V Corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army and some Serb generals were responsible for some of these victims.

1 After a decision on arrival of the UN to Croatia, three regions under protection of the UN (UNPA) were formed: in eastern Slavonia, Baranja and western Sirmium (East), in western Slavonia (West) and in the so-called region of Krajina (North and South).

4. The UN Sector South was subject to serious post war destruction and devastation of various houses and mobile Serb property. The whole region, towns and villages were systematically burnt, some time after termination of the military operation Storm. 22,000 houses were burnt and mined and the rest were plundered and greatly devastated. In the UN Sector North there were also burning and mining of houses reported but to a lesser extent.
5. Finally systematic monitoring efforts of human rights situation in that region showed that human rights violations continued for several months after the operation. *The Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights* (CHC) registered 24 murders committed on January 1, 1996 until February 22, 1992 and the perpetrators were discovered only when they turned themselves in to the police. Violence, terrorism and harassment against the Serb minority had been going on during the year of 1999 and the perpetrators remained unpunished and considered as a common occurrence in daily life of the region.
 - ◆ This report will point to the steps and procedures whose consequences in the final outcome may be ethnic cleansing of the whole region (regardless of the way) by disabling the return of refugees, the destruction of Serb property and denial of property, labour and other rights of ethnic Serbs.
 - ◆ The document will, besides unnecessary civilian victims (a violation of humanitarian law) point to continuous violence in that region, individual or collective harassment and unpunished terror and cases of racist behaviour towards Serbs by state and local authorities.
 - ◆ In spite of the fact that Croatia, among the destroyed and burnt villages managed to preserve the walls of the Orthodox churches, except in two or three cases, (but not of the schools, monuments, culture houses.) This report cannot avoid mentioning the cases that point to the religious intolerance.
 - ◆ *And war crimes?* It is beyond doubt that the crimes were committed. The CHC and earlier various international organisations reported numerous out of court executions committed by the Croatian soldiers or police officers.
 - ◆ *And furthermore:* besides the main content of this report, made through several years of continuous and systematic monitoring of the situation and the field work of numerous activists, an inseparable part of the report are enclosures with the civilian victims, lists of various manners of harassment and terrorism. The report is not dealing with missing persons, regardless of whether these victims were military or civilian. However it will not list out of court executions of the prisoners and soldiers, who surrendered to the Croatian Army and police, in which there exist numerous data and proofs.

Zagreb, April 8, 1999

Military Operation "Storm"

1.

The Croatian army on August 4, 1995, began the large military operation Storm in the region consisting of UN Sectors South and North¹, called *Republika Srpska Krajina*.² The operation started early that morning at 5 a. m. by artillery attack and shelling against all important points of the Serb defence, especially of the city of Knin which was the capital of Krajina. It lasted 84 hours, and it officially ended at 6 p. m. on August 7, 1995. Around 200.000 active soldiers and soldiers in reserve³ took part in the military operation Storm with the help of powerful artillery, special police and aviation units.

The corps from Bjelovar, Zagreb, Karlovac, Gospić and Split took part in military operation Storm. NATO aviation helped by bombing the Serb radar systems on Plješivica, Lika on August 3, 1995 and alleged rocket launchers in the vicinity of Knin, because of the security of the UN forces in the vicinity. The 4th and 7th, military brigade and 126-defence regiment attacked the region of Krajina from the territory of the neighbouring state, Bosnia and Herzegovina in the southern part and from the direction of Bihać. Parts of the Croatian territory around Donji Lapac, Plitvice and Dvor na Uni were liberated by the 5th Corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Army.

The main co-ordinators of operation Storm situated at the main headquarters were the following generals Vinko Vrbanac and Pavao Miljevac. General colonel, Petar Stipetić was in command of the UN Sector North, and general colonel Ante Gotovina in the UN Sector South. General colonel Mladen Markač personally carried out the special police forces operations in the region of Donji Lapac, (UN Sector South). The commanders

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- 1 Military and police operation Flash which was conducted on May 1 and 2, 1995 had as an outcome integration of the UN sector West into territory and legal system of the Republic of Croatia. The UN Sector east was reintegrated into the territory of Croatia in a peaceful way on 15 of January 1998.
 - 2 After the fall of Serbia, in 1436, which was conquered by the Turks and their consequent victory over Bosnia, Austria and Hungary were close to the danger. The regions not conquered by Turks were divided into special districts. They consisted of Slavonia, part of Vojvodina, Kordun, Bania and Lika, and the Senjska kapetanija was established. Since 1480 that entire region called Granica or Krajina, had been under indirect control of Vienna. In the middle of XVIII century military Krajina achieves its independence and separates from Banovina Croatia. The Austrian Hungarian monarchy moved mostly Serbs from the Turkish regions: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Military banovina was annulled in 1881.
 - 3 Fran Višnar stated in Vjesnik, on August 13, 1995 that 80.000 professional soldiers and 120.000 mobilised soldiers were prepared as active members of the Croatian military units. The special police members should be added to that number, as well as the units of Croatian Council of Defence and the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Army. The UN Sector North and South was attacked from 31 directions at the same time.

of the operational actions in the UN Sector North were: general-majors Ivan Basarac, Luka Džanko and Marijan Mareković, and in the UN Sector South there were: Mirko Norac, and headquarters brigadiers Damir Krstičević and Ivan Korade. General-colonel Ivan Čermak was the military commander of Knin.

Three elite guard units 4th, 7th and 9th, special police forces, and brigades 111th, 112th, 113th, 119th, 123th, 142th, regiments 7 and 132, home-guard regiments and 84, military, tanks, numerous heavy equipment and aviation units took part in the military operation in Sector South.

There were two reasons for such a large, thoroughly planned and very well prepared Croatian operation in relation to the Serb side. The first reason was the dramatic situation in Bihać enclave, which was surrounded by Serb forces from Croatia, specifically the so-called Republika Srpska and paramilitary forces of *Fikret Abdić* who proclaimed the so-called *Autonomous Region of Western Bosnia*.⁴ The second reason was a refusal of the Serb side to accept Croatian conditions for peaceful reintegration of the former UN regions, sector South and North, on 3rd of August 1995 in Geneva. The Croatian delegation consisting of *Ivić Pašalić*, general-major *Petar Stipetić*, *Vesna Škare Ožbolt* and *Smiljan Reljić*, and the Serb delegation; *Mile Novaković*, *Milivoj Vojnović*, *Ilija Prlić* and *Lazo Macura* participated in the negotiations in the small town of Genthod, near Geneva on August 3rd, 1995. The UN negotiator, *Thorvald Stoltenberg* was a chairman at the meeting. It was clear to everybody that (having in mind who were the members of the delegations) the negotiations were only a formality. Three days earlier, on July 30, 1995, President of the Croatian Republic, *Franjo Tuđman* stated that he could not possibly negotiate with *Milan Martić*, the then president of the so-called Republika Srpska Krajina.

Two days before this statement on July 28th, 1995, the Croatian Army and the Croatian Council of Defence took control over the town of Bosansko Grahovo. They cut the main communication line between Knin and Republika Srpska and took under control the significant strategic points on Dinara and bombarded Strmica, which was at that time abandoned by all population.

The Croatian army had been preparing for the military operation Storm for two years. A group of American retired army officers actively prepared the Croatian soldiers for the combat. The general commands regarding the attack were decided about on June 26, 1995, under the command of the headquarters general, Janko Bobetko. "Readiness for carrying out military operation" was determined on July 15, 1995.

2.

The Serb side, according to the official evaluation, had at its disposal around 40.000⁵ soldiers from the entire territory of the Republic of Croatia. The Serb defence was weakened two weeks earlier with the withdrawal of heavy artillery from the most significant

4 Split declaration, signed in Split on July 22, 1995, by president of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, President of the presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, and President of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Krešimir Zubak, was the basis of the planned military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5 General Červenko, stated on August 9, 1995 that Serbs, including the Croatian Danube region has at their disposal from 37, 500 — 41,000 soldiers. ("Večernji list", August 10, 1995)

defence lines. The explanation for that act was that the contemporary and modern artillery would substitute it. Equally the Serb rocket units, and aviation on the military airport near Udbine, were allegedly disabled by putting out of function its vital electronic parts, which made it easier for the Croatian units to carry out the operation and decrease losses in human power and equipment to the minimum. All this pointed to the fact that the highest officers of the Croatian army and state officials were sure that the army of the *Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* would not in any way jeopardise military operation Storm, nor the army of Republika Srpska, which at the time had its own problems.⁶

Chaos and a lack of motivation among the Serb soldiers for any kind of significant resistance dominated because of previous media propaganda which depicted danger coming from the Croatian army. This army commonly called the Ustasha army, continuously reminded of the actions "*Maslenica*", "*Miljevački plato*" and "*Medački džep*", where the Croatian army killed and buried many people⁷, and destroyed and devastated several villages (Divoselo, Čitluk and Počitelj near Gospić) to the ground. The whole atmosphere led to the fast withdrawal of the Serb paramilitary forces, and with them the entire Serb population. Some Serb military units were cut off from their highest commanders and did not know what was about to happen.

Therefore some Serb soldiers remained for longer periods of time on some front lines and offered stronger resistance, while in Sector South, military units and civilian population left the region in a very short time. Significant resistance was reported in Ljubovo near Korenica and Gospić and in the Red land in the vicinity of Knin.

In the region of Banija, in the villages in the vicinity of Hrvatska Kostajnica, Dvor na Uni and others at the end of 1994 and the beginning of 1995, there were lists of "*security measures*" and the lists of residents, who were to be "*temporarily*" accommodated in the surrounding area of Derventa and Banja Luka, in case of withdrawal from stronger "Ustasha" attacks and some other cities in *Republika Srpska*.

This action acted as demoralising factor for the residents of the area. The owners of personal vehicles and tractors received gas for full tanks free of charge in the case of a "*temporary withdrawal*". Equally the action undertaken by the Croatian Council of Defence and the Croatian Army in the region of Bosansko Grahovo and the conquering of the strategic point on Dinara, left the village of Strmica without any defence. Strmica, located on road on the way to Knin-Bosansko Grahovo, was cut off already on July 28, 1995 when the village was heavily bombarded from the direction of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁸. Until the end of the day all residents of Strmica except 10 elderly people withdrew "*in the direction of Srb*" because of security reasons. However, that pilot column was not stopped until the refugees reached Banja Luka and Serbia.

The "*Temporary withdrawal*" of civilian population before the military operation Storm occurred in a series of villages on the left demarcation line immediately before operation Storm started. The residents of Ceranje Donje and Gornje, and Miranje and

6 The army of Republika Srpska has acted in only few cases, without any significant consequences: Dubrovnik was shelled and the aviation attacked the Ina factory of artificial manure in Kutina, and some targets in Podravina, where they suffered great loss.

7 The whereabouts of the mass grave as a result of the military action "Medački džep" in which at least 45 people were buried, was discovered only recently.

8 The first grenade fell on the haybarn of Milice Jejine in Strmica.

Pristega in the surrounding area of Benkovac, Nebljus and Krug in Donji Lapac left their villages on August 3, 1995 in the afternoon or in the evening. The commander of the General headquarters of the Serb military army of Krajina, general colonel, Mile Mrkšić, on the eve of the military action Storm, prepared a pamphlet with the written order (it is not known when it was exactly distributed, sometime before military operation Storm) with the following content: *"Because of the attack of the Ustasha's army which we expect, and in order to secure the conditions for carrying out the proper defence I ORDER THE FOLLOWING: that the entire civilian population withdraw from the battle regions in direction of Benkovac-Žegar-Srb"*. The second direction for the withdrawal of civilians was towards "Knin-Plavno-Lička Kaldrma" etc.

According to the statement by *Nedeljka Drača*, born on 1924, in Udbine, the Serb population was informed about the evacuation on August 2, in the evening. On August 3, they received their order for packing. The column started off on their way on August 4, in the morning in the direction of Donji Lapac. The last residents left the village of Udbina on August 5, in the afternoon hours.

"N. Drača told our activists on July 23, 1998 about the whole escape plan. *"Our leaders frightened the whole population regarding the Croatian army. We had to run away. We, who did not run, hid and did not reveal that we were staying in the region, otherwise we had to run or Serbs would have killed us. They were checking the houses in order to see whether the people were leaving or not"*. Around 30 residents together with *Nedeljka* and her husband *Dane* /who died on September 2, 1997) stayed in Udbina. They were mostly Serbs, a few Croats and Muslims. 10 of them were killed later.

The Croatian army entered the village of Udbina on August 7, 1995 in the morning. Prior to the army, the special police forces passed through the village on their way to Donji Lapac."⁹

The general colonel, *Petar Stipetić*, who led the military operation in the UN Sector North, said immediately after the surrender of the 21st Corps of the Republika Srpska army:

"According to what happened and how it happened, I think that the exodus of the Serb people was previously prepared on their behalf and was done under the pressure of their own army. I believe that, in the last moment, they estimated that our success was inevitable and that step, a suicide step, is for me a clear indication that their policy failed and that the vision of some kind of life and the project of Great Serbia and its survival in this region failed also. I repeat it is my opinion that the scenario was prepared some time earlier, before the operation started like some kind of reserve option. It was done forcefully under the command of paramilitary forces and their commanders. Everybody said — we were ordered to do this".¹⁰

The residents of Zečevo withdrew on August 4, 1995 until 9 a. m. Only 10 residents decided to stay. The Croatian advance troops entered the village on the following day, but other troops will commit crimes. *Janko Čakić* was killed on August 28, 1995 and burnt in his house. His brother *Božo*, born on 1932 and *Božo's* daughter *Nedeljka* (born

⁹ Houses in Udbina and the surrounding area started to burn after first Croatian military troops passed through the village. Immediately after them civilians arrived who looted the entire peoperty and stole cattle. According to the witnesses's statements one building was burnt in Udbine.

¹⁰ General-colonel, *Petar Stipetić*, "Military operation Storm", homeland war, number 2, November 1995.

on 1946) was transferred to the collective centre and upon return to their homes they found only abandoned houses, empty hay-barn and a devastated yard. Nikica Korda from another part of Zečevo remembered that "a *Krajina* officer" came on August 3, around 10 p. m. and ordered them to leave the village because "the attack by the Croatian army was expected." Mostly all residents left the village the following day. Only *Mile Korda*, *Milka* and *Đuro Dragaš* stayed in the village until the following day with Nikica Korda. Two women *Boja* and *Sava Korda* decided to leave the village when killings and plunder started.

Vasilj Lalić, born in 1931, from Kistanje, left his village on his bike on August 4, 1995. He went to see his cattle that day, in spite of the thunder of grenades heard very close to the village. Upon his return home he found his house empty, his wife *Vesa*, born on 1930, left the village. His daughter called him from the Kistanje centre to come to her house immediately. He left with his bike and did not come back again.¹¹ "It was a terribly chaotic situation, but we were not told that we would not come back again but that we would only withdraw to the village called *Biovičino Selo*. . ." I thought well. ok then, but if I had known I would not have left like this, I did not even take a piece of ham with me. " He told the CHC activists on December 1, 1997.

3.

While the Croatian artillery heavily shelled all most important Serb positions and some cities like Knin on August 4, 1995, since 5 a. m, the speech by president *Franjo Tuđman* was red on the radio and various TV shows¹² in spite of the fact that in the chaotic situation and lack of electricity prevented people from hearing the message directed to Serb population by the President of the Republic. Stating his reasons for undertaking the military operation in the former territory of *Krajina*, Tuđman said:

"On behalf of the democratic authorities:

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- 11 The married couple *Lalić* left behind a personal vehicle type *Lada*, 56 sheep, a cow, pigs, tractor and all other property. Upon their return home on April 28, 1997, they found only a burnt house. They barely managed to put up the walls of the house again.
- 12 When the military operation *Storm* started my husband and I were at home. Since there had not been any electricity, and when all the evil started, my son connected the accumulator to the radio and we listened to President *Tudjman's* message, which invited all those who were innocent to stay and that nothing would happen to them with the arrival of the Croatian army. That is how we decided to stay although almost all people left the village already. I saw the arrival of the army and tanks that stopped at the playground near the school, and many soldiers. Two days later, on Sunday 6, 1995, my husband and son went to report to the UN center that they stayed. They registered all of us, and me because I did not leave the house all the time. . A few hours later my husband came back and soldiers after him, holding a rifle pointed at his back. They took the rifle, for which my husband had a permit for years, and my husband did not say a word, he gave them his weapons and turned to leave with him again. They left towards the village of *Bursač*. It is my native village in the vicinity. He returned late at night together with my son. He did not talk about what happened there but only trembled from great fear. 40 days later we heard that many people were killed in the village. Then is when we decided not to stay because they would certainly kill us. We went to the church where the UN HQ was situated and immediately registered for departure." (*Marija Karanović*, born in 1935, in her statement to the CHC activists on January 8, 1999).

I call upon the members of the Serb paramilitary units who have of their own will or were forcefully mobilised into the paramilitary Serb units to surrender their weapons to the Croatian authorities with the guarantee that they will receive a pardon according to the valid Croatian laws.

I call upon the initiators of the rebellion to realise the futility of their endeavour and to realise the damage that the rebellion may cause to the Serb community in Croatia, if they persist in their rebellion, to surrender to the Croatian authorities and accept pardon given to them or the right to a fair trial for their offences.

I call upon the Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity who have not actively participated in the rebellion to stay at their homes and not to fear for their lives and their property and to wait for the Croatian authorities with guarantees that they will receive all citizenship rights and that they will be allowed to vote for the local self-administration according to the Croatian Constitution and with the presence of the international observers.

We are determined to stop the suffering and anxiety of the Croatian displaced persons from the occupied regions, while guaranteeing Croatian Serbs all human and ethnic rights in accordance with the constitutional and legal order of democratic Croatia".¹³

"The Government of the Republic of Croatia guarantees all Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity in the recently liberated regions that their personal and property rights will be protected according to the constitutional and legal order of the RH. I call upon citizens of Serb ethnicity not to leave their villages and towns and not to leave for complete uncertainty, but to become loyal citizens of the Republic of Croatia according to the Croatian constitution and laws" stated Nikica Valentić, the then Prime Minister of Croatia in a message to the Croatian Serbs.

Ivan Jarnjak, the then Minister of the Interior Affairs, publicly stated and guaranteed the security of life and property to Croatian Serbs, on August 5, 1995.

These public statements, especially Tuđman's message to Serb people, will be used as proof that the the Serb population left Croatia on their own will, and that the reasons for their departure did not exist in fact. Unfortunately, the content of these proclamations were denied at the same time as they were read. The state authorities, from the local to the state level, by their behaviour only proved that the content of the message was in theory one thing and in practice another. There have not been any true intentions on behalf of the Croatian authorities to act in accordance with these proclamations.

4.

General-major, *Ivan Tolj*, the commander of the political administration of the *Ministry of Defence of the RH*, on August 5, 1995 said that the communication lines Medak-Gračac, Plaški — Slunj, Benkovac-Knin, were liberated on August 4, that the Serb population was massively leaving many cities and towns and that *"the evacuation of Knin approached its end"*. He, furthermore, published that on August 4, 1995, 50 Serb soldiers surrendered in Dabar, and 12 soldiers and 25 civilians in Drniš.

¹³ "Slobodna Dalmacija", a daily newspaper, on August 5, 1995

The Croatian radio broadcast on August 5, 1995 that Knin was liberated and that a large Croatian flag, 20 meters long, was hanged on the Knin fortress. The following events were also reported: the liberation of Lovinac, entrance of the Croatian army to Gračac, and Serbs leaving Udbina. Primišlje was also liberated and that opened the way to Slunj. By the end of the day the Croatian army entered Gračac, took over Ljubovo, a very important strategic point. *"The rebel forces commanded the evacuation of the Serb population. The Croatian army opened two paths for the Serb civilians who wished to leave these regions in two directions: on one way the path was opened towards Srb and on the a path was opened towards Dvor."* was written in general Tolj's public proclamation delivered on August 5, 1995. Tolj, furthermore, stated that the Croatian forces defeated 760 Serb soldiers.

Around 3. p. m hours on August 5, 1995 the Croatian army met the V Corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army, near Tržačke Raštele. The soldiers of the V Corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army, had already, without previously contacting the Croatian army, crossed Kruge, 10 km away from Donji Lapac. Around 5, 30 p. m. the Croatian army entered Benkovac. Vrlika, Kijevo, Drniš, Žitnić, Plaški, Novi Lički Osik, Medak were liberated at this time. The Croatian army entered on August 6, 1995 Korenica, Slunj, Cetingrad, Otrić, Bruvno, Plitvice. Tuđman arrived to Knin at 4,30 p. m. and while visiting Drniš said: *"Not only did every idea of Great Serbia finally collapse, but also that Serbs can continue to play the role which they played in Croatian history: stabbing knives into the back of the Croatian people, making friends with Italian fascists, and inviting them even today to divide Istria and Dalmatia between Italians and Serbs."*

The following day, on August 7, 1995, the Minister of the Defence, *Gojko Šušak*, at 6,30 p. m. announced the end of the military operation Storm, adding that the battle equipment of the 21st Kordunian Corps near Topusko was being taken over from the Serb commander Čedomir Bulat. He, furthermore, informed the public that the Croatian military forces had 118 dead and 620 wounded¹⁴, while he did not have any information regarding the Serb forces. Three members of international peace forces died in the operation — a Danish and two Czech soldiers, while 6 were wounded. One Croatian officer took several Danish soldiers and used them as a live shield.

This is how in only 4 days the Republika Srpska army, which was feared by the entire Croatia for full four years, disappeared. And not only that, most of the population left the UN North and South Sectors. At least 180.000 Serbs left for Republika Srpska, FRY or other countries.

Still burning issues: Why did the Serbs leave in such a way? Did they leave on their own will or under pressure of their army leaders and authorities? Is their departure the result of fear from Croatian retaliation? Is it only a logical consequence of secret plans and agreements between the President of the Croatian Republic and the President of FRY, *Slobodan Milošević*? Is the exodus of Croatian Serbs an overture to the drama on Kosovo? Finally isn't an end like this partially a consequence of all of this?

Possible replies to all these questions were given in this report on the behaviour of the Croatian army during and after military operation Storm, about the attitude of the local and state authorities towards the *"the Serb question"*. The CHC activists will report incidents and cases, in the following text regarding all these questions and issues.

14 Minister of Health, Andrija Hebrang, stated on August 10 that the Croatian side had 174 dead and 1430 wounded soldiers, and minister Ivica Kostović said on August 29, 1995 that the loss amounts to 211 dead soldiers and police officers.

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The Departure of the Serb Population

1.

The territory of the Republic of Croatia — the former UN Sector South and North, which were reintegrated during military operation Storm, spread over 10.500 square kilometres¹ which amounted to 18% of the territory (28 pre-war municipalities were integrated into that region — 12 entire municipalities, 16 municipalities partially). UN Sector South included 13 pre-war municipalities (5 entire municipalities² and 7 partly³). A part of the region, which was included by the rebel Serbs in the so-called territory of the Republika Srpska Krajina, was liberated earlier in military and police actions. “Maslenica”, “Miljevački plato”, “Medački džep”.

In the entire territory of the former UN sectors South and North, according to the list of the 1991 Census, there lived 300.000 residents — 85.000 Croats, 200.000 Serbs and Yugoslavs, 15.000 undefined. Only Serbs, according to the 1991 Census, lived in 216 settlements in that region (in 86 settlements in the UN Sector South). In 237 settlements more than 90% population was of Serb ethnicity (100 UN Sector South). Serbs were the majority in 83 village settlements (40 in the UN Sector South) and 15 in the town settlements (11 UN Sector South⁴). Croats were mostly expelled from the region at the beginning of the war in 1991. Only 2500 stayed under Serb administration in the entire region.

In the former Sector South, on the eve of the war there were 145.000 residents living in the region. 33.500 were Croats while 108.000 were Serbs living in the region. It is difficult to say with certainty how many residents lived in the UN Sectors South and North. An unknown number of the Serb minority members left the region before the war for various reasons: unsafe conditions of living, unemployment, harassment, killings, disappearances, and the “*fight for the Serb thing*”⁵, and settled in the region of Kra-

1 The territory of the former UN Sector west spread over 700 square meters, and the UN Sector East over 2500 square meters, reintegrated in a peaceful way on January 15, 1998.

2 Donji Lapac, Gračac, Knin, Korenica and Obrovac

3 Benkovac, Drniš, Gospić, Otočac, Sinj, Šibenik and Zadar

4 Benkovac (794 Croats and 2780 Serbs), Donji Lapac, (6 Croats and 1742 Serbs), Gračac (61 Croats and 3908 Serbs), Kistanje (9 Croats and 1980 Serbs), Knin (1660 Croats and 9867 Serbs), Korenica (49 Croats and 1519 Serbs), Lički Osik (1156 Croats and 1570 Serbs), Obrovac (285 Croats and 1253 Serbs), Srb (9 Croats and 1059 Serbs), Udbina (73 Croats and 934 Serbs), Vrhovine (65 Croats and 742 Serbs).

5 Incidents like terrorism directed against Serbs (mining of houses, restaurants, flats, cars and harassment, killings and maltreatment) were a daily occurrence in cities such as Sisak (where around 400 persons were assassinated), Karlovac, Zadar, Gospić, Bjelovar, Osijek and other cities throughout Croatia. War crimes

jina. It is estimated that 120.000 Serbs left other parts of Croatia and resettled in Krajina. *Stjepan Šterc*, Deputy Minister to *Jure Radić*, Minister for Development and Reconstruction said in his interview in *Globus* in 1998 that only 70.000 Serbs left the region, which could not be true.

However, no matter how many urban Serbs from other parts of Croatia left for the Krajina region, the number of the Serb population increased in the UN sectors. An unknown number of refugees from other regions of the RH left for the FRY and *third countries*, other countries throughout Europe during the war. *Stjepan Šterc* would claim that 90.000 Serbs left the region and moved to the FRY or to third countries, running away from unlawfulness and war, and that 140.000 citizens of Serb ethnicity left the region during military operation Storm. Taking into account all kinds of departures, moving out, resettlement during the war, it seems that around 200,000 persons and at least 180.000 persons abandoned the region. The Croatian government claimed "*that he 154.079 Serbs (on August 21, 1995) who left the region before the attack were welcomed to Croatia. These Serbs resettled in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the region under Serb control or they moved to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. They were resettled in different parts of FRY, such as: Kosovo, Vojvodina and Sandžak.*"⁶ *Ivica Kostović*, Vice-president of the government of the Republic of Croatia stated on August 29, 1995 that 6000 persons remained in the former UN sectors North and South, among whom there were 3255 elderly and helpless people.

Since the Vice President of the government Mr. *Kostović*, did not have exact data on those people who remained in Croatia, nor precise governmental data on those who remained in Croatia, the exact number of people remaining was not known. In the Republic of Croatia, there remained around 8500 mostly elderly people. To be more exact there remained 4051 people living in Sector South and 4363⁷ in Sector North.

2.

The Serb population left the UN Sector South almost entirely until the end of Saturday, August 5, 1995. The villages and towns remained abandoned. For example only one civilian — Croat, *Josip Marković* remained in Obrovac. Most people were hiding trying to avoid close encounters with the army. Several cases of seeking shelter in the UNCRO camps in Korenica and Knin were reported. Many people confirmed later on that they were forced to evacuate, but not many knew that the refugee columns would not stop until Bosnia and Herzegovina and FRY.

such as the one occurring on the Korana bridge in Karlovac had as a consequence numerous exiles into the so called Serb Republic regardless of the fact what one actually thought about it. When the policeman *Mihajlo Hrastov*, killed and wounded 14 unarmed soldiers of the Yugoslav People Army, war prisoners, and was accused of committing war crimes, and later on released of all charges, around 10.000 citizens of Serb ethnicity left the city. At the time, especially after murder of the *Zec* family and other secret executions, 40.000 persons left Zagreb, 25.000 Osijek, 10.000 Split, and 8000 Gospić. Most of them left and settled in the region of Krajina. Many of them expressed their wish to return to Karlovac.

6 The report by the International Helsinki Federation (IHF), of August 25, 1995

7 Human Rights Watch/Helsinki: "Unpunished crimes during military operation Storm and denying the rights of the refugees to return

The inhabitants of Plastovo and the surrounding villages, who received gas two or three days before the event, were first told to withdraw towards Đverske, and go to

Kistanje, and then to Srb⁸. It seemed that the families of the highest Krajina authorities had known exactly where they would stop. The CHC received information that these families were evacuated earlier and they did not form a part of the refugee column. The witnesses claim that the families of some ministers transported their furniture on the truck to the FRY under the pretence that the "old things" were taken to their "children studying" abroad, or "relatives" and that the new things would be brought back instead. The Serb army broadened the local road near Srb — a side road for faster withdrawal. This pointed to the fact that the evacuation had been planned in advance and that the officers of General Mile Mrkšić and the ministers of Milan Martić estimated that they would not fight the Croatian army and that was a purely strategic move.

Regardless of the motives of the military leaders for withdrawing the army and the motives of the civilian authorities for moving the entire population, the statements of hundreds of witnesses pointed to the fact that they were easily moved because they feared the moment when the Croatian army would enter their villages. Most of them did not believe that the so called Republika Srpska could survive and let alone defend itself without the help of Slobodan Milošević who did not need them any more because he had already lost the so called "west boundaries" of Great Serbia.

Living for so many years in isolation in the place where human rights were regarded as something strange and unknown, they were at the same time burdened with the past. They were burdened with hatred and remembrance of what their enemies did to them and what they did to their enemies at the beginning of the war. They were burdened with thoughts of what Croat or Serb extremists did, of brutal murders and hatred and now they were finally coming to the final battle brought them only fear and panic. The statements by President Tuđman and the late Minister of Defence Mr. Šušak did not bring them any hope or possibility of dignified or honourable defeat, regardless of any possibility of peaceful reintegration or signing of any other agreement. Therefore, it is not strange that the rhetoric of president Tuđman delivered in his message to the Serb people on August 4, 1995 was not taken seriously and could not remove fear from the propaganda machinery and statements accumulated over the last five years. The first day of the military operation Storm proved that their fear was entirely justified.

3.

Around 1000 residents found shelter at the UNCRO camp in Knin, mostly elderly citizens. Most of these people in the camp said that they would not leave Croatia during the first few days of military operation Storm.

8 "Three to four days before the Storm I was at the meeting as a member of the Civilian protection. Drago Vujatović led the meeting. The attack by the Croatian army was announced, and we were told to give people the gas and to prepare them for the withdrawal to Kakanj and Zečevo. When after shelling was carried out we arrived to the Zečevo, the town was abandoned. /a student Dalibor Dobrijević, born in 1973, died later on, Mile Dobrijević, died, and Ika Dobrijević). Statement by Milorad Dobrijević born in 1952 told to the CHC team.

General Čermak, did not know, or did not want to know that the majority of persons who received passes to leave the camp, came running back to save their own necks just a few days later. They were beaten and maltreated before their return back to the camp. In spite of the fact that these people wished to remain at their houses in the beginning, they changed their minds later on. They saw how their houses were burnt and property taken away. Most of them were even physically abused. Finally they decided to pack their things and leave Croatia.

Around 800 persons left the UNRCO camp for the FRY on September 16, 1995, on 15 buses. Before leaving they had to sign the following statement: *"I declare that I leave the territory of Croatia on my own will and enter the territory of the Republic of Serbia. By this statement I also declare that I was properly taken care of and in a humane way brought to the border crossing."* Many persons seriously opposed the signing of the statement adding that they did not wish to leave Croatia on their own will. Most of these people used special passes issued by general Čermak to visit their property. When they saw that their land was burnt, and that Croatian soldiers and police officers threatened them and forced them to leave, they returned first to the UNCRO camps and later on left Croatia. Some of the refugees received TVIK's working cards in which their working status was concluded with September 1, 1991.¹⁰

Dušan Drpa, born on 1938, left Knin on one of these buses in spite of the fact that upon hearing President Tuđman's message he decided to stay. When the city of Knin was shelled at the beginning of the operation, he went to the UNCRO camp and registered himself there. He received general Čermak's pass and returned home on August 16. He felt that situation was not good and he realised that he had embarked on a dangerous mission. On August 22, three Croatian soldiers entered his house and physically and verbally abused him. They asked him why he did not leave with the other Chetniks. They took away his hi-fi and his sleeping bag. When he reported the incident to the police they behaved extremely unprofessionally. The same three soldiers returned to his house and beat him. They took away his citizenship paper and threatened to kill him. He left his house on the following day, returned to UNCRO camp and left with others for FRY. *Dušan Drpa* was not the only such case. But as the time went by, many people who wanted to return to the UNCRO camp, could not return to the camp any more because the UNCRO on the other hand wanted to get rid of civilians as soon as possible. The doors for those who wished to return to the UNCRO camp remained closed.¹¹

9 General Čermak stated on August 10, for *Večernji list*, how 300 Serbs reported to stay.

10 The CHC activists helped some persons to return to Knin on August 17, 1995. The family Kondić did that. In spite of a few slaps, insults and physical abuse they managed to stay at their homes. Some others had terrible experience so they left.

11 Uncertainty and fear were caused by such cases also. The Croatian soldiers on August 5, 1995 took *Nenad Dujković* from the shelter and his wife's brother, *Dragan Mirković*. They let the children and women

4.

The Citizens of Strmica were the first ones who went into exile, the so-called, "*tactic withdrawal*", on 27th, and 28th, of July 1995. There were 1300 inhabitants living in the village prior to the war. At least 8 of them were killed in the village, and 8 were reported missing. R. S. (a witness) remained to live in the village. He witnessed all that happened and he himself did not know how he managed to stay alive. He believed that he had survived thanks to his vivacious and communicative character. R. S. talked to the Croatian soldiers and gave them all the information they needed. In spite of that, they forced him to dig out his own grave in which they would put him once they kill him.

A carcass of his horse can be still found in his hay-barn. He told us that his horse was young and suffered a *heart attack* from fear. Fear from whom? He did not exclude the possibility that the horse had been killed. The carcass remained closed in the hay-barn. R. S. entered his hay-barn in the presence of the activists of the CHC on January 6, 1999.

The residents of Biljane Donje, presumably left the village late at night on August 3, or early in the morning August 4, 1995. They were told that they would leave the village only temporarily and that they *should withdraw to Benkovac*. Only Pera Radmanović,¹² born in 1925, remained in the village. Her son was in the 4th Croatian army brigade. Residents from Biljani Gornji started off on their journey an hour later. Around 11 p. m., on August 3, 1995 residents from Ceranje Donje and Gornje, and Miranje,¹³ left the village. In the village there remained only 9 persons¹⁴, and in Pristega¹⁵ nobody. The Croatian army entered the village on August 5. The residents were taken away to the collective centre in Zadar after that the villages were looted and houses burnt. The only house that remained intact belonged to Miloš Čubrilo, born in 1923 who did not wish to leave for the collective centre. In the continuation of the report the behaviour of the Croatian army towards them was depicted.

The exodus from Benkovačko Selo,¹⁶ Jagodnje Gornje¹⁷, Kule Atlagić, Benkovac and other villages, started on the 4th of August, because the villages were at that time heavily shelled.

leave for the UNCRO camp and they took the men for interrogation. The same happened to Vukašin Vujasinović, born in 1927. Information about them has not been found until today. The members of the IHF mission tried to find some clues to their whereabouts a few days after the incident, but have not succeeded in their attempt.

- 12 Kata Diklić returned to her village after a few months, born in 1922 and according to the census from 1991, there were 1033 inhabitants living in the village. All houses, except the house of P. Radmanović were burned.
- 13 Only Jovo Žmirić remained in Miranje. 14 families from B-H came to live in the village..
- 14 Ceranji Gornji: Anđelija Karan, (f), born in 1927, Dušan Karan, (m), born in 1936, Velinka, (f), and Veljko Šaponja, (m), both born in 1930, Serbs, Ceranje Donje; Sava Vojvodić, (f), born in 1912, Milica (F), born in 1921 and Miloš Čubrilo (m), born in 1923, and Sofija (f), born in 1922, and Luka Čubrilo, born in 1922, Serbs: Veljko Šaponja and Milica Čubrilo died. Until June 1998, nobody returned to the village.
- 15 The Croatian army steals in Pristega, then loots and mines all houses, exactly in the same manner in which Serbs behaved in 1991 towards Croat houses.
- 16 The houses were looted and a few of them were burned. 30 persons returned to the village until July 21, 1998.
- 17 The village was shelled and the Croatian army entered the village on August 5, 1995. The owner of the first burned house was a Croat, Senka Čvorak. Other houses around 50% of the buildings were burned a month later. 5 elderly citizens remained in the village, and until July 1, 1998, 14 more citizens came back.

Đuro Klačnja, born in 1931, from Frkašić did not intend to leave the village. Moreso because he expected to meet his son, a member of the police and his son-in-law who took part in the military operation Storm. He did not succeed in his intention. He said: *"They stopped in this little yard and woke me to move on, and told me that I have to run. They did not allow me to stay."* he started off on August 5, 1995 at 4 a. m. Klačnja with his wife Smilja, born in 1948, arrived to Serbia after 17 days of travelling on a horse carriage, drawn by a mare. They sold the horse carriage and the mare upon their arrival to Serbia for 1800 DEM¹⁸ in order to survive there. When Klačnja returned home at the beginning of 1996 he found his house burnt down. Alongside a returnee couple Klačnja, in Frkašić lived: *Bogdanka Borjan*, born in 1913, *Jelena Rašeta*, born in 1926, *Nedjeljka Rašeta*, born in 1956. *Mica Rašeta*, around 75 years and *Petar Rašeta* born in 1898. According to the 1991 census there were 111 residents living there.

Columns of refugees from Ličko Petrovo Selo and from Plitvice passed through Korenica¹⁹ on August 4 in the morning, while the residents of Korenica decided to move on Saturday, August 5 early in the morning. These columns decided to pass through Frkašić, Bijeli potoci and Kamenski on their way to Donji Lapac. They had to stop in Bjelopolje because something exploded in the sawmill. The column from Škare, Doljane, Zalužnica, Vrhovine, Trnavce came into contact with the Croatian army in Debelo Brdo. In case somebody thought that their withdrawal was a tactic move and that they would return home, they were immediately prevented from pursuing such thoughts after the events, which occurred later on. For instance, the tragic case of *Savka Hinić*, whose son Marinko, born in 1946, was killed in cold blood before her own eyes by a Croatian soldier.²⁰ After such an event, no one had to fear that the column would stop and return home.

The regions of the Drniš and Šibenik hinterland, Podinarje were abandoned on Friday early in the morning. Only a few people remained to live in the village of Ljubović near Gračac. One of them was killed on February 19, 1996 by an unknown perpetrator in her house. The other one, the last resident, abandoned the village after numerous attempts to survive there. There were around 300 persons living in Miočić. Two elderly women remained in the village. One of them passed away and the other was left on her own.²¹ In the village of Cvijane (Knin), there were 790 Serb residents living there. Only two remained in the village, a 85 years old man and a 80 year old woman. The column started off on August 4, in the morning. However on April 18, 1997 the village was completely abandoned. Most houses were burnt and some were plundered and devastated.

In the village of Cetina, which counted around 790 residents, only 9 elderly citizens remained living there. A woman, (Ana Barišić) was killed. Two persons were missing and one woman is staying at her relatives. *"It is good now in comparison with how it used to be after military operation Storm. They used to abuse us. The worst thing is that there is*

18 "Ah, a few things were stolen from me there. We lived in terrible conditions. We were hungry. We were not welcomed there. We received some aid, and nothing else, said Đuro Klačnja to the CHC activists on July 17, 1996.

19 Until January 1998 Korenica was called Titova Korenica. (Tito's Korenica)

20 His mother does not know the whereabouts of his grave. She returned home and he did not find her husband Milan for whom she neither knows where he was buried.

21 The village was completely destroyed and burned. (The field CHC activists on June 1, 1996)

no electricity. We cannot go to the city, because there is no connection" (no bus), told Božo Barišić to the CHC activists on April 18, 1997. Božo Barišić was born in 1932.

126 residents lived in the village of Kruge, (Lička Korita and Donji Lapac belong to the same region), on the eve of the war. 123 were the members of the Serb minority group. The residents of the village of the neighbouring Nebljus abandoned the village before the military operation Storm begun. The Serb army left the region even earlier. Only four persons remained to live in the village: the *Delić* family, mother *Saja*, born in 1904, her son *Dane* (born in 1925) and his wife *Bosiljka*, born in 1924 and the old woman *Saja Barač*. Allegedly *Jelka Blanuša* remained to live in the village also, but she "went somewhere" and until July 19, 1996 did not return to the village. No one was killed in the village, nor was the village burnt. Only *Dragica* and *Milan Blanuša's* family house was set on fire. Milan died three years before the war was over, and *Dragica*, of Croat ethnicity, moved to her relative's house in Delnice. All other houses were devastated and burnt, the interior of the house destroyed, and valuables stolen. The soldiers of the V corps, who came all the way to Donji Lapac and met there with the Croatian army, stole the cattle and more valuable objects.

The soldiers belonging to V corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army entered the villages of Nebljusi²² and Kruge without any fight at all. The Croatian army entered the village of Nebljusi on August 7, 1995. The soldiers of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army entered the village of Nebljusi on August 3, and Lapačka Korita on August 4, 1995 in the morning. The *Delić* family was literally "destroyed" that day. *Dane* left on his tractor on his way to Donji Lapac intending to personally enquire about the events.²³ Finding only chaos and panick, he decided not to leave his house. However, his tractor was stolen. In the meantime the Bosnian soldiers abused his wife and mother. Mother *Saja* disappeared and *Bosiljka* was found with serious bodily injuries. She was transferred to Bosnia with the help of some international humanitarian organisations and the acquaintances of her son from Bihać. She finally ended up in Velika Gorice at her son's house.²⁴ *Dane* ended in the collective centre in Zadar, where his son took him over. They returned to their house in May 1996 and found out that their house served as a military hospital of the 145th Corps leaving their sign on a completely devastated and plundered house.

22 According to the 1991 Census in Nebljusi lived 303 residents in 1991: 2 Croats, 287 Serbs, three Yugoslavs and "others".

23 I arrived to the gasoline station, and there I witnessed a complete mess. I see that I do not have any luck. There is nobody who sells the gasoline, but everybody pours gasoline. There was no order, no command. Eh, well I am not leaving with such people. I am not going anywhere. Then one older man, If I would see him now I would recognise him, leaves in the direction of the hotel Kamensko near gas station and puts him on fire. Well we will not leave the hotel to them, says he, and I felt as if something struck me down. Something is burning in the village. Nobody knows what is everybody else doing. I think municipality . "Since you are not going you will not need your tractor and they took it away from me. Later on I saw it in Lapac all destroyed. (*Dane Delić*, born in 1925, Lapačka Korita, in his statement to the CHC activists on July 19, 1996).

24 "And at the beginning? Nobody was shooting. Nothing could be heard. But I was sick. The Muslims beat me. They came from Bihać. Serbs were leaving and Muslim entering the village... Why? Well, where are the fighters? Where are the fighters? Asking me questions like this. Than beats me, my whole body. I couldn't get up. They struck me several times across my ribs, head, spine. Finally an acquaintance of my son from Bihać, took me away. I do not know how I reached my son. When? Who would remember that? (*Bosiljka Delić*, born in 1924, Lapačka Korita, to the CHC activists on July 19, 1995).

The mother, Saja Delić, was hospitalised in Knin, where she died from the consequences of beating on December 21, 1995. The family tried to find out about her whereabouts while she was still alive but they did not succeed. Finally in May 1996 they found out that she was buried in the Knin cemetery, without a name on the cross.

The Croatian army and the special police forces entered the villages of Donji Lapac, and Srb on August 7, 1995 in the afternoon. Prior to that event the villages of Donji Lapac and Srb were heavily shelled. A few residents waited in the village for the Croatian army to come. And most of them left after they witnessed the behaviour of the Croatian army, after they saw the Croatian soldiers burning, planting mines and killing. They went through the lines of the Croatian and Bosnian army.

"We awaited the Croatian army with happiness. We truly believed that they were our liberators. Our house was the HQ of the 113th brigade of the Croatian army from Šibenik. They did not beat us, but the police took us to prison in the village of Srb on August 9, 1995. A day earlier the commander searched our house twice. We were put in a solitary cell in Srb around 15 hours. We were told that we had been detained for our own safety. While we were in prison, we were not interrogated. We did not receive food or water. When they finally released us, I asked for a certificate by which they could confirm that we were imprisoned. The police officer replied that he could not give it to us because he did not have a proper stamp. When they brought us home we saw the tractor and the cart loaded with our stuff and two calves which hung slaughtered. They simply took away our stuff. I know the name of the commander of 113th Brigade who took part in stealing. His name was Zlatko. We reported the whole incident and were told that the police filed a complaint against an unknown perpetrator."²⁵

"At daybreak on Saturday, August 5, 1995 I looked through the window and there I saw a refugee column going through our village from Benkovac and Kistanje. All kinds of carts, cars, tanks, trucks with canons were passing through and there was dust everywhere. People, old and sick. An old man died in the cart near Ikan's vineyard and they took his body further on with them because they did not have time to bury him. There were no doctors, no proper medicine, water, food, while the sun was burning and the Storm was approaching, the roar of shelling was already heard. An even more unfortunate factor was that people ran out of gas, leaving tractors and other vehicles behind and continued on foot because they feared that cannons and tanks would cut the column and then the end would come. I also sat on the tractor and thought to move on, but then something inside me said. "Don't go". I got off the tractor and stayed." According to the diary report of B. A from the village of M, two-three days after he remained in the village with a few elderly people. "I am happy that I stayed here, because I was born here and I want to die here. I often regret that I stayed because I am not sure how long will I be able to cope with the situation here with all these old people. We do not have anything here, no buses, shops, stores, while bandits come everyday and abuse us, taking away everything. When somebody dies, there is no one to carry the coffin. The state does not care about us", a witness told to the CHC activists on 27 March 1999.

In the entire village of Mokro with 384 household objects, there remained only 80 persons. Seven of them were killed and a few disappeared. Twenty-six (26) persons remained to live in the village of Očestovo, thirteen (13) in Pađeni, eight or nine (8 or 9) in Bajić, over ten (10) in Zrmanja, Palanka, Uzdolje, twenty (20) in Orlić and five (5) in Velika Popina.

²⁵ T. K, born in 1930, from Lička Kaldrma, to the CHC activists on July 3, 1998

5.

The residents of Knin mostly left during Friday, August 4, 1995. The inhabitants of the Knin surrounding area left the following day. K. Š., a member of the Serb army, who was sent on a mission to Knin from Vrlika, witnessed the following events during his stay there.

"I did not know, nor did the local residents know, that on the position on the road there were 250 kilos of explosive buried there. There was a storm there that day on August 3, 1995 and the thunder activated the explosive.²⁶ Explosives were falling like rain, whole rocks were falling down near us and it was fortunate that no one got hurt. Now it seems that the explosion was caused in order to destroy the road but it was not so, because no one knew about the explosive.

Among 32 men who were at the time in the field (8 km from the first line) half of them run away immediately. On the day of the military operation Storm (August 4, 1995) there only remained 12 persons there, when grenades started falling on us. There were no forces going to Vrlika who could act as a strong military force and come to help us. There were no reserve positions. When the Croatian army attacked on August 4, I found myself surrounded because no one had told me anything about the true situation. They presumed that there was a great army waiting for them there, but in fact there was only I and five more soldiers there."

When he turned to his commander for advice, the latter told him that he should release his soldiers: *"Let them save their necks. There is no information from Knin, because the radio and telephone connections are cut."* K. Š. was told to leave for Knin and join the command of VII Corps and try to get at *"least two trucks"* for getting the soldiers out of the region. He walked all the way to Knin. *"I came to Knin around 4 o'clock in morning. The dawn begun. The city was empty and subjected to heavy shelling of the artillery. The shots were heard from all over the place. However the shots from the firing arms were not heard. The Krajina army withdrew on the road towards Krčić, in the way of TVIK and the DIZEL Depoe. I found various parts of military equipment thrown all around the place, uniforms, gas masks, water bottles. All traces clearly showed that the whole withdrawal routine was done in a hurry, but I did not see a single civilian. There were no traces of life. On the right side of the road (towards the administration of the Dizel Depot) I found a police car. There were marks which showed that it had been run over by a tank. It was completely crushed and a human leg was sticking out of it.*

I continued on my way towards the Command. I approached the barrack gate. around 10 a. m. there was only silence. I saw a car type Lada, there were two men sitting in the uniforms of the RSK army, around 25–30 years old. The car was pierced with holes at the height of the rib cage. The Croatian army did not enter the city at the time, therefore I do not know how they died. it is certain that they were killed by the machine gun shots.

In Knin there was a scary silence, and the day was nice and sunny. When I approached the Benkovac vine cellar I heard some kind of noise. I entered the premises and saw 4–5 soldiers in the Krajina uniforms. They lied completely intoxicated. They were terribly drunk and did not see me entering. "²⁷

26 The road towards Vrlika — Sinj, near the bridge called "Raba".

Some time between 10 a. m. and 11 a. m., on August 5, 1995, the Croatian soldiers were all over Knin. An air plane type *MIG 21* flew over it and shelled the entire region of the barrack North, although there was no one inside, besides three dead soldiers. Military motorization entered Knin from various directions, with a delay from the direction of Bukovica, on the road Zagreb-Knin. "*Machine shots were heard and screams but I am not sure whether these were the screams of victims or of fear.*"²⁸ The witness hid in the bushes, close to the Croatian soldiers and watched the raising of the Croatian flag on the Knin tower sometime before noon. He remained hidden there all night and the following day until the afternoon. He also remembered that the military vehicle LOV came from the direction of the Knin centre until the former shop DONA.

The city of Knin was, therefore, completely abandoned on August 5, 1995, Friday morning, around 10. The events in its surrounding area clearly showed that the city was not defended at all. The Serb army was disoriented even before the military operation started — meaning before the shelling of the entire region — their defence lines were abandoned. Some resistance was reported in Ljubovo and in Crvena zemlja, near Knin. The UNCRO staff knew about the beginning of the attack, and half an hour before it started it actually removed all officers and officials to the barrack South. The city was heavily shelled the entire day. The refugee column, on its way to Knin-Padene-Srb was also heavily bombarded.

"There is no doubt that Croats knew how to bombard civilian objects. Among the 30,000 grenades directed towards Knin, less than 250 hit military objects. Since the issue of being a poor shot was out of the question, it seems that the civilian objects were shot on purpose."²⁹

27 The destiny of these soldiers is unknown. The CHC has unconfirmed data that they were executed on the spot.

28 K. Š in his statement to the CHC activists, on February 11, 1995

29 General Alain Forand in his statement for the Hague investigators in the New York Times.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

Treatment of civilians — victims

Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law. (Article 2, Item 1 "Convention on Human Rights")

Members of the IHF mission reported various statements by civilians who were given shelter at the UNCRO camp. Some of them were abused physically and verbally. The UN soldiers, who would later on (from August 12), be distracted and prevented from carrying out their duty, brought some of them by car. Croatian soldiers brought others in. A disabled elderly woman said that when the residents left the village and left her alone that she was prepared to die. *"I heard the army coming, my God, is it theirs or ours. I nearly died, when I heard someone say: Look there is an old lady here. The other came to him and told him: Put her on the truck and take her to Knin. What about if I leave her here or kill her? said the other one. I heard this as in a dream. I heard like through the dream. Take this old lady away as it were your own, or off goes your head, said the other one again. May God be with them. good boys. I, scared, asked one of them what was his name in fear. "You talk too much old lady. We are "Cougars", remember: "Cougars are saving you". I have never heard of such a name. And now here I am. Where am I to go? poor me."*

Others (elderly and younger) were not so lucky.

Conclusion

Croatia suffered through the war with dignity in the worst possible moments. When it was weak and did not have a strong army, when the Vukovar was being destroyed, when Ilok was persecuted, when Dubrovnik was shelled. It always carried its tragedy with dignity. However, it kneeled down before victory. It could not carry out *the victory on its shoulders the same way. It could not bear victory with dignity...*¹

Predictions:

"...Does Zagreb wish to liberate the occupied territories, and really renew civil order over the rebellious Serb population or to conduct revenge against Serbs and drive them away?"

1 How to bear victory, by Jelena Lovrić, Novi list, August 27, 1995

Furthermore, is the Bihać aspect of the war merely a new occasion for the division of B-H or only an introduction for an alignment pact of all forces opposing the idea and practice of ethnically cleansed states? Tuđman would surely emerge out of this conquest victorious? However, the question is whether that would be a victory like the one in western Slavonia or will Tuđman, led by the western Slavonian² experience, be a moral victor this time? This matter will prove whether this is just another in the series of agreements between Zagreb and Belgrade, the results of which would be new human resettlements, columns of refugees and waste land. In other words, will the victory of the Croatian army be at the same time a victory of human rights, humanity, democracy and Croatia.”³

Promises:

Dr. Franjo Tuđman: “I ask all Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity, who did not take an active part in the rebellion, to stay in their homes, without any fear for their lives and property, and to wait for the Croatian authorities, with a guarantee that they will be given all citizens rights and that they will have a right to the elections for local administration according to the Croatian Constitution and the Constitutional Law with the presence of international monitors.” (President of the Republic of Croatia, August 4, 1995, in the message to the rebel Serbs, see before)

Nikica Valentić: “The government of the Republic of Croatia guarantees that the personal and property rights of all Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity in the recently liberated territories will be protected in accordance with to the constitutional and administrative order of the Republic of Croatia. (President of the government of the RC, in his message to Serbs, August 5, 1995).

Mr. Ivan Jarnjak: “To all persons who remained in the recently liberated territories or will return there, the Ministry of the Internal Affairs guarantees all security and safety as well as the return of their property, the legal public order and peace. All citizens of the RH who left these territories are allowed to return there if they wish to do so.” The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the RC to journalists on August 8, 1995).

Dr. Mate Granić: “The Government of the RC will ensure the fulfilment of all human and minority rights to all those who decide to stay in Croatia and choose it as their homeland. These rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.” (Vice president of the Government of the RH and Minister of the Foreign Affairs, in his letter to the leadership of the European Union on August 9, 1995).

Dr. Jure Radić: “We are not interested in the ethnicity of all those whose houses should be reconstructed. All those who lived in the recently liberated territories are for us citizens of the Republic of Croatia.” (Vice-president of the government of the Republic of

2 During military operation Flash the international humanitarian law was violated. Many out of court executions were carried out. Some victims were secretly buried in the mass graves, and some were burned. Serbs who remained in the region had to undergo various forms of abuse by the state officials and local men in power, and new comers from B-H. /report is being prepared regarding these issues/

3 Victory or “victory”, by Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, president of the CHC and Ivo Banac, a member of the CHC, Feral Tribune, on August 7, 1995 (Text was written on the day of the beginning of the Storm, August 4, 1995).

Croatia and Head of the Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, August 9, 1995 in his interview to journalist).

Dr. Adalbert Rebić: "We will rennovate the houses of the Serbs, who have to return, although almost 99% of the houses were preserved in the stormy attack of Croatian army. Regarding the private property, the issue of ownership is for our state a sacred thing." (Minister in the Government of the RC and the Head of the Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees, August 9, 1995)

Warnings:

**The UN Security Council demands that the Croatian authorities a) Respect the rights of the local Serbs including their right to stay, leave or return to safety. c) Create the conditions which lead to the process of return of all those persons who left their houses." (Resolution of the SC no. 1009, from August 10, 1995).*

The UN Security Council demands again that the "government of the Republic of Croatia undertake urgent measures in order to stop violations of international law and human rights and investigate and punish all perpetrators of such crimes. It repeats again all its demands that the government of the RC entirely respects the rights of the local Serb residents including their right to stay or return to safety." (Resolution of the SC no. 1019, from November 9, 1995)

"Direct evidence exist about the systematic plundering and looting of civilian houses and state-owned property, including firms, on behalf of the Croatian army, civil police and members of the special Police units." (Reports by the Commission of the Helsinki Federation of the OSCE, from August 25, 1995).

**Official Croatian statements, which called upon Serbs to stay or return to Croatia, were in complete disagreement with the reality. Even if these activities did not occurre as the result of a conscious official policy, the lack of efficient results which the Croatian authorities showed regarding the control and prevention of these incidents in a month period would surely place great responsibility upon the entire government." (Report by the Mission of the European Union, September 1995).*

The Committee appeals once again to all institutions of the Republic of Croatia to undertake energetic steps in order to stop this "violence" in the liberated territories of Croatia, and thus prove that the committed crimes are not a part of a plan of ethnic cleansing of the Serb ethnic minority in the Republic of Croatia. (Statement by the CHC on October 5, 1995).

The former Sector South, especially in the surrounding area of Knin, remains a region which is of the utmost concern. Permanent attacks, plunder and physical attacks in the region show that the measures taken by the Government in order to improve the safety situation in the region were relatively unsatisfactory."

(An additional report on the human rights situation in Croatia in accordance with the Resolution 1019, (1995) of the UN Security Council for the period of August 23, until middle of November 1996).

Tudman's regime and Tudman personality have confirmed our concern (see before) that the main target of the application of the armed forces was not the liberation of the occupied territories, and the establishment of the constitutional and civil order for all resi-

dents of the liberated regions in the Knin area, Lika, Kordun and Banija, but the creation of finally exclusive authorities who would treat Serbs in the same way that the usurpators of Martić's paramilitaries treated Croats." The continued departures of Serbs out of their own will, common murders of the remaining elderly citizens of the region, mass destructions of homes, arson, numerous obstacles to obtaining citizenship papers, are not and cannot be the strategy of a democratic society." Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, the CHC President and Ivo Banac, a member of the CHC "the war for the liberation of Croatia turned into a fight against free Croatian thought", Novi list, August 9, 1999)

The respect of human rights on behalf of the Government is still poor. The Government has continued to allow serious human rights violations, especially towards Serbs in the liberated territories (former Sectors North, South and West). Killings, plunder, threats continue, although to a lesser extent than the last year, and the Government is not doing anything to investigate, find and punish those responsible for such violations. Many cases of human rights violations from 1995, whose victims were mostly Serbs remain unresolved." (State Department Report on Human Rights Violations in Croatia for 1996).

A year after the military operation Storm, the Croatian government did not undertake appropriate measures to blame those responsible for the most serious human rights violations against members of the Serb ethnic group. Croatian police officers and members of the Croatian army who committed mass executions, forceful detentions, torture and other physical abuse, arson, theft and the destruction of entire villages, with rare exceptions, remained completely unpunished for committing their crimes. Although the government publicly stated that they had undertaken all possible measures for the fast return of Krajina Serbs to their homes, the Croatian government in reality created numerous legal and practical obstacles for their return." (Helsinki Watch: "Unpunished violations of the crimes committed during military operation Storm and limitations of their rights to return to Krajina", 1996)

Human rights violations in the region committed during and after the military operations Flash and Storm have been almost forgotten. If proper actions are not taken, the majority of the perpetrators might never be faced with the crimes they committed, and the victims might never be allowed to receive justice for their sufferings, and there is also a great danger that the facts be forgotten forever for the history. There is a serious threat that the Croatian authorities will show to the others that if they manage to survive all attacks and criticism, the international community will through time loose interest and start to deal with other issues..."

(Amnesty International: "Croatia — No Punishment for the Murders Committed after the Military Operation Storm, August 4, 1998)

Request:

"I feel a need and the call of consciousness that as a lawyer and humanist publicly state my opinion regarding the daily, loud and so many times ignored reports on the killings of civilians in the liberated territories. My message is short and clear and it goes like this: "The State of Croatia. So much longed for and dreamt about. Awakening and returning to the innocence of 1990–1992. Do not turn your face from the killed civilians — the elderly and helpless people. Take away this feeling of embarrassment, shame and de-

ceit.” (*Darko Paravić*, the former President of the Military Court in Rijeka, and awarded by the “badge of courage”, Novi list, October 5, 1995.)

Defence

1. “Under the military command of the president, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, under whose leadership we achieved the Croatian state, we led our flashes and storms to our pride for the Croatian presence and future—said Gotovina and added how he responsibly stated that the Croatian army did not commit a single war crime. For individuals, dressed in military uniforms, the Croatian army does not bear any responsibility.” (General Ante Gotovina, at the II electoral parliament of HVIDRA, Croatian Military Invalids of the Homeland War, “Večernji list”, 28 March 1999)
2. “A special action of the President himself was undertaken in order to protect civilians. Croatian and international humanitarian organisations immediately went to the liberated regions. The President’s action saved many lives and they could have been lost considering the scope of the military operation. President Tuđman has taken all appropriate steps in order to protect the civilian population.” (Ivica Kostović, president of the president’s office of the RH, April 1, 1999 in “Jutarnji list”.)
3. “Regarding the military operation Storm we have all the necessary documentation regarding the preparations, the implementation of the operation and we can support with arguments all that happened.” Minister of Defence, Pavao Miljavac, Jutarnji list, March 22, 1999.

Individual killings and mass executions

In December 1995, the special rapporteur of the UN Secretary General, *Elisabeth Rehn*, in her report stated that more than 120 Serb civilians were killed. She, furthermore, reported on numerous harassments and physical abuse on behalf of the Croatian soldiers, police officers and civilians, as well as mass arson and the abandonment of Serb property, although they did not leave Croatia. The President of the Republic, Franjo Tuđman justifies all this by stating that most of these crimes were committed by “Serb terrorists”. It was reported that Croatia accused 750 persons for the committed crimes and accused 230 of them formally. There is no data on court proceedings or court decisions regarding these crimes.

In January 1998, the special rapporteur of the UN Secretary General, stated the following data regarding the whole issue: “5580 court procedures were carried out in total in Croatia, regarding the former operations in the Sector South and North, and 359 are still in the investigative phase. There are 3785 cases at the first court instance, and decisions were brought in 1236 cases.” However, this is only statistics. The Amnesty International and the CHC were not able to obtain any data on these court procedures. There had not been any information regarding the whole issue in the press. Equally when the leaders of various state bodies had to deliver certain data regarding the issue, everybody

expressed a different opinion. Only a superficial analysis, and there is no sense in stating it here, points to all kinds of illogical facts. There is, therefore, no need in stating these illogical facts. The Croatian authorities cannot justify the continuous presence of tacit approval for crimes and their perpetrators.

The thesis of the former President of the Supreme Court, Milan Vuković, according to which *Croats in this defence war could not have committed any crimes*, became a leading statement by the state authorities when the issue concerning the crimes was concerned. Various organisations and the international public often warned about the issue and the reluctance of the Croatian authorities to find the perpetrators of these terrible crimes.

"During the military operation, the Croatian defence forces and special police forces committed numerous violations of international humanitarian right, including (but not solely) the shelling of Knin and other cities. During military operation Storm at least 150 Serb civilians were killed without a proper trial, and several hundred were missing." Warned the *New York Times* on 21 March, 1999 stating how the government of the Republic of Croatia did not do anything or did little to throw a special light on these events.

* * *

The CHC registered (see enclosure 1) the names of 410 *killed and executed* civilians, until the end of 1995 in Sector South only. There were a few among them who died from the consequences of wounding and harassment. Additionally the CHC added additional information on the killings of 24 persons from the beginning of 1996 until the 2 February 1999. Most of these persons were killed by surprise mines, planted everywhere, in ruins of the houses, gardens, fields, beds.

According to UN data, on October 10, 1995, General Alain Forand, registered in the UN Sector South 128 killed civilians among which the deaths of 87 were confirmed. It was estimated, according to "high criteria", that they lost their lives by force after the military operation Storm.

The UN and the European Community monitoring missions registered 163 killed civilians (and 17 killed Serb soldiers) until November 21, 1995. All civilians were elderly persons killed during the military operation Storm. Until November 16, 1995 all incidents will be analysed and appropriate steps taken before the Hague Tribunal for War Crimes. There is a wide range of human rights violations included in jurisdiction of the Hague tribunal.

Furthermore, the UN staff registered 15 dead bodies (among whom there were women and children who *"died from the consequences of the shelling of civilian houses"*). The CHC did not register this incident and a series of other incidents, which had been registered by the UN police officers. Therefore, the lists shown here are neither complete nor final.

The UN observers did not register a great number of victims, specifically because their relatives had not reported anything to them. These incidents include *"garden cemeteries"* which were not marked in any way. Specifically, not only the relatives of the victims, but others too, residents of the villages where the killings occurred were scared of retaliation. It is true that the perpetrators of the murders and the executors of the *"out of court killings"* did not notice witnesses to the crimes. In cases where the witnesses were seen they became victims as well.

In its report UN teams registered the case of one man, civilian from the village of Kakma near Benkovac, 75 year old civilian who was last seen on August 9, 1995 around 16, 20 when he was detained by the police. Around 17, 45 hours the same man was found dead — shot various times by firearms. The body disappeared the following day.

Two women were killed in Brgud, Milica Graovac and? Graovac, 56–70 years old. Milica Graovac *“was shot through the head in the dining room of her house. Blood stains, trash, etc. was spread all over the floor.”* The body was left in front of the house, and the other was found besides the road. Milica Graovac’s grave was found at the local cemetery (no one knows who buried her) while the body of the other woman disappeared.

In the continuation the following descriptions of some events will be reported:

Donji Lapac: The special police forces under control of general Mladen Markač, entered Donji Lapac on August 7, 1995, in the afternoon around 15 hours: *“I remained for a month and a half in the woods, here above the house. I stayed with Sava Tišma, born in 1914. I registered at the police. in 1995, and left Lapac in 1995. Muslims were the first one who entered the village and plundered it. (Dnopolje). I know that Serbs burnt the new hotel, police station. I know that three or four objects had been burnt even before the Croatian army entered the village of Lapac. They were shelling the village until 4 in the afternoon. The commander Markač came first to Lapac. Not a single shot was fired from the Serb side. there were no Serbs, nor anyone. Markač came to Donji Lapac on Monday, around 4 in the afternoon.”*⁴

At least 38 persons were killed in Donji Lapac. It was presumed that majority of the residents were killed also, however data are still incomplete. Milutin Medić, born in 1916/17 from Brezovac Dobroselski, was still alive at the end of August. The witnesses saw him in one of the Croatian television shows talking to the journalists and pretending to be safe and secure. Only a few days later he was killed by firearms and buried in the vicinity of his village. A few unidentified persons were killed in Donji Lapac. These persons were brought from various places. A few were killed, and burnt in a private shop in the village. A physician from Donji Lapac, Dražen Koritnik, Croat, 40 years old was among them. The authorities did not give any data on him but the witnesses state that they recognised his body by the clothes he was wearing.

Some were killed long after military operation Storm, the old man Savo Bursać, born in 1911 from Kaldurma Lička was killed in his house on August 24, 1995. He was buried on the lawn besides his house, which was immediately burnt after that. Four persons were killed in the village of Oravac. We shall discuss the event under the chapter “Mass Executions”.

Gračac: Đuro Mandić, 81 years old, decided to stay at his home in Tomingaj and finally meet his daughter Marija from Zagreb. His daughter Marija found him dead in the backyard of his house on August 25, 1995 when she finally received a permission to enter the village.⁵ She did not report the incident, because she was too scared, but buried her fa-

4 Z. L. called, “J”, born in 1928, Donji Lapac

5 Driving on to Tomingaj (at her own responsibility, that is how we were told at the police) we did not have any difficulties. The police patrols stopped us several times and checked our I. Ds. At the entrance to Gračac we noticed an improvised tent. The tent was marked by a street sign Ulica Ante Pavelića. Near the tent

ther besides the haystack. Finally on September 9, 1995 she reported her father's death to the Gračac police. They told her kindly that she should "let the things rest as they are" and that they would investigate the case and carry out exhumation, and that she would be informed about it on time. However, Marija Mandić did not leave her father's house immediately. Around 15 hours a group of police officers approached her house and exhumed her father's body. They did not allow anyone to come near to the sight. They claimed that they would take the body for the autopsy, and that they would later on inform her about the burial. She followed the cars and found out that they took her father to the Gračac cemetery. She demanded that they bury her father in the local cemetery or that she attend the burial in Gračac. The reply was negative. She only received a number 387 under which her father was buried at the cemetery without a name on the grave. Finally in 1996 she managed to receive a permission to transfer her father's body into the family tomb. When she asked whether the state would help her she was refused and told that she should pay to the state for allowing the municipality to bury her father instead of her.

That same day in *Zrmanje Vrelo*, September 29, 1995 two men were killed around 5 p. m. Milan Mrčetić born in 1948 in Gudura, and Dušan Šuica born in 1927 in Milanović: "I sat in the kitchen, Smilja Marčetić, called Smiljka⁶, told to the CHC activists on October 11, 1995, and Milan slept. Suddenly, four soldiers dressed in the green and mask uniforms entered the house with mask hats on the head. They asked for our citizenship papers and identification cards. Milan stood up. I showed them where to look. They started to search, pull out drawers etc. Then one of them took his rifle and pointed to Milan's throat and took him away." They killed him 150 meters away from the house. They shot him four times and took his ID and left.

Dušan Šuica was killed in the hay-barn near his house in Milanović. The soldiers took his ID from him.

That night 10 soldiers entered the village. "Some had bullet-proof vests and yellow and green uniforms and some masked hats. They were between 30 and 40 years old. Their leader was fat, short and had moustaches and two signs on his shoulders and was in red pants."

Knin: There were lots of people killed in Knin. However their number is still not confirmed. Many civilians were killed in the city or in the surrounding area of Knin. These people were killed by shells and were executed by the first Croatian military troops. Ljubo Đapić from Biočić was killed near "Nenadić pump" at the entrance to the city of Knin. His tractor ran out of gas, so he returned to the pump to fill it up. Jelena and Simo Paklar saw his body in the canal while leaving for the UNCRO shelter. They saw several dead people in the canal "already packed in bags" or without bags. "We saw a woman without a head and many killed persons in tractor, who tried to get out of Knin. All of them were civilians" Said C. T. from Paklar in Biočići.

I saw a dog house. Jovica was written on it. We finally entered the yard. Chicken, a couple of sheeps, pigs. It means that a father was somewhere around. How come that he did not hear us, I come to the hay-barn and I stopped breathless. I found my father's Đuro dead body near the wall." (Marija Mandić)

6 Smilja Marčetić, the CHC activists visited her on April 16, 1998. She was very sick and she died the following day.

The witnesses will state that in some parts of Knin there was a true "body count". 14 fire cisterns came to Knin in order to pick up the dead bodies, wash down the streets from blood and only then where the UN teams allowed entering the city.⁷

*"They drove them from the crossroad to the barrack towards the cemetery. On Sunday (August 6, 1995) around 10 hours. The blood was pouring all over the place, the brains were falling down and it was horrible. that day when we went on our way to report to the police. There was a truck full of them. They were in uniforms. There was a lot of spilled blood in front of the police station. There were 7 dead bodies at the entrance to the bar. One, killed across the street was in the uniform."*⁸

The witness who hid near the city saw two executions. The police vehicle took part in the latter one. There was one person dressed in the police uniform and two others were civilians. "A vehicle turned to my house. I did not see anything, but I heard. They shouted and screamed: Open up, Open up. *the doors opened and the voice was heard. And what? And afterwards I hear 5-6 gun shots.* That happened on August 5, around 11, a short time after entrance of the Croatian army into Knin. It seems that somebody stayed at his/her house and that the newcomers knew where he was and shot him immediately. The witness saw execution of the several (the number was not confirmed) persons in civilian and army uniforms. "I saw a group of 5-6 persons in the masque uniforms who stood on the upper side of the road. I saw two men standing, and a few persons kneeled down before them. There was one woman among them. They were killed by shots into back of their heads. One of the standing man shot them. The one who was turned by his back. Tam 2000 van in green colour was parked up on the road. It had Zadar registration plates. When the army moved through the city, they could have stepped over me, so I moved to the other position, which gave me a better shelter. In the 15 minutes time I heard the Tam vehicle move on and going down to Knin. There was only one man inside, civilian driver, 40 years old with a moustache. He had a blue coat on and not a uniform. The vehicle passed above me, and when it went down to the city, I saw that it carried dead bodies. He had to slow down because of the barricades on the road besides the mill, and I clearly saw the numerous bodies piled like wood inside the van. I do not know whether these bodies came before or after the execution."⁹

In Knin nobody could obtain information whether somebody was killed or not. Nobody was allowed to bury the dead. Nobody was allowed to come near the cemeteries. Jovan Treskavica, born in 1942, was a disabled man, a guard in the firm "Dinarka". He stayed and continued to work in spite of the chaotic situation. From time to time he left his factory in order to see whether everything was under control. When the Croatian soldiers entered the town and found a shelter with his wife *Draginja* and several other women they were ordered to leave for the UNPRO camp. On her way passing by the old military bakery, she saw her husband Jovan dead on the boardwalk. She ran towards him but was cruelly pulled back and forced to move away. He was lying in blood and on his stomach. She has never found out what happened and where he was buried. Some witnesses claim that they saw him with his throat cut.

7 The Croatian army had in their logistics truck prepared for washing down the streets.

8 N. R. born in 1933, in her statement to the CHC activists on January 8, 1999

9 K. Š.

His wife could not attend his funeral. It is presumed that he had been buried in the city cemetery, but the number is not known. She did not receive any information about him. He was proclaimed dead in the court with an unknown place of burial.

Milan Milivojević, born in 1911 and a son Ilija, born in 1933 were killed in the house from a firearms on August 7, 1995. They registered previously at the Croatian police and were in contact with the Croatian authorities. The UN patrol reported their deaths on August 12, 1995. When the Croatian police arrived to the sight, they made the whole "performance" there. They did not allow the monitors to approach the house, and finally after a short "investigation" they said that the Serbs planted the surprise mines there after killing both father and a son. In such a way, the most serious crimes were covered up. It was interesting that all knew the identity of dead persons and nobody knew the sites of their burials.

The Croatian soldiers entered the village of *Strmica*, after they shelled it from a direction of Bosansko-Grahovo — Knin. Some ten elderly residents remained in the village. The village was already abandoned on July 28, 1995. At the house of the M. M, a woman called Jovanka Mizdrak, called Joka was found, /51 years old/ and old lady Đuka Momić (died). The soldiers ordered them to leave in front of the house and sit on the bench. When they sat down one of the soldiers approached them and ordered the old lady to stand up and sit several times.

Since the lady is old and ill, she did not perform the command easily. Then one of them said: *Kill her!* and pointed to Jovanka Mizdrak. He shot Jovanka with several bullets. Blood spilled over two other women, who froze from fear but remained alive.¹⁰ The old ladies (M. and Đuka) had to stand besides the military column. They asked me: *"Do you hide any Chetniks around here? Do you have any weapons?" I told them that my son had a hunting rifle. They took the rifle and bullets away. So that's it. for three days I did not know whether I would stay alive or whether they would kill me. They immediately took everything away from the house. They took staff from the empty houses and also from our house. They took away everything that was worth wile. They took a calf from me, slaughtered him and took him away, 4 lambs, 3 sheep. Some men in uniforms took 10 pieces of smoked ham. They took my agricultural tools for tilling land, lawn-mover, all connections, television, 2 radios, lots of tools, welding machine, 3 suitcases, chain-saw, new washing machine, all better goods. Who would be able to remember everything? Nothing could be saved. You only keep quiet and try to save your own neck."*¹¹ 15 people were killed in Strmica, at least 8 civilians. A few of them were buried in gardens, like Mićo Bačkonja, a retarded man, 40 years old,¹² and the whereabouts of the other graves is still not known. The citizens pointed to two grave mounds on one meadow. They did not know who was buried there. Two sisters, Anđa and Draginja Dragaš, 65 years old, sick and old, almost disabled, were burned alive at the end of August. Da-

10 If the soldier told Joki Mizdrak to stand up and sit down again, she could have done it, because she is young and healthy. Porbably he got mad because Đuka could not get up fast enough. I am glad that he did not tell me to do that, because I could not have done it, I hardly walk. And what were we to do. We waited for couple of days and found our Joka, put her on the cart and buried her nearby the stream in the hole made by a grenade. She is still there. (M. M. to the CHC activists on April 9, 1998.)

11 M. M., the same

12 Draga Stojković, with the help of two other women buried him near the house.

mir Zorić burned them together with the house. Charges were pressed against him and currently there is a trial against him in Šibenik. The monitors established that the police troops did not have any discipline and that Zorić had not even been asked to report burning down the house and two women inside. The exculpatory circumstance is that he allegedly did not know that sisters Dragaš were inside the house. The procedure was not completed until now.

In the village of Oton — part called Bender¹³, ten elderly citizens remained. They took shelter in the nearby woods waiting for the moment to return home. Nikola Pašić, born in 1948, blacksmith, came with them. Upon his return to his house they found him shot with multiple bullet holes behind the house. They buried him in the garden. On March 1996, he was transported to the village cemetery near Čupković bridge,¹⁴ with consent and efforts on behalf of the then commissioner of the government of the RC for the city of Knin, *Petar Pašić*. According to V. P. who was with him immediately before his death, when he returned N. Pašić, *"was all cut over his stomach by a knife and stabbed by a knife in the muscle near the heart"*¹⁵ After military operation Storm, some Croat women came into the village. These Croats were from Croatian villages where the Krajina lines were established. They were looking for him and wanted to protect him because he had helped them a lot by giving them food when he was on the front lines. He was a cook in the army". testified his cousin and neighbour L. P,

In Oton, a part called Brdo two old men were killed Ilija Sudar born on 1922 and Branko Sudar, born in 1937. The date was not known. *"I enter the house and nobody is there. I find "a slaughtered goat. I go to the yard and the poor man was lying near the well, near to the main house, his head was in the direction of west, and his feet were in the direction of the east.*

The worms are crawling out of his head. I raise his head and I see that his brain was splashed, his head butchered. Tomorrow I buried him in the garden, near the well. ."

*"We found about the murder of Ilije Sudar from some soldiers. they say that he should have been buried because his corpse smelled bad. I and V. K. went there. We found dead Ilija. He lied on his belly in the garden with his head towards the south shot various times. We buried him on the meadow near the road."*¹⁶

In the third part of Oton, called Polje, two Martas Vujnović, one born in 1910, and the other in 1905 and her son Stevo, born in 1939 were killed. First Marta Vujnović was killed on August 18, 1995, near the burnt house. At that time her son *Jovan*, who did not

13 A part of Oton, called Bender had 36 family house with 198 residents. After military operation Storm, 10 residents remained in the village. The Croatian army burned 6 houses in the village. Four persons returned to the village from exile until July 11, 1998.

14 This is the only example where the authorities helped some families to be buried at the domestic cemetery. Usually, people were usually buried in the "garden graves". Later on their bodies disappeared. The services in charge dug the bodies out in presence of the police, carried them for the autopsy and buried them at distanced and far away cemeteries. The relatives, when they found out, the whereabouts of the bodies, had to dig them out, and bury them at their own expense.

15 Storm was early in the morning. The people ran away. Nobody called us and we did not have any vehicle to move on with, so we stayed. The army came. They were all dirty. They asked me about my son. I lied that I did not have a son. And they told me: "Scram — meaning run". So I ran. My wife Savka stayed at home and later on she came to the woods. (V. P. in his statement to the CHC activists on July 11, 1997).

16 A witness M. K., born in 1926, July 4, 1997 to the CHC activists.

leave the house during military operation Storm slaughtered the calf for the Croatian soldiers. He heard shots and saw smoke but he did not know which house: *"And what could I have done, I buried my mother at the same spot at which I found her. I did it all alone. I wrapped her in the sheet, dug a very deep hole in the ground and placed her there. I marked the grave with two stones."*

Marta Vujnović, disabled woman, was killed that same day in the hamlet near the village. Her son Stevo was killed in the yard near the barn. The bodies were taken on September 6 in the unknown direction. Marta's body remained in the house until the end of October. When the authorities took the remaining parts of her body, they left the skull, which was later on found by her other son who returned from exile on September 6, 1996. The fact that the old lady was found naked was not cleared.

Eight persons were killed in Oton. A few disappeared. The village was almost completely destroyed by the soldiers who lived there for some time.

In Vrbnik, on the road near Knin-Drniš, nine (9) persons were killed, and a few disappeared. Lazo Damjanić, born in 1933, was killed in the village. *"We went to bed peacefully on Saturday night, August 5"* said his wife Vesela. *My husband Lazo got up on August 6, 1995 and went for a bit of wine for breakfast. He ate some smoked ham and drunk a glass of wine when two young soldiers with pigtails arrived. The third one remained on the road. They shot at the house and asked who was hiding inside. Poor Lazo got out, they took him by the hands and left with him. When they arrived to the road, you know he suffered from a stroke and was shaking his head all the time, they told him: shake your head, shake it. you shan't be doing that for long time.*

*I screamed and pleaded. "Please children do not leave me alone with these two invalids."*¹⁷ And they shouted back. Move back you Serb whore or we will kill you too. They shot twice in the air. The third one will be yours. They took him and killed him there below the hill. My poor son found him who crawled on his feet to find him. He was looking for him three days. The third day a car passed by. They asked me what was I waiting for. I say they drove away my old man. They replied: you shan't see him alive again. I ask Will I see him dead again? They say: If you manage to find him. He was buried at the Knin cemetery after 16 days.¹⁸

Savo Vukmirović, 73 years old, suffered from a brain stroke, and remained disabled. He remained alone at his home. The witnesses saw him alive before the Croatian army entered the village. The soldiers burnt his house, hay-barn and several nearby houses. When his son Željko from Split and his daughter Milena from Zagreb, came to visit him they found only some burned bones.

17 Vesela and Lazo Damjanić, (lived alone, and suffered from a stroke, disabled) took care about Lazo's deaf sister and the retarded son in wheel chair.

18 "When I finally arrived up, I covered him with hay and put one branch over him. He layed there for 16 days. They promised but did not come. On August 13, Krešo Čosić went there again. They said that they would arrive in four days time. One little boy said. Common on you Serb whore, let me take a picture of you. I did not want my picture taken. He slapped me over the face. Thze policeman shouted at him: Leave the woman alone, she has enough as it is. I begged them, and pleaded with them to bury him in the tombstone that he himslef built. They did not want to. They put him in the black bag and on the car. I threw a bit of earth upon his body, it is a tradition, and the little one slapped me again. The police officer protected me again. And that is how my husband was buried under a number 498, and they knew all data about him. (Vesela Damjanić, born in 1937 in her statement to the CHC activists on April 29, 1997)

Staka Škarić, born in 1919, or 1920, returned from the refugee column back home again. She was last seen alive two–three days after military operation Storm, and on Wednesday, August 9, 1995 she was found dead in the corner of her wine cellar.¹⁹ Marija Škarić and Milka Šurdonja buried her.

Radovan Amanović, born in 1957, remained to live with his mother Mara in their family house. He was ill and did not have any military obligations. He was killed in the centre of the village, near the former public house. Old man, Đuro Amanović, called Đoko, was also killed there. First they were buried near the house and later on their bodies disappeared.

A group of 17 residents from Vrbnik, who were found by the soldiers belonging to the brigade Puma from Varaždin were more fortunate. They took them all and closed them in one of the nearby village garages. On Sunday, around 11, they took all of them to UNCRO camp, telling them that they would not be safe in the village taking into account the behaviour of those “coming after them”²⁰.

In the period since August 6, 1995 until September 28, 1995, when Croatian soldiers lived there, 7 persons were killed in Mokro polje. Ružica Babić, born in 1926 who lived alone, very ill and almost disabled. The Croatian soldiers killed her on her own doorstep on August 6, 1995.²¹ Milan Demir, born in 1942, retarded. A hand grenade killed him. When he saw the soldiers he got scared and started to run. 7 grenades were shot after him. Not one of them exploded. He was killed on the so-called Bolta's fence, where the local residents buried him. His house was also burnt that day.

Jovan Popović will say the following regarding deaths of his brother Mirko, born in 1952 and his mother Stana Popović, born in 1926, on August 7, 1995. “*That day the Croatian soldiers entered the house and interrogated me. I showed that my ID in which it clearly stated that I was permanently liberated from army service. They took me with them all around the village. I went through horrible period, some individuals threatened me, put gun to my throat etc. Finally they let me go home.*

I lied down very tired and exhausted. Suddenly I heard shots. I thought that the army was killing chicken. But I heard my mother screams. When I heard that a Croatian soldier

19 “On Tuesday, or Wednesday in the afternoon I started off towards a wine cellar, and shouted. Oh, Stako, Stako. She did not respond. I entered a wine cellar and found her in the corner dead. The face was all blooded. I went to fetch Mika Šurdonja, in order to help me take her into the house. We put her in the house in the evening and buried her the day later. (Mrija Škarić, born in 1925, to the CHC activists, on May 6, 1997)

20 “They bombarded us on Friday and on Saturday night (August 5, 1995) took us who stayed. On Friday the people started off and I did not want to. there were 17 of us. They locked us in the garage. On Sunday around 11 they took us to the UNPROFOR camp. They treated us nice, and did not harass us. When you go down to Knin on the curve there were many dead lying there, I cannot tell how many. They were corpses in uniforms and not in the civilian clothes. (Anica Vukadin, to the CHC activists on April 10, 1998).

21 She walked with a help of a stick. I visited her on Sunday morning and brought her a piece of pasta. She told me that she was afraid. She asked me whether I had arrived with my tractor to take her to the village of Babići. I did not arrive with a tractor I promised to take her in a few days time if I survive. Let the God be merciful to you. I feel sorry that I could not take her with me. I do not have peace, and my consciousness hurts, because Ruža was killed that day. When I returned I found her dead on the doorstep of her house. You see these holes, these are bullet holes and this is a sign of the IV Brigade of the Croatian army. (A witness, B. A. on May 21, 1997)

scream. I killed one more. we have to burn him before the monitors arrive. and through the window I saw officers shouting: Do not shoot any more, or I kill you. I finally understood that something was happening. I went down the stairs and saw my brother killed and my mother choking from the wound on the throat. I raised her and she showed me to run away, and asked for water. Soon she passed away. The bullet went through the lips and it stuck in the TV screen.²²

Father and husband Obrad, born in 1919, will add: *"I sat at the table when they killed my wife and son. I accidentally remained alive. We were not allowed to bury our dead during day. We waited for the night to fall down and around 23 hours we took their already rigid bodies in our car and took them 300 meters down hill and buried them on our meadow called Popovića gaj."*

Stevan Sučević, born in 1934, was killed on August 9, 1995. He was shot in his back. His body was burnt later on. He was buried in Knin.

Jeka Kanazir, born in 1928, killed on August 10, 1995, and thrown in the well. Her body was found on September 20, 1995.²³

Sava Babić, born in 1913, was killed on September 28, 1995 with two bullets in her son's car. Bullet wounds were visible on her forehead and bellow her nose.

In the second half of September, a male body was found in Mokro Polje on the land called Mrduša. The body was found decomposed. The witness will state: *"He lied on his side. The right part of his head was blown apart. He was missing teeth. The remaining yellow hair was hanging from his head. He had a white shirt on, blue T-shirt, and black velvet trousers. He had simple peasant sandals on his feet with a rubber sole. I found a watch beside him, with an inscription of the firm "Radnik" from Benkovac for 40 years of work there. I thought that the body could belong to Obrad Trivić who worked there."²⁴*

Ruža (born in 1937) and Stevo Manojlović (born in 1940) from Ivoševac, who looked for a shelter in that village. *"I saw Ruža and Stevo Manojlović burnt bodies on the concrete in front of the farm house. At first I could not recognise them, because the whole scene looked horrible. They lied one beside the other. Ruža's arm was lying not far away from her body, and I found her other hand in front of the farmhouse on the road. It seems that they tortured them before they killed them and then they burned them. The civilian troops for protection put them both in one black bag and took them to Novo groblje in Knin."²⁵*

"Bandits come every day, they set on fire hay-barns, haystacks and take everything they find from the houses. They kill cattle, cows, pigs and chicken. The smell is awful and one cannot breath freely, and the smoke from burning falls down on the meadow as fog.

22 This is horrible what is going on. They came and took away 2, 5 tons of honey, and offer me 10 DEM. Wedo not have any conditions to live. My house is 25 km from Knin, and we do not have any transport to Knin. We cannot go there to buy fundamental staff for living.

23 It is not sure whethere Jeka Kanazir threw herself into the well, in spite of the fact that in the village nobody believes that. The wintesses state that she was afraid of Croatian soldiers and that she said: "They asked me something and I froze from fear and peed in my pants"

24 The police found remaining parts of the unknoww male on September 21, 1995. They confirmed the name Obrad Trivić, took him away and buried him. However this presumption is not correct because Obrad trivić is alive and it is still not known who was buried under his name at the Knin cemetary.

25 A statement by B. A. who found keys of the tractor and the family houses besides their bodies. By cheking the keys he confirmed the identity of the killed person.

On August 8, 1995 on Wednesday for the first time the army enters the village, a group of 8 soldiers, to search the village and find weapons. I told the old woman Sava and Mirko that I had to wait for them in front of the house. They came in front of the house and said that there was nobody there. I approached them and told them that there were only three of us there and that they did not have to fear anybody that they were free to enter the house and I offered them some wine. They accepted the offer and told me to pour some for myself and drink first because they were afraid that I might poison them. Four of them entered the house, and started looking for weapons, gold, money and the rest of the stuff. Their commander stayed in the field and started to vomit from the food he ate. When one of the soldiers saw that, he started to run down the stairs and scream and point the automatic rifle towards me. "You fucking Serb, Chetnik, why did you poison him?" But fortunately the commander shouted back: "Do not kill the man, I am sick from the food I ate, and not the wine" That is how I managed to stay alive, although I was already prepared to die. The one who wanted to kill me came from Šibenik, and was called Bili, and the other soldier, very good man, told us that Bili was a criminal, released from prison a few days earlier. However, that same Bili came the following day with two more soldiers and took away 8 smoked hams, and on their way through the village they set Mica's hay barn on fire and burnt it down together with a cow, a calf and a pig, which they managed to save."²⁶

72 persons remained in the village after military operation Storm. Some were killed and others died. Some of them moved away. Presently there are 39 persons living there. There were 1359 persons there before the war started.

16 persons were killed in Plavno. Mile Samardžija from Padani, was killed also. He was a shepherd of the village and guarded the sheep most of the times in the region of Međugorje (mountain on the crossroads between Bosna, Lika and Dalmacija). During the military action Storm he was herding the sheep. He came down the mountain in Torbički Vagan, to Ilija Dragašić's house. He slept at his house for two nights, and was last seen leaving with the police towards his cabin. When his wife alarmed everybody that he was gone, the search for him was organised. He was found 6 or 7 days after military operation Storm dead near his cabin. His dog and a sheep were laying dead beside him. The search from the village of Plavno buried him beside his cabin.²⁷

The Croatian army entered the village of Plavno with tanks on August 6, 1995 and the residents left Plavno during August 4, 1995. The soldiers in the troop arrived later, and had black ribbons around their heads. The groups of soldiers spread all over the village. They shot, without any warning or discussion, everything that moved through the village. 13 elderly people were killed that day, mostly in their yards and gardens. They were shot by firearms mostly. Dušan Savić, born in 1908, was found cut to pieces in his shed. Kuzman Pajić, born in 1900, was shot at his doorstep, in spite of the fact that he raised his hands above his head and surrendered. Savo Đurić, born in 1942, disabled, in wheel chair was burnt. "The soldiers were setting everything on fire and singing: Look how the Kijevo is burning. At the time of the attack, Savo Đurić was staying at his home with his mother and his wife and daughter were hiding in a cellar in the village. The sol-

26 A witness, B. A.

27 He guarded almost 300 sheep. He received 10 DEM for a sheep and it was worth while to him. (K. L. born in 1922, to the CHC activists on April 18, 1997)

diers set Đurić's house on fire and then forced his mother out of the house and threw the son-invalid into the burning workshop. Later his mother and wife collected the burned bones and buried them.²⁸”

Petar Perić was stabbed by a knife. He was leaning against the wall of his own house on August 6, 1995 around 18 hours. His wife Danica, born in 1923 would say: *“I went after him. I found him lying in front of the house. I said: Oh my God, why are you lying here, but I hear no reply. I repeat it again, but he did not respond. I moved him, and saw a pool of blood underneath his body. On Friday they left. He could not leave because I was very ill. The army did not enter the house. Three or four days later soldiers entered the house and burned the lower part of the house, and the upper part of the house was blackened. They took everything worth while.”*²⁹

His wife Sava, born in 1917, found her husband Todor Savić, born in 1908, dead in the hen-house: *“His legs on the doorstep and the head inside. The rooster was lying on his head. I raise the head and found my hands full of blood. I tore up his shirt to see whether his throat was cut, but no. It seemed that a bayonet killed him. All his internal organs were spilled out. His stomach was cut various times. I cannot tell you how the whole scene looked.”* That same day, the Croatian soldiers set the upper house on fire, and burned the old house and the hay-barn where three old cows were burned. Two Croatian soldiers came and abused her, and pointed the rifle from her shoulder and shot towards the house. They were looking for sons, and took away some things from her.

Two old men, Kuzman Paić, born in 1900, and his neighbour, Todor Savić, called “Dušan” were killed in their yards, buried together in the rocky ground above their house.³⁰

Branko Šimić, born in 1949, was a mentally ill man. He lived with his mother Vasilija and his sister, also mentally ill. A group of Croatian soldiers entered the village on Sunday night. 10 women were imprisoned and closed in a shed. Branko was taken away and his watch was taken off his hand. The mother explained that he was “he was mentally ill and nervous man” and asked them not to hurt him. They replied that they were taking him for “*medical treatment*”. He was killed and buried there.³¹

Lazo Dubajić, born in 1920, was shot near his house. The residents of the village took him when the night fell down and buried him on the spot where he had been killed. A year and a half later they dug out his body and buried it in his own field.

Most of the residents of the village of Plavno were in constant fear and look out for the bandits who were all the time stealing from them regardless of the presence of the police. Pavao Savić, born in 1906, after a series of repeated harassment hang himself and Joka Petković, born in 1923 drowned herself in the well of *Miloš Marinković*.

28 The note by the Regional Centre Knin, on May 26, 1996.

29 Danica Perić, had many difficulties while trying to obtain her documents and proclaimed her husband dead in order to receive his pension. The husband was proclaimed dead in 1997. The CHC helped her achieve this.

30 Here my father and a neighbour were buried one beside another. Todor savić was found dead in front of his house. He was found mutilated. His liver was falling out of his body. /petar paić to the CHC activists on November 20, 1996).

31 In the house myslef and my daughter, still sick, are living here. The lootings are usual. The stole my fridge. There were two of them dressed in uniforms. They told us to leave with Chetniks. .” (Vasilija Šimić, to the CHC activists on Novebmer 20, 1996).

Several persons were killed in the village of Žagrović. Jovo Dmitrović, born in 1936 was killed by Croatian soldiers on August 6, 1995. *“When the Croatian army entered the village on August 6, 1995, he waited for them at his doorstep. They pointed their guns to him and he was begging them not to kill him because he did not do anything wrong. He was slowly withdrawing from the doorstep, when they shot him. The traces of the shots were seen on the aluminium doors. The doors were later on taken away and his house was plundered. His corpse laid there for 21 days.”*³²

Stevan Dmitrović, born in 1943, who was living alone, was killed that same day. When he saw that the soldiers killed his neighbour Jovo, he started to run. While jumping over the fence, the bullets killed him. He hanged on the fence for 21 days.

Milka Korolija, born in 1907, from Ivoševac, was killed on September 9, 1995. At the beginning of the military operation Storm she moved to her son's house because his family decided to remain in Krajina. On September 8, she wanted to see what was happening to her house in the neighbouring village. They took her there and left her to spend the night. *“The following morning on September 9, 1995 my daughter and son-in-law came to visit me from Split. They remained in the house and I went to visit my mother in law and took her something to eat. A civilian with a rifle passed beside the house at the moment and told me: Why don't you go to Serbia? What are you doing here? Are there any cows in village? He was not friendly at all and I got rather scared. I wanted to leave the house immediately and wanted her to come with me. She did not want to leave and said that they would plunder her entire house. I left her there and prepared lunch, and then I heard everything that happened. The mother in law was killed soon after I left her there. My neighbour M. heard the shots, and found my mother in law killed at the doorstep of my house.”*³³

At least 14 people were killed in Ivoševci, while 10 more were considered missing. Jovan Relić, born in 1924, was killed in his wine cellar on August 8, 1995. Residents buried him in the garden. He was officially proclaimed dead by the Court and transferred to the family vault. Mirko Štrbac, born in 1910, deaf and disabled, was killed in his home and burned there. Gojko Korolija, Dušan Korolija, born in 1949 was thrown into the well, where he was found on September 12, 1995. The old lady, Manda Tišma, 65 years old was killed by a soldier *Željko Šunjerga*. The case was processed but he was released. His defence was based on the fact that Manda Tišma had a hand under her apron and that he thought that she held a gun and shot her. But, M. Tišma did not have a gun under he apron. In spite of the fact that she had a family vault in Ivoševci, she was buried in Krin under a cross with a name on it.

In the village of Cetina, Ana Barišić was killed, 90 years old, while *Sava Barišić* and, 68 years old and *Stana Kurbasa*, born in 1920 disappeared.³⁴

32 Statement by R. D. (f), Croat, born in 1943 in Tenja, Osijek, told to the CHC activists on June 17, 1997. She adds: *“...he was a good man, and a valuable worker. He did the most difficult jobs working in TVIK factory. He poor man lived alone. His wife died and they did not have children. He liked to eat a lot and he was very fat. He did not want to run away with the others but remained to live in his house.*

33 K. D told to the CHC activists on January 7, 1999.

34 After military operation Storm many persons came to the village. They were dressed in uniforms and these were not the same people who passed through the village first. The first ones were very nice. They did not touch us. The ones who came later did terrible things. After military operation Storm in the village remained besides five of us (Milica Četnik, borin in 1925, Gojko Četnik, born in 1921, Božo Barišić, born

Some hamlets in the surrounding area of Podinarje were impossible to reach. The residents of these hamlets left the area on time, only a few elderly people remained to live there. Two old women remained to live in one house there, and one man from Knin, who took part in the military operation Storm, visited them several days in the row, brought them food and helped them. One morning he found them with their throats cut open.³⁵

On August 16, 1995, Ilinka Crnogorac, born on 1928, was killed in the village of Polača. A witness said to the CHC activists on April 18, 1997: *"I and my husband found her dead in the house. She lied in the corridor, all in blood. She was shot in the back. We found bullet shells, and we suppose that she was killed from the rifle. The people, who were in the village at the time, told us that a group of them came and killed her. This happened on August 16, after the Storm."*

Both, persons dressed in civilian and army uniforms participated in mass executions. Many persons were killed without any particular reason or motive. That is how Uroš Ognjenović, born in 1928, and his neighbour Uroš Šarić, born in 1920 were killed in the yard of their family house, while *Radoslav Ognjenović*, born in 1910 and *Mirko Ognjenović*, born in 1920 were wounded. Three unknown men killed them: two were in military suits and one was in civilian clothing. They came to the village in the evening hours. They first verbally abused and harassed the mentioned persons and later on someone shot them with the automatic rifle. The murdered persons were buried on August 24, 1995 in Zadar, anonymously, under a number without a name, although it was known who were the persons. The sanitation services did not allow that a son of the killed Uroš Šarić, *Srećko*, born in 1951 (Osiječka 12) attend the funeral. When he enquired about the whereabouts of his father's grave, nobody was responsible.³⁶

in 1932, and Marko Barišić born in 1956) Sava Barišić and Stana Kurbasa remained in the village also. Nobody knows anything about them. Stana Barišić was burned in the house. There can still be found bones, fingers in the room where she was killed. You go and you will see. I saw the, She was over 90 years old and disabled. (Božo Barišić, born in 1932 to the CHC activists on April 18, 1997)

35 I found these two old ladies. The most miserable sight. Very poor especially now. Scared and poor. I told them not to fear any more, that we are not Ustashas. I came the following morning and brought them bread, oil and a few other things. I visited them several days in the row. One morning I come and they did not show up. I entered the house and found them dead. I went mad. I knew who did it. I saw this fool one day coming towards me, laughing. I told him to stay out of way, because if I go crazy I might report him or kill him myself. No, I do not wish to talk about it now, but maybe one day. This should not go on unpunished, because we did not fight for that. I entered the Knin among first ones, you should have seen what was going on there, maybe one day, now it is not the time." (L. D. told to the CHC activists on April 19, 1997).

36 On August 25, 1995 I received a confirmed information that a day before a field team collected bodies of two persons and transferred them to the Zadar cemetery for burial. The identity of persons was not established and they were buried under NN marks. When I asked about some information about my father I was told to report to the police station. I did that on Monday, August 28 1995. I went to the Civilian protection premises first where I was told that they did their part of the job and that the bodies were buried at the city cemetery in Zadar. For other information I should turn to Nekić Ivo, a chief of the criminal department in the 1. Station. Mr. Nekić refused to give me any data and he did not even give me a number under which my father was buried. He only confirmed that from the village of Kakanj two bodies were brought and that these bodies were buried in Zadar as military persons. He could not give me any other data because he had orders from the Ministry that I cannot accept. (Srećko Šarić in his letter to the Zadar-Knin Police Administration, on August 30, 1995).

A son, Srećko Šarić, pressed charges against “unknown perpetrators” on August 28, 1995, at the Military Persecution Office in Split. The perpetrators have not been found until today.

Tode Marić, born in 1931 was killed in Orlić, in the vicinity of Knin, on August 13, 1995 around 14, 30 hours from fire-arms. Three men approached his house in military uniforms prior to his killing. He used to tell his sister *Jovanka* that different men are coming to his house, take away his smoked ham, money, and other various objects and how he believes that they will kill him one day.³⁷ He lost 4 pigs, two cows, calf and a horse. A horse returned home after 8 days but the bandits came again and took the horse, put him on the truck and drove him away.

In that same village, Predrag Simić, born in 1966, was put before the firing squad and shot on August 5, 1995 around 16 hours. *“I found him Sunday, he lied on his belly, we heard shots and screams, and I was afraid to come out of the house. Nobody saw who actually killed him. We all hid. I only know that the army came. I do not know whether he was shot or stabbed by a knife. I only know that a pool of blood was found there.”*, he stated on November 20, 1996. O. P Predrag Simić avoided army service in the Serb paramilitary troops. He was several times arrested and maltreated. He was released during military operation Storm in Bruška where he served time because he refused to be mobilised into Serb army. His mother is trying to initiate procedure for assuming responsibility for his death. However for the time being she cannot do that in Croatia.

Bodies of the victims were found often massacred — mutilated “A body of a man was found (Ilija Vujasinović, Ivoševci, a civilian, between 75 and 80 years old. His head was decapitated), and found in the pigsty.” said Chris Gunness, on September 11, 1995 in the “Voice of America”.

In the village of Žagrović, the UN found bodies of four men. “... Two bodies were thrown in the ditch besides the road. Both were dressed in their underwear only, and one had his slippers on. A right fist of one of them was mutilated, and several fingers were cut off.³⁸ Both men had bullet holes in their heads.” the UN monitors reported on August 16, 1995.

Nikola Panić, born in 1935, disabled, killed on August 6, 1995 in Golubić. His head was found 50 meters away from the murder spot. Allegedly soldiers played football with his head.

A corpse of Marija Banjanin, 89 years old from Gračac, was found with a head cut off. The head was found without eyes.

NN, (f), around 74 years old, was found tied with a fishing net. The automobile tire was found around her neck, which seemed burned.

In the vicinity of Golubić, the UN registered a dead man and woman. The man’s nose and ears were cut off. (“The Independent”, September 10, 1995).

37 My brother lived and worked alone in Orlić the whole time and during military operation Storm. He has never been active in the army and did not have any weapons. His daughter Gordana Marić lives in Canada, and his son, Mladen in Maribor. Neither of them was here during the war and the Storm. (Jovanka Marić, to the CHC activists on November 20, 1996).

38 There were several cases reported where three fingers have been cut off from victim’s hand in the region of the former Sector North near Turanj (Karlovac).

Korenica: In the village of Komić only 12 persons remained out of 190 residents in total. On August 12, from the direction of east, two tanks and three armoured vehicles came with several Croatian soldiers entered the village. They started to shoot and set houses on fire. The house of Marija Brkljač-Ugarković, (born in 1921) and Petar Ugarković, no 88, was the first one on their way. Their daughter Jela lived with them, because she lost her job in Zagreb in 1991.

Petar climbed to the nearby hill, in order to see what was happening, because the village remained abandoned, and the Croatian army was not there. Jela prepared food — she was preparing beans in the so-called garden kitchen, where her disabled mother lied for several years. When her daughter Jela heard the army coming, she hid into the nearby bushes — 15 meters away from her. She left her mother in the garden kitchen believing that no harm would come to her. The soldiers searched the whole house and left. The witness heard as one of them said: *"It's all over. Let's go."* When they moved from their house, the entire household was set on fire and the old mother Marija was burnt alive inside.³⁹ Jela Ugarković, collected her mother's bones and buried them below a fruit tree in her orchard. A month later, on September 17, 1995, she moved them to the local cemetery together with other relatives.

Jela Ugarković immediately reported the death of her mother to the UNCRO staff and the Korenica police. At the beginning of November 1995, the police team, accompanied by Jela Ugarković investigated the crime scene. However Jela did not receive any information regarding the investigation. A request for compensation of damages was submitted, but she did not receive any reply. At the beginning of June 1996, Jela Ugarković, accompanied by the CHC activists, visited the Korenica police station, when she found out that they did not know anything about her report or "any kind of incidents happening in Komić". The deputy police commander said that the police officers that were previously working at that same police station did not leave any data behind. That same day the criminal police technician went to the field and carried out investigation again. He took pictures and measured the entire estate and the place where the mother of Jela Ugarković died. Jela on June 8, 1996 reported again the whole case to the Korenica police station.

"That same day, it says in the report, on August 12, 1995, after 12 hours and before 14 hours, a groups of Croatian soldiers with two tanks and three transport vehicles entered the village from the direction of Ondić, peacefully because the village was abandoned. Since I decided to stay with my mother and father who was disabled and couldn't move, believing the message of president Tuđman, I was not afraid and I thought that nothing could happen to us."

However, all of the sudden the soldiers entered our yard and I hid behind one bigger tree, 15 meters away from our house, and my mother remained (as usual) on her bed in kitchen garden where the lunch was prepared at the time. A few soldiers passed through the house and entered the premises where my mother Marija lied."

39 If I were to suppose that something could have happened to my mother, I would have taken her somehow outside of the house and hid her in the bushes. I thought that the army would not do anything to us because we were not guilty at all. When I realised that something was going on I tried to do something. I approached the house, fell into bushes and I could not move for a long time. I got scared for my father and started looking for him." (Jela Ugarković to the CHC field team on June 7, 1996).

Then the soldiers engaged on “burning of the neighbouring house, which has been empty for 20 years. They burnt the corn. Entire corn fields were set on fire. They shot and killed cattle and then they withdrew as soldiers and left the village.”

There has not been any reactions regarding the written report on behalf of Jela Ugarković. The only reactions were, after reporting the entire incident to the police, anonymous threats over the phone. The CHC arranged transfer for Jela Ugarković to one west European country. The concrete reaction on behalf of the state authorities was the court decision of the Minor Offence Court regarding punishment of Jela Ugarković because she had not changed her personal identification card on time. The IDs should have been changed until October 28, 1993. Since Jela Ugarković lived in the occupied territories until military operation Storm she could not have done that. It remained disputed why Jela Ugarković, upon changing her ID, was prosecuted and punished. This is the only such case reported by the CHC. In other cases related to the changing of the old IDs for the new ones, there were no deadlines. When the police asked for the whereabouts of Jela Ugarković, it was clear that they did not look for her because of her negligence regarding ID card but for other reasons.

88 old men were killed in Komić that same day. Sava (93 years old) and Petar Lavrnić (a son, 60 years old), house no. 84 were killed also. The CHC activists found them accompanied by a witness on March 2, 1996. Their bodies were covered by snow and were found besides the yard path near the shed. Petar Lavrnić was according to the witnesses a strong and tall man. It was possible that he opposed the Croatian soldiers while they were burning the fields down and that they killed him and left him to burn in the house. Mother Sava was not killed, but was left tied in the house. The ropes were found around her legs. After soldiers left she used her last strength and tried to pull her dead son out of the house and left him 10 meters from the burned house. Her son Petar's body was turned face to the ground, and his mother Sava lied on her right side, crouched (as if she had lied down to rest besides him). The second variant could be that somebody else (third persons) tried to drag the mother and a son out of the house.⁴⁰

Stanka Čurčić, 45 years old, was shot in the village. Milka Pavlica, born in 1906, disabled, burned in the house. Mika Sunajko, 75 years old, in the vicinity of Klapavica, whose corpse has not been found and Rade Sunajko, 88 years old. He was buried in the orchard. A married couple Mara and Rade Mirković were also killed.

The survivors left the village. These are: Petar and Jela Ugarković, Radovan Diklić, Anica Ugarković and Maša Lavrnić.

80% of the family houses and household objects were burnt in Komić on August 12, 1995. The soldiers killed the cattle too. 7 dead cows were found in the vicinity of late Lavrnić.

The number of killed persons in the former Korenica municipality has not been as yet established. A number is not less than 31. Mass execution was also reported in

40 The CHC activists with the then members of the CHC; Orthodox priest Jovan Nikolić, a member of the presidency, Drago Pilsel, a vice-president went to the field on March 5, 1996 with a relative of the family Lavrnić, D. M. from Karlovac. The Zadar public persecution office was informed and all-important authorities in the RH together with the president of the Republic, Franjo Tuđman. The research team visited the field, but her member, especially Milivoj Lasan was very arrogant and unkind towards the CHC members. The remains of Sava and Petar Lavrnić were buried in one coffin at the local cemetery. The father, Jovan Nikolić carried out the ceremony during the funeral.

Korenica attended by a high officer (see in the continuation). In Arapov dol, somebody killed Nikola Babić, born in 1928, by a split-log, Đuro Ćupurdija was burnt in his own house in Frkašić and Mile Radaković, was killed two months after military operation storm by a metal stick. Miroslava Petrović, born in 1947, was most probably shot by a firing squad. The Croatian army killed Milovoj Vrček, around 30 years old, who worked in Korenica in the firm Likagraf, and his father was a chief of the Šumarija. Professor of physical education, Zdravko Sovilj, was also killed in Korenica. He hid in UNCRO camp when Croatian soldiers entered the village in Borje. The Croatian army asked that UN soldiers "give him up only for a short time — to ask for some information "... Z. Sovilj has never returned home.

There are many "garden graves" in Ličko Petrovo Selo. Nobody knows who is exactly buried there but the victims were buried by the authorised service, because the crosses over the graves were official with the NN signs on them. It was presumed that Nikola Orlić was buried in one of them, and that Zdravko Carić in the other. He was a refugee from Bihać. Marija Veselica was buried in the hole with a lime. Since the soldiers of V Corps of the Army of B-H, most of these executions are attributed to their mandate. It is only known that the Muslim soldiers killed Petar Bobić, but the whereabouts of his burial.

Dane Kastić was born in 1951 in Pećani. He was last seen alive on August 10, 1995. He was later on found in the sitting position with the untouched skull. Before the burial took place, the witnesses saw the skull in pieces — shattered, which means that somebody desecrated and violated already dead person.

21 grave was found later on the Korenica cemetery, called Gradina, after military operation Storm, and each one of them carried the sign NN which means that nobody could have been identified which does not seem probable. Where are the rest of the citizens buried in Donji Lapac and other towns?

Last year the decomposed skeleton was found in the rocky ground near a village of Macura (Kistanje-Ķnin). The police gathered the bones, but the person is still unidentified.

In the village of Žegar, (Obrovac) the family houses were devastated as well as the fabric factory "TRIO". "At the entrance of the factory, near the guard house, there is a skeleton of the decomposed body."⁴¹

Decomposed skeleton was also found in Gornji Ervenik. It might only be presumed to whom it belong.

Near the church of saint Đurđe in Biljani Gornji, the terrain activists of the CHC registered another human skeleton.

One unidentified corpse was found in the vicinity of Gračac, near Velebit.

Otočac: In the village of Doljani, during military operation Storm (twelve)12 civilians were killed: six men and six women, mostly elderly citizens, who decided to stay in their

41 In the yard of the factory there could have been scattered animal bones. Three freezing boxes were found at the premises, which connected the kitchen of the factory. There were found unidentified bones. It might be that these bodies belong to animals or humans. At the bottom of the hole for the vehicle repairs the carcasses of cats and dogs were found.

native village Doljani. Nikola Stojanović, 65 years old from Škare, hid in Doljani, where he was killed by decapitation.

In *Zalužnica*, 8 civilians were killed, mostly on August 6, 1995, Marinko Hinić born in 1946, was killed in the refugee column near Vrhovine, before his mother's eyes (Savka) born in 1915, and her husband Milan, born in 1910, remained at his house where he was killed. She has not found out the whereabouts of his grave.

"When they all started on their journey, we were all scared of the army and shooting. I started off with my tractor and my son Marinko and my step-son Srđan, towards Vrhovine. When we arrived there in Vrhovine, two soldiers approached us and did not say anything. I think that it was Sunday (August 6) shot him from a rifle. Blood was spilled all over him and I fell unconscious and I do not know anything any more. Then the same man, when I came to my senses and started to move said that he would kill me also, and the other one told me to leave him alone." stated on October 29, 1996 to the CHC activists, Savka Hinić. Then she, after her son was killed in front of her eyes, returned home with her stepson Srđan.

Her stepson was taken to Gospić, and she refused to leave for Gospić, asking them to kill her. They left her alone, and the following day they burnt her estate to the ground. "I was scared to sleep at my house that night so I slept near in the hay-barn. The following day I approach my house, I did not know what to do... There were no neighbours near, only many soldiers in the yard, and I think, 5 tractors. They go into my house and take away all my belongings. I pass through to take my staff with me, and they push me and do not let me pass. They say: "Run away you old hag, for will kill you now." And one attacked me, but the other one who knows me from somewhere, tells him to leave me alone, and to me to move away because that they will burn my house down. I was completely shocked. I do not know what to say. they took everything away and later on burned everything. and now I do not have anything. I do not know where my son was buried, nor I know anything about the man.⁴²

Marica and Žarko Popović, were elderly and very ill people (Žarko had a diabetes, and Marija was half-blind), they were very hard working people. Marica was killed in the cellar of her house, where her body lied for two months, while Žarko was killed, and later on hanged dead, but the whereabouts of his grave are not known.⁴³

Branko Vukovojac was not killed in the first attack of the Croatian army. The advance troops did not kill him. The group of Croatian soldiers sat with him, it seemed that they knew him from before, and they sat and drank coffee with him. When the others approached the house, one of them without any warning fired several shots at Branko Vukovojac, complaining to others how could they "sit and drink with a Chetnik". Wounded Vukovojac died a few days later.

The CHC received numerous letters (both signed and anonymous) on series of incidents and procedures with tragic consequences. One letter arrived from Zadar on September 22, 1995. "There are some things which are still happening 50 days after military

42 A stepson, Srđan, stayed in Gospić for a few months. Now he lives at the house of Ljubo Hinić. They receive charity and humanitarian aid. All real-estate was stolen from them, farmhouses were burned and their 4 cows, 30 sheep and 5 big pigs were taken away from them.

43 Maca and Žarko Popović were killed. Maca in the cellar. We do not know how. Her body was lying there for over two months. Her husband was killed and hanged above house. They were not guilty of anything. (Jelica Popović, on October 28, 1996 to the CHC activists)

operation Storm, and which happened, and which will harm greatly our state, are not stopping. Arson and plunder continue even today. I am sure about that because I drove a woman who lives in Zadar today to visit her family in the village of Dobropoljce 16 km from Benkovac. All villages are burned and plundered. It still happens today. Trucks, vans and tractors loaded with bricks and other construction material taken from the roofs are proof to that. I wrote to you because of the horrible things that I saw in the village of Dobropoljci hamlet Kužeti below the farm co-operative where everything was burned and stolen. Below the farm cooperative house there was a small house, which is burned down now, and I learned that it belonged to Kužet Petar who had his family there and a sick daughter. Gentlemen, the horror I saw. You may yourself go there and see with your own eyes, if you hurry, is that the aforementioned person burnt, and only skull remained and a bit of a spine. I found out that the same was called KUŽET PETROVKA.⁴⁴

Mass Executions

Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949

The International Tribunal shall have the power to prosecute persons committing or ordering to be committed grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, namely the following acts against persons or property protected under the provision of the relevant Geneva Convention:

- (a) wilful killing;
- (b) torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments;
- (c) wilfully causing great suffering or serious bodily injury to body or health;
- (d) extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly;
- (e) compelling a prisoner of war or a civilian to serve in the forces of a hostile power;
- (f) willfully depriving a prisoner of war or a civilian of the rights of fair and regular trial; (Article 2 of the Statute of the International War Tribunal for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law in the territory of the former Yugoslavia from 1991, the CHC and Croatian Law Centre in 1995).

* * *

Article 3

Violations of the Laws or Custom of War

The International Tribunal shall have the power to prosecute persons violating the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but not be limited to:

44 The field investigation confirmed these statements. Petrovka Kužet, 40 years old, retarded was burned in her house. The perpetrators are unknown. It is not known who did that.

- (a) Employment of poisonous weapons or other weapons calculated to cause unnecessary suffering;
- (b) Wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity
- (c) Attack and bombardment, by whatever means, of undefended towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings;
- (d) Seizure of, destruction or wilful damage done to institutions dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts, and sciences, historic monuments and works of art and science;
- (e) Plunder of public and private property; (Article 3) of the Statute of the Tribunal

Several mass executions of civilians were recorded. Primarily these executions occurred in Golubić, Oravac, (Donji Lapac), and Uzdolje, where the victims were all buried in one spot, or in Gošići, Grubori and Varivode, killed in the same day, but in different places. Such killings occurred in the village of Komić about which we wrote before.

Golubić (Knin): A group of people, seven of them, see enclosure 1 from Golubić, did not want to return to exile. They were on their way to Plavno, in order to find shelter there and wait for the situation to calm down.⁴⁵ A son of Đuka and Dušan Damjanović drove the tractor. They were all sitting on the tractor. They went out of gas in the village of Radljevac, and the driver went back to get some gasoline. 9 persons remained waiting. The Croatian army found them in front of the house by Đure Dobrijević, and shot seven of them on the spot. A married couple who left earlier on foot managed to save themselves. Dobrijević's house was set on fire. The bodies were buried 25 days later.

The following persons were shot by the firearms: Mara, born in 1930, and Petar Marić, born in 1930, Đuka and Dušan Damjanović, born in 1930, Milica, born in 1927, Tanasije Vuković, born in 1925, and Boško Vuković born in 1938. Many chrysalises were found on the spot. At the same time, down the road, in Radljevac, (in front of the house of Branko Markelić), Jovan Markelić was killed, born in 1937.

These civilians were killed by the soldiers of the 3rd regiment of the IV Brigade of the Croatian army.

The Croatian soldiers killed at least 14 civilians in the village of Golubić, on August 6, 1995. Đuro Jerković, called Nine, was one of the first victims. He was killed, slaughtered and stabbed by a knife, in his own yard. "His neighbour, Ile Jerković found him, who a day later left for Serbia with his wife. ." Stevan Stančević⁴⁶ told us. Jovan Jerković, born in 1936, was killed in the vicinity of his house. Vaso Vasić, born in 1922, and Nikola Panić, born in 1935, who hid at the house of the latter, was killed the first day by firearms. When the army arrived to the village, they took them out of the house and shot

45 The group counted 10 persons in the beginning. Vukosava and Boško left the house.

46 When I returned home I had to pass by the house of Đuro Jerković. I saw him in the garden lying in blood. Two cars full of soldiers arrived. I froze. One of them said. Common old lady, in front of us. He ordered me to open the gate and made me walk around a house because of the surprise mines. This was the house of Milica Jerković. They took a tractor of the late Đuro Jerković. I started off in the direction of my house when one of asked me whether I could smell the corpse. He ordered me to bring a blanket and cover it. I did that. (Z. U., 70 years old, to the CHC activists on November 21, 1996).

them.⁴⁷ Branko Radinović, born in 1920, wife and husband: Maša, born in 1927 and Nikola Radujko, born in 1925, and Vaso Radujko, born in 1928, and Tode Marić, born in 1929, were all killed near Kesić bunar. Glišo Čanak, born in 1937 was shot by a rifle in his house on August 16, 1995. Milka Grubić, 60 years old was killed at the house where she looked for a shelter. Zorka Kablar, 80 years old and Milica Šljivar, called Milka, born in 1936 in the wheel chair was killed also, her head burst and 80 years old Jeka Opačić who was killed on the path behind her house on August 28, 1995.

Uzdolje, (Knin): The Croatian army killed on August 7, 1995, around 9 o'clock 7 civilians born from 1920 until 1931. According to the report of the international monitors "the residents were gathered on a small path, forced to sit down and killed from a distance. One potential victim survived but was wounded. ."

Grubori, (Knin): Six persons were killed in Grubori on August 25, 1995. These are: Jovan (Damjan) Grubor, 73 years old, (burnt with the house), Jovo Grubor, born in 1930, slaughtered on his meadow near his cows, Marija Grubor, born in 1905, (Jovo's mother, killed and burned with the house), Milica Grubor, called Milka, born in 1994 (killed behind her house), Miloš Grubor, born in 1915, (with two bullets in his head) and Đuro Karanović, born in 1950, (his was mutilated). The following persons from the same village were also killed: Petar Vidović, 55 years old and Stevan Vidović, born in 1945, at the end of August when he was carrying water on his donkey.

"The whole village was in light. Three older women that were still there or had just returned to the village showed us the burning houses. The cattle were inside the burning buildings. Five or six pigs' carcasses were lying on the ground. When we returned to the village that night they showed us bodies of the people. One belonged to an older man (Miloš Grubor, born in 1915) in the room of the house, which was partly burned. He had pyjamas on and lay in the pool of blood near the bed. He was shot behind the ears, and the bullet passed through his throat. A little bit further away, there was another body in the room. We could not see the person. (Jovo Grubor born in 1930). The man told us that he brought the body that afternoon when we were away. When he turned the body over, the sight was horrible. His throat was cut in two pieces."⁴⁸

The special police forces executed the residents of Grubori. The Republic of Croatia had not assumed the responsibility for this terrible crime. The authorities did not investigate the incident nor gave any replies to numerous questions.

Gošić, Knin: In the village of Gošić, near Kistanje and Đevrsak, 7 persons—civilians were killed on August 27, 1995, in the afternoon. These are: Dušan Borak, born in 1937, Grozdana Borak, born in 1920, Kosara (Tode) Borak, called "Kosa", born in 1920,⁵⁰ Marija Borak, born in 1915, Milka Borak, born in 1925, and Vasilj Borak, born in 1927.

47 Vaso was killed in front of his house. Nikola Panić was with him, who was a disabled man. They hid in Vaso's house. They took them out and shot Vaso first. Poor Nikola started to cry and ask for help and they killed him too. This happened on Sunday during the Storm. (V. Ž. to the CHC activists on November 21, 1996).

48 Alan Roberts, the UN spokesperson, in Glas Amerika (Voice of America) on September 11, 1995

49

50 Milka Borak took three of their relatives from the Knin to the village cemetery. She paid 9000 Kuna for that. She sought help from the state institutions, but did not receive any help because the issue concerned

The Knin police buried them all in Knin, under ordinal numbers from 543 until 550, refuse to turn the bodies over to the relatives who live in Croatia.⁵¹ *Mara Borak*, 90 years old disappeared.

For the murder of the civilians in Gošić, the following Croatian soldiers were accused. Nikola Rašić, Zlatko Ladović, Pero Perković and Ivica Petrić. But since the date of their demobilisation was changed they were not convicted of any crimes as civilians.

At least 12 houses were burnt in the village, and all other houses were plundered and devastated. A roof and wooden parts of the new house of Marija Žeželj were stolen. Since her return she has been living in an old and devastated house. The village received electricity recently. There is no water, telephone lines, traffic connections, any shops. There is no possibility to receive any aid for reconstruction or renovation of the village. Milan Letunica, born in 1923, left the village after the rest of the residents were killed and found shelter in FRY temporarily. He was left without any property and his cattle; cows, calves, 80 sheep. All his belongings were stolen from the house. Today he cannot receive any help nor any credit for starting all over again.

Varivode, (Knin): In the village of Varivode, located between Kistanje and Đevrsak, on August 28, around 17, 30 hours 9 persons were killed. These are: Jovan Berić, 75 years old, Jovan Berić, 60 years old, Mara Berić, 70 years old, Marko Berić, 80 years old, Milka Berić, 71 years old, Radoslav Berić, called Rajko, 69 years old, Dušan Dukić, called Dujo, 75 years old, Mirko Pokrajac, 85 years old. They were killed in their own yards, doorsteps and houses.

Mara Dukić, 70 year old, informed the police about the massacre. She managed to save herself and spent the night in woods. She stopped the police patrol in the morning and told them what happened. The police tried to cover up this horrible massacre and attacked all those who claimed the contrary. At that time, the groups of soldiers dressed in black uniforms were roaming the region.

On Tuesday, 26 of August, on our way near Varivode accompanied with a journalist Anne Marie Bostrom, a member of the Swedish Helsinki Committee, we saw a truck full of soldiers dressed in black uniforms passing through that region, Some time later that day one of these soldiers was standing at the entrance of Varivode, armed with the automatic weapons, I think with Uzi. We did not go to Varivode on that occasion because the activists from DOS (Dalmatian Committee for Solidarity) wrote the report previously how in that village everything was plundered and burned. We believed that there was no reason that something horrible would happen in Varivode again.”⁵²

non-Croat refugees. A right to help during transport of the mortal remains was not granted to anyone, regardless of the fact that they refused to bury them in the distanced cemeteries, and that the state promised to cover the expenses of the burial when the situation calms down.

51 The hamlet of Borak has 15 households all of them destroyed, partly burned and devastated. All houses and yards were full of traces of turned over things, furniture and other goods. We find the traces of blood 40x15, on the floor of the kitchen in one house. A pair of glasses was found in the other house on the table. On the table of the other kitchen, the humanitarian aids rotten tomatoes and a copy of *Slobodna Dalmacija* of August 26, 1995. was found. On the other house in the neighbouring hamlet a sign was found “72nd military unit of the Croatian army, do not touch. Thank you”. The whole village smelled of carcasses of animals. 12 residents lived in the village before August 27, 1995 and now there is nobody living there.” (The CHC report of October 11, 1995).

52 Milorad Mišo Rogošić, the then CHC activist in his statement to Feral Tribune on October 9, 1995

"I was told ironically that the food that I was carrying to the older residents of the village would not be delivered to them "not later, nor ever again". I was advised to leave because I did not have anything else to do there. I saw a peasant woman with the police (Boja Milošević, called Bojanka, f, 42 years old) who was 7 days earlier wounded by a knife, I thought about the worst possible things and turned my car away from Varivode."⁵³

The CHC informed the public about it on October 2, 1995, and the police did not react for a very long time. Afterwards the police claimed how they did not have any intention to cover up the incident.⁵⁴

Marija Pokrajac, born in 1911, was also killed in Varivode, but the exact date is not known. *"I approached the houses on the outskirts of Varivode, from where Zečevo is seen. Before me I saw a water tank. I smelled the decomposed body. I thought, since I saw carcasses of many dead animals such as sheep and cattle, that the smell came from a dead sheep. First, I could not find out the direction it was coming from. I saw water can near the water tank. I threw silently the can into the water tank. When the can fell down it fell on something soft. I looked down the tank and saw a corpse floating in the water. I was shocked. The body was dressed in trousers, shirt and was all swelled, and I do not know whether it was a man or a woman.*

A bit further on, some 100 meters away from this sight, I found in the bushes a corpse of a woman. It was all swelled. The birds already started to eat it. She was naked to her waist and I could not tell how old she was. She was physically strong woman and all swelled. She stank horrible. I could not stand it. She lied on her back. There were neither cattle nor birds. Nobody was there, only smell of corpses and burned land..."⁵⁵

It is not confirmed whether the body belonged to Marija Pokrajac. The body in the well might have belonged to Milivoj Atlagić, born in 1940, from Ostrvica, who did not leave with the refugee column. A day later he left for Varivode where he allegedly had some business to take care of and was killed there.

The following persons were arrested for the murders of the civilians in Varivode (and in Gošić). They were later on released in July 1996: *Zlatko Ladović, Nedjeljko Mijić, Pero Perković, Ivan Jakovljević* and *Nikola Rašić*, while *Ivica Petrić* was convicted to 6 years in prison for the murder of the Serb civilian Đurđe Čanak. *Nikola Rašić* was sentenced to 18 months in prison for armed robbery and attempt to murder *Leko Tanjga* from Očestovo.

Oravac, Donji Lapac: Special police forces entered the village of Oravac, near Donji Lapac on August 7, 1995. First they caught Marko, born in 1940 and T. born in 1947. They were taken to a yard and ordered to wait. Soon Stevo Ajduković, born in 1937, Ruža, born in 1920, and Rade Bibić, born in 1919 (married couple) were brought there too. When they decided between 15 and 16 hours to take them to the nearby meadow behind the trees, T. realised that they were on their way to execution, he jumped over

53 R. D one of the relatives of some of the killed ones, in Feral Tribune, on October 9, 1995

54 K. A. from Mokro Polje, was staying in Kistanje. He clearly heard that somebody ordered the officers from Kistanje to go to Varivode and burn the corpses. This was the first information, which he received regarding the incident.

55 K. Š. Told the CHC activists on February 11, 1999.

the smaller fence and run away. Later on he heard shots. The whereabouts of their graves are not known.

Korenica: D More witnesses gave statements about the group executions (at least two) of civilians and an execution of prisoners in Korenica. The first mass execution occurred in the city cemetery and the other near city centre and in the suburbs. The high officer of the Croatian army attended one of these executions, personally giving orders to execute residents of the villages. The data on these executions are unfortunately incomplete.

“The Officer of the Czech battalion of the UNPROFOR forces, situated in Korenica informed me that on Sunday, August 5, 1995 they had seen 21 Serb civilian running along the base of the Czech battalion from Croatian soldiers. Later on Czech soldiers heard awful screams and shots. Maybe it is only a coincidence but the numbers on the nearby graves are compatible to the numbers of 21 Serb civilian.” (Robert Fisk, the Independent). There are 21 NN (no name) crosses. It is strange because in some cases the names of the killed persons were known. For example, professor of the physical education, Zdravko Sovilj, hid in the shed of the UN. The Croatian army demanded that they turn Zdravko Sovilj over to them for short time only because they needed certain information. The UN soldiers released Zdravko Sovilj obtaining a confirmation from the Croatian soldiers that they would bring him back. That did not happen.

* * *

Individual killings in the reintegrated regions remained secret for the domestic public. It was even more difficult to find out about the group executions of civilians, which happened long time after military operation Storm ended, like the ones in Grubori, Gošić or Varivode. Besides, neither the police nor the army, in spite of the regular meetings with journalists, did reveal any data regarding incidents publicly.

Some journalists wrote and attacked publicly the ones who openly talked about the killings refusing to write about the actual murders. They denied facts, twisted them and stood in defence of the perpetrators of these crimes. After one of the most horrible massacre which occurred in Varivode, a journalist of “Zadarski list”, Ivica Marijačić, attacked those who informed about such incidents.

Journalist Marijačić will on July 11, 1996 write in the same newspapers: “Croatia is indestructible and for the leading men of the Croatian Helsinki Committee it is a painful acknowledgement, which turned into a nightmare and permanent complex. And when Croatia cannot be destroyed, then it should be continuously humiliated, slandered, and shown to a world as a dungeon, and finally given to Ivan Zvonimir Čičak and Petar Mrkalj⁵⁶ that they according to the criteria of the Yugoslav nostalgics establish peace again. When last year the massacre in Varivode near Knin happened in which 9 Serb civilians were killed, the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights immediately published the statement in which it informed the public about 12 killed Serb civilians. The CHC activists arrived to Varivode, and on their faces there were expressions of happiness and exhilaration, and not of a shock or repugnance, because they found material for anti-Croat propaganda.

56 President and the executive director of the CHC.

The reason for such a behaviour on behalf of the CHC activist in the time of peace must be according to Marijačić's opinion: "Mostly these are the former secret service members, or children of secret service members, or offended communists or unsuccessful politicians, very ambitious and completely marginalised and given over to oblivion."

Such a truth coming from the journalists of Hina, Ivan Marijačić and Zadarski list, had as a consequence a series of calls (anonymous or with names), offering various additional information to the CHC. A reader of Zadarski list from the city of Zadar, sent an anonymous letter on July 24, 1996 stating the following: "A writer, Ivica Marijačić, denies that the mass graves of Serbs buried at the end of 1992 or beginning of 1993, exist in Zadar. I personally saw a big refrigerator lorry followed by bulldozers on its way to Nin-crossroads Bokanjac — Puntamika, on the estate called Žmirić. The communal firm Nasadi from Zadar uses the estate. The entrance is around 100 m long and on the right side there are many cypresses. Besides cypresses, the bulldozer dug a ditch 50–60m long and 2m width and 1m length. The corpses of Serbs were thrown there from the truck. The bulldozer threw earth on them and returned with refrigerator lorry. The dead people were dressed in civilian and army uniforms. The job lasted for 2 hour and the cemetery was not marked with anything."⁵⁷

1. **The International Tribunal** shall have the power to prosecute persons committing genocide as defined in paragraph 2 of this article or of committing any of the other acts enumerated in paragraph 3 of this article.
2. Genocide means any of the following act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such.
 - (a) killing members of the group;
 - (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
 - (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring its physical destruction in whole or in part;
 - (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
 - (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
3. The following act shall be punishable:
 - (a) genocide;
 - (b) conspiracy to commit genocide;
 - (c) direct and public incitement to commit genocide.
 - (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
 - (e) Complicity in genocide;

The International Tribunal shall have the power to prosecute persons responsible for the following crimes when committed in armed conflict, whether international or internal in character, and directed against any civilian population:

57 The CHC activists did not investigate such information, however the witnesses stated that the mass gravesights existed there but we redug them several times. They do not know where the bones were take. The CHC believes that the bodies, both of civilians and military victims from the action Miljevački plato were buried there. At least 50 persons died in the aforementioned actions. However the special report will be made regarding this issue.

- (a) Murder;
- (b) Exterminations;
- (c) Enslavement;
- (d) Deportation;
- (e) Imprisonment;
- (f) Torture,
- (g) Rape;
- (h) Persecution on political, racial and religious grounds;
- (i) Other inhumane acts;

Missing persons

The problem of missing persons had been also very important. Various international institutions and human rights organisations⁵⁸ stated that the authorities of the Republic of Croatia with all available means were looking for the missing Croats but not for the missing Serbs. The authorities ignored the problem completely. Manfred Novak, who on behalf of the UN dealt with this problem, stated on March 10, 1997, how 200,000 persons had lost their lives during the war and how 2 millions became refugees and displaced persons. 25.000 persons in the region of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia were considered missing which was more than half of registered cases of the kind in 60 countries since 1980.

Manfred Novak also said that the Government of the Republic of Croatia received a list of 2973 missing persons of Serb ethnicity during the year 1995 and 1996 that according to him disappeared after military operations Flash and Storm.⁵⁹

The Croatian government delivered data for 11 persons from "the list of 905 missing persons", stated on July 8, 1996, Pavle Todorović, president of the Commission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for Humanitarian Issues.

The CHC was not able to deal with the issue of missing persons because many important pre-conditions regarding the issue were lacking. However in its daily work registering of the missing persons was continuously carried out.

The CHC registered numerous demands for missing persons, who disappeared during military operations Storm and Flash, hoping to uncover the destiny of some of them. The CHC received numerous data on how some persons were secretly executed after

58 A grave means dignity for those who are looking for their dead and missing persons. This means garden graves where relatives may mourn their dead, or appropriately marked grave where the descendants may honour their dead. For the families who's dead were buried at the city cemetery in dense rows with crosses that means burial in the family tombstones with appropriated gravestones. (Amnesty International, Croatia, three years since military operations Flash and Storm — three years of predicting justice", August 4, 1998).

59 1300 Serbs were considered missing after military operation Flash. They were arrested, transferred to the collective centres Bjelovar, Požega, and Varaždin, and later on disappeared.

these operations and that out of court executions of soldiers and prisoners who were not armed and wanted to surrender were a common occurrence. The authorised bodies had a strong intention to cover up such incidents and hide true destinies of missing persons. It was almost impossible that the relatives obtain any data regarding their missing family members, not even in the situation where they were publicly showed alive on the state television.

Instead of registering the names of the allegedly missing persons we shall hereby state a few cases: Milka, born in 1926, and Lazo Dragišić, born in 1919, remained alone in their village, Dragišić in Plavno. On August 13, 1995 (when they finally received a permit to go), their daughters visited them. They did not find them at home, although they obtained data that they did not leave for exile. On August 20, they found the body of their mother Milka in the rocky ground (killed by gunshots), and father Lazo remained missing since then. "Lazo came to my house, my friend. He told me that he was on his way to Plavno to Vinduke and Torbice. After this I did not see him. When I heard that he was not there I and Ilinka went looking for him and were looking around and could not find anything." Said S. D. born in 1913. Lazo was last seen at her place on August 7 or 8, 1995. There has not been any data found on him since then.

"I know that Dr. Dražen Koritnik was last seen at Ljubović's place in Donji Lapac on Monday morning. There was one man seen with a beard, jeans and tennis shoes on. Dražen Koritnik had a beard."

"A witness, M. S called "J," born on May 7, 1936, said to the CHC activists. There had not been any official reports about a doctor Dražen Koritnik, Croat, from Zagreb, who came to work in Donji Lapac after he obtained his university degree. The authorities refused to give any data on him in spite of the fact that they had information about his destiny. The general silence of the authorities in a case of Dražen Koritnik, is an evident example of how they tried to cover up the truth about hundreds of missing and killed persons. When the CHC activists turned to the officials for help in case of Dražen Koritnik, the then commissioner of the government of the Republic of Croatia for Donji Lapac, Željko Piplica, not only refused to co-operate but replied: *"Ask the Chetniks about him. He offered medical help to them, left with them and they must have killed him somewhere in Bosnia"*. D. Koritnik did not leave with Chetniks for Bosnia.

The other example of a similar search ended up tragically. A day after military operation Storm ended, a daughter of Marta Vujnović, born in 1905 who lives in Germany asked about her mother, born in 1905, and brother's Stevo destiny, born in 1939. She knew that Marta and Stevo remained in the village of Oton, but the Knin authorities refused to help her.

At the end of August 1995, she wrote a letter to the CHC, asking for help. The CHC office demanded that the Commissioner of the government, Petar Pašić help them. Mr Pašić did not reply to any of the written demands on behalf of the CHC. However, he showed a letter to the international observers and said: "I have more important job to do, than look around Knin and collect Serb corpses". When he said that, Marta Vujnović and her son had already been dead. The Croatian soldiers killed them on August 18, 1995 in their own house. Mother Marija, was killed inside the house, and Stevo in his own yard. If Petar Pašić, had listened to her daughter and sister *Ljubica*,⁶⁰ it would be

60 A daughter of Marta Vujnović and a sister of Stevo Vujnović, could not leave Germany and visit the village of Oton at the time. She did not have any new Croatian documents. It is still difficult for those born in Krajina to obtain their ID's. They were not considered as existing from the beginning of the conflict.

possible that they would be alive today together with other residents of the Oton, killed that same day. Today nothing is known about these persons except the fact that they remained at their houses and were executed on the spot. The sanitary team, headed by Boško Ilić, from Pađen, knew that. The whereabouts of their graves are not known.

Milan Medić, was last seen 5–6 by N. Đ, born in 1918, 5–6 days after military operation Storm. In the end, N. Đ left for Martin Brod, but the Croatian police took him to the collective centre in Zadar. When he returned to the village, Medić was gone. There has not been any information regarding his whereabouts since then.

The CHC regularly collects, at the request of families and relatives of the missing persons, all information about the missing persons and forwards them to the Commission for Detained and Missing Persons of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and other specialised domestic and international bodies and organisations. The ministry of justice replied to only one case, where the issue concerned missing persons, and instead they were in prisons.

The Commission for Missing and Detained Persons of the Government of the Republic of Croatia completely ignores the letters sent by the CHC. Finally, on July 1998 Ivan Grujić replied to our letter after Ante Klarić, the Ombudsman of the Government of Croatia, pressured him. The colonel Grujić repeated a series of unacceptable and incorrect statements. "All war prisoners who were in the hands of the Republic of Croatia, as well as the members of the paramilitary formations arrested during military operations Flash and Storm were registered by the International Red Cross except those who were accused of the war crimes. Based on the Amnesty Law — all persons, accused of committing war crimes and who were in power of the Republic of Croatia were liberated through the process of prisoners' exchange." Colonel Grujić did not say anything about others on the list who were in the hands of the RC but were not exchanged, released nor accused. All of them had been executed even in the cases when they had been previously interviewed and shown on TV. Today there is no existing official data regarding these people.

There have been also registered certain cases in the UN Sector South by the international organisations and the CHC activists when the Croatian soldiers executed already arrested Serb prisoners and those who were disarmed and gave themselves in.⁶¹

Furthermore, Colonel Grujić, explains in the letter to the Ombudsman how "960 persons died in the military operations Storm and Flash and that they all were buried according to the Geneva Conventions. Before these persons were buried, in all cases where it was necessary, the identification of bodies had been carried out." According to his statement, 242 persons were identified. A list of these persons, and 668 protocol, was given over to the commission of the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia "who is in charge of these problems". Over 100 persons were identified and the procedure of search was carried out for another 188 persons. Of course, colonel Grujić had never given explanation regarding dozens of wounded missing persons, especially in the military operation Flash. He was also not able to explain why were many of these persons anonymously buried, under no name signs on their crosses, in spite of the fact that their mothers, spouses, other relatives or friends identified them. He did not give any

61 The special report is being made regarding the rest of the soldiers and their destinies.

reply regarding the fact that under "no-name" signs at the Knin cemetery there were some other persons buried.

Attitude

The CHC sent five lists for search for more than hundred missing persons. It confirmed that the Republic of Croatia still does not want to help find them, specifically to give appropriate information to their relatives. The bodies of the Republic of Croatia in charge of this problem are of the opinion that Serbs who were considered "aggressors" did not have victims, specifically how these victims were not important for Croatia and that they should not apply standard procedure in their cases. This attitude is entirely unacceptable. The Croatian government and victims, regardless of different approaches to this problem, must treat the Serb victims the same way that it treats Croatian victims. In the end the issue concerns suffering of the citizens of the Croatian state, in spite of the fact that these people had been rebels or on the side of the rebels.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia is obligated to reveal the destinies of the Serb victims to their families, despite the fact that the issue concerns the "enemy side". It is also a duty of the Republic of Croatia to reveal all data, explanations and proofs to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, regardless of the fact that they were considered aggressors in the war. Croatia has a duty and a right to demand from FRY data regarding their victims also, which it does. It is unacceptable that the aforementioned Commission for Missing Persons and the Office for the Victims of the War which do not wish to cooperate with various organisations who are searching for missing Serbs, even in cases when the issue concerns missing Croats.

Prisoners

"Ten prisoners were imprisoned in the high school building in Knin. One at the right side was heavily beaten, had red bruises around mouth and eyes, and the other on the right hand looked starved and dressed in the shaggy old uniform of the Republika Srpska army, wearing a thin beard. They told us that they had enough cigarettes and food and that they only wished to wash up. They were put in a small room with a mattress on the floor and a large Croatian policeman guarding them. Upon leaving the cell, one of the activists of the European organisation for human rights said. This is not a prison. This is a pigsty.

Well, among all Serb soldiers who were left behind their colleagues, and run away from the Croatian offence during military operation Storm, these ones were lucky. On the first floor, even larger Croatian policeman collected some photographs. Some groups of Krajina soldiers were shown on them and armed civilians sitting on the fence. The Croatian policeman did not have time to hide the photographs

It did not take us long to realise what was going on in the building of the Knin high school. The Croatian security service was checking out the photographs and asking the prisoners to identify some of them. "This is how they search through Serb houses, a UN official told me. They were looking for the photographs and documents written in Latin letters, and than they would burn the house. (Robert Fisk, The Independent, September 5, 1995).

It was previously mentioned that the Croatian army killed war prisoners and all those who surrendered or were caught in uniforms without arms. A Croatian soldier said to one of the foreigners interviewing them that a Croatian soldier, when finding a man in uniform with a wife, kills both of them. At the same time, in some army units they were not informed what to do with the prisoners. The soldiers were told: "There are no prisoners". The witness, the Croatian soldiers, said that the prisoners, not only soldiers, but also the civilians had to be killed, because there were no camps — collective centres organised to receive them. Specifically when a soldier caught a prisoner somewhere on the front line, he had to take care of him personally, and that was impossible in the attempt to advance furthermore.⁶²

Unacceptable behaviour with the bodies of dead or killed soldiers was also registered. One such case happened in Donji Lapac, when at the new cemetery 4 dead soldiers were burnt. The UN recorded, and the CHC also received some witness's statements regarding the out of court executions of disarmed enemy soldiers, mostly by shooting him in the back. Burials in garden or field graves were also recorded, especially in the region of the former Sector South, near Lički Osik and burials in secret places, specifically throwing the bodies into ditches.

The Republic of Croatia has in treatment of some prisoners, violated domestic and international regulations: abused them physically and kept them in prisons for a long time without any indictment and proper trials..

62 We were told that in cases you ended up with a prisoner, you should take care about him, and in that first attack one did not have any time nor people for that. (M. N. in his statement to the CHC activists on May 22, 1998).

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C H A P T E R F O U R

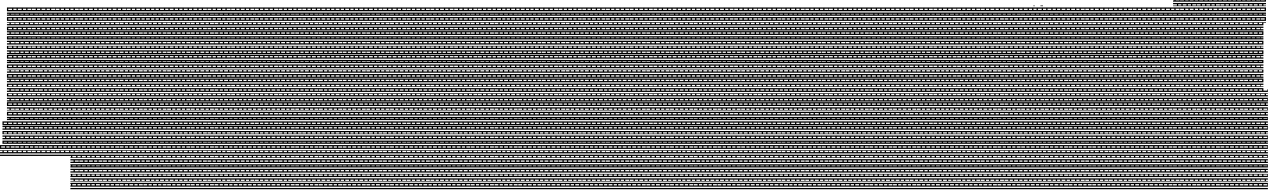
Graveyards

Consequences of any war are the victims. The most tragic consequences are dead or killed civilians, as well as soldiers. These victims could not have been avoided in any of two military operations Flash nor Storm. This report deals with unnecessary victims and behaviour of the authorities towards civilians and victims of the war related to identification, registration and burial. The CHC activists and many other monitors during military operation Storm could not have done anything during these military operations. Immediately upon termination of the actions, they could only do three things: first, find any victims in the field, secondly, monitor or at least try to monitor their burials and thirdly ask from those who have or should have any info regarding them data on registered and any other victims.

After first phase, the phase of the investigation followed: firstly, monitor the situation and incidents on cemeteries, public burials, secondly, finding (if any) unburied victims and discover secret burial places and thirdly gather statements from witnesses. Primary task was prevention of more unnecessary victims. This is how the CHC carried on its work. After war those who are looking for somebody they lost are turning towards cemeteries or secret burials, trying to find out what happened. The NGOs at the same time, help those people discover what happened and whether the victims were treated according to domestic, international and common and agreed law. They also tried to discover where dead civilians were buried, not because already dead and buried victims but because of the human kind, its dignity and future. Dead are advancement of alive!

Situation at burial sites after military operation Storm

All war victims, especially civilians had to be precisely identified and information on them had to be gathered. /according to the data from identification cards, and statements of relatives or people who knew them/. Death was supposed to be officially confirmed and then burial would follow. The graves should have been tied up and marked by names or numbers where names were not known. However, the foreign monitors confirmed by following events on the cemeteries that the international law was violated. The UN monitors warned the authorities about these violations in their letters and statements.



It is hard to believe that general Čermak, who publicly spoke about the human treatment and respect of the law, did not know what was going on, because he was seriously and regularly warned about the human rights violations. See in the text, which follows:

Public burials were carried out at the city cemeteries in Gračac, Knin, Zadar, Šibenik, Korenica, Donji Lapac, Vodoteča, Zvjerinac. The ditches several meters long, and two meters in width and of unconfirmed longitude, were dug by a machine and the dead bodies of soldiers and civilians together, have been placed inside in different ways, in boxes, plastic bags, or without anything. In some cases the machine threw earth the ditches by a machine. The mounds were formed later, and the crosses were put above them. The crosses are all the same, wooden and brown. The plastic numbers were thereupon placed on them (the CHC activists have not discovered the procedure according to which these numbers were placed upon crosses) names, and surnames of the victim as well as the sign NN, in case dead person was not identified.

The access to the cemeteries, immediately after military operation Storm was not allowed to anyone. The civil police was guarding the sights and was very strict about the whole procedure. The Gračac cemetery was guarded for a long time by the military police. How dangerous it was to approach Gračac cemetery was even felt by the members of UNCIVPOL, when on August 15, 1995, they tried to visit the cemetery and was driven away by snipers. A day later, monitors were shot at from the direction on Velebit with 5 sniper shots. On September 8, 1995, military and civil police denied any access to the cemetery. The same happened when the CHC activists tried, on September 30, 1995 to approach the cemetery.²

Donji Lapac: In the vicinity of this town, there are two cemeteries, one old and one new. Both were big and on both there is still some diggings going on. After military operation Storm unidentified bodies were buried on both cemeteries. One unusually large mound was found on the new cemetery, located on the road Donji Lapac-Srb, and above it, the cross was placed with the sign: "001 NN" (see enclosure 1). On the right side of this mound, the earth was thrown upon and supported by wooden pillars, and the rest of the hole was dug out, the size 2meters x 2 meters.³

1

2 When the CHC team went on their usual monitoring of the cemeteries and took some photographs in Gračac, one of the guards asked them why there were taking pictures of orthodox cemetery. When we told him that this was done for comparison in order to establish which cemetery was seriously damaged, the soldier sighed with relief: "Good, I thought you were Serbs". (The CHC activist report).

3 Out of the fence of this cemetery in Donji Lapac, on July 18, there was another grave formed marked with a name of A. Ajduković, where the burial was carried out at least a month before. It was not established why is this grave dug outside the cemetery, when there is a lot of space within the cemetery itself.

In the old cemetery, situated behind the road Donji Lapac–Korenica, there is a hole, 10 meters in width, dug out by a machine. 4 mounds were formed there, however the crosses are placed above two of them only. “One of the mounds is almost a meter in width, as if two classic mounds were joined together, which points to the fact that under that mound there are several persons buried. Besides the hole there is a larger quantity of dug earth and a shovel!”⁴ Five older tombstones were demolished at the same cemetery⁵.

It is unknown how the sign under number 1 is located in Donji Lapac, when the burials in that place started much later, on August 8 1995. Donji Lapac was liberated on August 7, in the afternoon. It was not confirmed why there are no more mounds and more tombstones in Donji Lapac cemetery, since it is a well-known fact that civilians were not buried in small local cemeteries. There were only a few gravestones found in Donji Lapac and the surrounding area, when in Donji Lapac and the surrounding area at least 38 civilians were killed, and more than that were found missing. In this region, the soldiers were killed also (like the four that were burned in mortuary), and some persons from other regions, for example from Korenica, whose number surpasses the number of mounds. This means that the bodies of dead or killed persons in that region were buried in Gračac, Zadar or some other cemetery or secretly, as pointed by the witnesses.⁶

Gračac: The monitors arrived at the cemetery on August 15, for the first time. The UN police counted 22 NN signs. Mounds were shorter than 2 meters, and in width they were 80 cm. “At the cemetery in Gračac, the monitors have on August 18, 1995, registered 59 crosses.⁷ On August 31, they registered 81 cross (only 10 of them had names on them), on 11 of September, 105 crosses (17 had names on them)⁸, September 18, 115 crosses (only 19 with names on them), September 23, (122 graves), October 4, 123 graves with 19 names on them. These names are:

622 Ilija Domjanović, 395 Dušan Brkić, 1926, 472 Mirko Čorak, 386 Đurad Čanak, 387 Đuro Mandić, 388 Mira Sovilj, 389 Braco Sovilj, 329 Perka Banjanin, 565 Stevo Žigić, 347 Jovan Kontić 1914, 384, Jovan Prlina, 309 Mićo Rađmanović, 280 Toljagić, 283, Ilija Krtinić, 359 Stevo Manojlović, 361 Branko Grbić, 363 Nikola Dragičević, 364 Čedomir Dragičević, 365 Ilija Veselinović.

October 9, 1995: 150 (NN) graves were found placed in 5 rows of which the last one had 10 crosses. Only a few of them had names of the deceased, while most of them had

4 The CHC activists on July 17, 1996.

5 The following gravestones were demolished belonging to Vukosav Vuković, Ilija Rašeta, Dušan Potkonjak, Dragomir Kljajić and Dragan Popović. These are mostly killed Serb soldiers during the action Međački džep.

6 The CHC activists did not find additional marked burials in the vicinity of Donji Lapac. However, in April in 1997, the existence of 20 and more, unmarked mounds were discovered. They were covered by grass. The CHC activists do not exclude the possibility that these mounds belong to the times after military operation Storm. Several dozen of persons disappeared in this region, therefore in case the aforementioned statement is confirmed the whereabouts of these missing (buried) persons could be found.

7 Attempt to search the cemetery on August 29, 1995, did not succeed.) Nine persons carried out digging at the time and one big plastic bag was behind them on the floor.

8 On September 18, 1995: “The newly dug graves were located there of approximate length of 20 meters. The CIVIL police supervised the entire investigation of cemeteries. “(HRAT)

NN sign on and ordinal number. The number of the last cross is 622, and the name of the deceased is written on it. (Ilija Damjanović). In the continuation of the rows, there is a fresh dug out mound over which the bulldozer passed. The earth is soft and very easily trodden down. At the beginning of the last row, the hole 3 meters in radius, was found which opens up a possibility that few bodies were put in the same hole, under one ordinal number.⁹

October 28, 1995. "The largest number is 753. There are few unidentified fresh mounds. There are two new rows of crosses, with around 30 crosses in the row. Three holes, 20 meters long, and 8 meters wide and 1 meter deep. There were red and white rubber gloves, some shovels and a few wheelbarrows found on the sight. All crosses were marked with NN sign on them and a number. The numbers are not in the row, nor have all of them been used. At the few crosses there is a sign that a person from Srb was buried there or from Zrmanje, but there is no name on it. On a few places there were seen traces of bulldozer, which might indicate that there are mass unidentified graves found there."¹⁰

October 30, 1995: — 156 formed graves were found at the cemetery

May 16, 1997. There are 6 rows of crosses found at the cemetery

1st row: 319 NN; 320 NN; 351NN; 280NN; 271NN; 272 NN; 352NN; 353NN; 283 ILIJA KRTINIĆ; 281NN; 354 NN; 355 NN; 356NN; 357NN; 358NN; 359 STEVO MANOJLOVIĆ, 360NN; 361 BRANKO GRBIĆ; 362NN, 363 NIKOLA DRAGIČEVIĆ; 364 ČEDOMIR DRAGIČEVIĆ; 365 ILIJA VESELINOVIĆ

There are 22 crosses found in one row.

2nd row: 384 JOVO PRLINA; 383 NN; 382 NN, 572NN, 571NN; 570NN; 569NN; 380NN; 379NN; 378NN; 350NN; 275 NN; 277NN, 278NN; 279 NN; 321NN; 300NN; 274NN; 322NN; 276NN, 301NN; 323NN

There are 22 crosses in that row. In the continuation of the row two burial sights were found first was 6 meters long and the other one was 4 meters long. Both of them were 2 meters wide and 30 cm deep.

3rd row: 318NN; 317NN; 316NN; 315NN; 314NN; 313NN, 312NN, 311NN; 310NN; 306NN, 307NN; 308NN, 309 MIĆO RADMANOVIĆ; 304NN; 305NN; 302NN; 303NN; 303NN, 367NN; 366NN; 368NN, 369NN, 370NN, 371NN; 372NN, 373NN; 374NN, 581 SAVA ČAČIĆ

In this row there are 27 crosses. After a cross with a number 581, in the direction of North, there is a hole 7 meters long and 2 meters wide and 30 cm deep. Three more crosses are placed in the continuation of the hole.

SAVA SUČEVIĆ, 1932–1977; cross without any sign on it; DRAGAN TOJAGIĆ

4th row: 349NN; 348NN; 346NN; 345NN; 344NN; 343NN; 568NN; 342NN; 341NN, 340NN; 399NN; 388NN, 566 DRAKULJIĆ STANA; 565 ŽIGIĆ STEVO; 564NN; 334NN, 333NN; 332NN; 331NN, 330NN, 329 BANJANIN PERKA; 328NN; 325NN, 324NN, 326NN, 327NN

There are 26 crosses in the row.

9 The report by the CHC activists.

10 The same

5th row: 393NN, 392NN, 391NN; 580NN; 579NN; 578NN, 577NN, 390NN, BRACO SOVILJ; 388 MIRA SOVILJ; 386 ČANAK ĐURAĐ (mound was covered by the fresh earth, no bushes); 575 NN; 574NN, 538NN; 539NN, 540 NN; 750NN; 751NN; 752NN, FROM ZRMANJA NN; FROM SRB NN, 642 KRTINIĆ NIKOLA, 381NN

There are 23 crosses in the row. In the continuation of the row there is a hole around 5 meters long, 2 meters wide and 30 cm deep.

6th row: 622 ILIJA DAMJANIĆ; 621NN; 620NN, 619NN; 399NN; 398NN, 397NN, 395 DUŠAN BRKIĆ 1926-1995; 394 NN; 472 MIRKO ČORAK; 624NN; 625NN; 626NN, 530NN; 531NN; 532NN; 533NN, 627NN; 628NN; 629NN, 630NN; 631NN, 632NN, 634NN, 635NN, 636NN; 637NN

There are 28 crosses in the row.

In total, 151 crosses were registered at the cemetery.

The number has, for unknown reasons, in comparison with October 30, decreased for five crosses. Broken or demolished crosses were not found in the grass.

At the cemetery in Garlic, the dead from the wider region has been buried. Even people from Dalmatinska zagora have been buried there. For example in Gračac, under ordinal numbers 397 and 398 Miljka and Mijat Gagić from Zelengrad were buried. The couple remained at their homes after military operation storm started and were killed (their throats were cut) at their doorstep. Animals dragged around the bodies. Their son Đuro, who has been living and working in Ljubljana for a long time, is the only person who knew that they remained at their home. He fought for a year trying to find out what happened with them. Nobody wanted to reply. They sent him from Obrovac to Zadar, from Zadar to Šibenik, even Knin. The cemetery of Gračac did not even occur to him. However he managed to find out that his parents were buried over Velebit. Why?

It was published that the bodies of the dead people that were transferred to Zadar, for autopsy, were actually buried in Zadar. It is logical that the remaining parts of the old couple were in Zadar and later on were transferred to Gračac. The CHC activists have not been able to find a reply. And why their names have not been placed on their crosses immediately remains a mystery. Why were they buried at Zelengrad cemetery, instead of Gračac.

A great number of victims have not been identified at all. Many of them remained unidentified in spite of the fact that the persons' identities were known. Regarding the burial, these bodies not only were they not buried near the places of their origin but on the contrary were buried in distances cemeteries long way from their homes. Sometimes the bodies were taken from their relatives by force. As is the case of Marija Mandić and her father Đuro Mandić. Đuro was found on August 25, dead and mutilated. She buried him by the haystack, where he was killed. She reported his death to the police in Gračac. Contrary to the promises the police dug her father out by force and, regardless of their promise and her wishes and requests, forbade her the access to the grave and buried him in the Gračac cemetery, instead of the family tombstone in Tomingaj. When she obtained a permission to transfer her father's body to Tomingaj a year later, she had to cover the expenses herself.

Knin: At the Knin cemetery there is certainly a secret mass grave. As well as in Gračac, a number of buried persons and placed crosses are not the same. HRAT counted 56 crosses on one mound on August 15, 1995. On August 16, the UN CIVPOL was allowed to visit graves at the cemetery. "96 crosses were placed on the opposite sides. Four erected mounds with flattened top, one significantly larger than the other. The crosses were placed approximately 70 cm away from each other. There are no individual mounds. The names were written on less than 20 crosses."

According to the HRAT team report, in spite of the obvious efforts of the authorities to prepare the place in advance, the general look of the cemetery, gives an impression of the mass tombstone.

The member of the civil protection, who was present at the scene, stated that the prints of the killed persons and pictures were taken and that their bodies were recorded on camera. Most of the dead persons were civilians from Knin, and they died on 4-5, August. He furthermore added that the bodies were buried in accordance with the international standards, specifically that each body was put in a separate bag, 1, 1 meter deep and at the distance of 10 cm from each other.

August 18, 1995. The IHF mission¹¹, accompanied by Čermak's liaison officer Karolj Dondo and an unknown colonel, addressed as a public relation officer, visited Knin cemetery. They noticed a large monument: "a big white water cistern, three plastic water cans, some pairs of new blue rubber gloves and a few new respirators on the boardwalk across the cemetery. Everything looked new and it did not seem used before. These objects were dry, which is interesting, because it was raining prior to the arrival of the mission to the cemetery. The mud was all around the cemetery. The members of the mission believe that the military authorities wished to leave the impression that during the burial of the bodies all technical procedures were respected, even more because the liaison officer stated that the whole procedure was carried out in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Immediately near the cemetery there was a big bulldozer parked. There were numerous traces of the vehicle in the mud between the bulldozer and a grave. They showed how some of the vehicles moved forth and back from that place."¹²

Members of the mission, saw a big flat square mound around 30x5 meters large (105x16 paces) and 75-80cm high (30-35 inches). The crosses were placed in two rows near each longer row of the mound. 86 crosses were counted, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (two days earlier, the UN members counted 96 crosses). [REDACTED]

A few graves with the old crosses, which were recently dug out and reopened. These graves were seen in the north-east corner of the cemetery. A desecrated grave was also seen there.

Members of the mission asked Karolj Dondo, liaison officer whether they co-operated with the International Committee of Red Cross while burying and identifying bod-

11 Dardan Gashi, an advisor to the IHF, William Heydin, investigator within the IHF, Bjorn Engesland, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Petra Klein and Petar Mrkalj, CHC.

12 Report by the OSCE on August 25, 1995.

ies. He replied that the MKCK participated in all phases of the process. After return to Vienna, on August 21, 1995, they contacted MKCK in Zagreb in order to check the statement of Karolj Dondo. The representative of the MKCK categorically denied any participation in identification of bodies during burial at the Knin cemetery.¹³

On August 22, 1995, the Croatian police and officials of the civilian defence of Knin, informed HRAT that in the surrounding area a special police team would collect bodies. They collected 130 bodies, which were buried at the Knin cemetery.

On August 23, 1995, there were 144 crosses placed at the Knin cemetery. 48 more than on August 16, 1995.

- “1. A big, square mound, placed from north to south, with 91 crosses on it. At that place, two more persons were buried, but the crosses were not placed there.
On August 15, 1995 there were 56 crosses on the mound.
2. *A smaller mound located near Northwest corner of the big mound, on which there were 13 crosses placed, existed on August 15, 1995 without any crosses.*
3. The smaller square mound, located at the northern side of the shed, had 29 crosses on. The situation has not changed since August 15.
4. A smaller mound located on the northern side of the shed, on which there were 11 crosses, remained mostly unchanged, besides the newly dug out piece of earth of the size 6x6, meters located nearby.

On 144 crosses there were only 46 names. This fact, the members of the civilian protection explained by a statement that many victims were soldiers, Bosnian Serbs or soldiers of the FRY. At the demand why a few married couples were buried together the following was replied: “When a Croatian soldier finds a man in uniform together with a wife he kills them both.”¹⁴

October 2, 1995: At the Knin cemetery there were found graves of the killed civilians in Varivode, killed on September 28, 1995 at their homes. /see enclosure 1/: Dušan Berić, Špiro Berić, (the name on the cross is Bezić), Jovan Berić, Radivoj Berić, Marija Berić, Milka Berić, Marko Berić and Mirko Pokrajac.¹⁵

April 19, 1997: At the cemetery there are in total 5 rows of crosses situated at the cemetery, and 9 rows were seen on the left side out of cemetery.

1st row: 245 NN; 165 NN; 246 LJUBOMIR LJEVAJA; 247 NN; 248 DMITAR VUJNOVIĆ, 249 NN; 250 NN; 251 NN; 252 NN; 253 MOMČILO MARJANOVIĆ; 245 NN; 257 NN; 258NN; 259NN; 260NN; 261NN, 262NN; 166NN, 263NN; 175 DUŠAN BIBIĆ; 152 NIKOLA POTKONJAK; 240 NN; 401 DANE ŠIJAN; 403 NN; 403 NN; 405NN, 408 LAZO MILANKO; 409 ANA MILANKO; 419 NN; 420 NN; 414NN; 415NN; 416NN; 416NN; 417NN; 425NN; 426NN; 427NN; 428 NIKOLA JERKOVIĆ; 429 NN; 470 MILKA ŠLIVAR; 471 NN; 472; 473NN; 474NN

There are 45 crosses in the row.

13 The same

14 Report by the HRAT on August 23, 1995.

15 Dalmatian Committee for Solidarity, October 4, confirms the existence of these gravestones connected to the Varivode killings

2nd row: 475 MANDA TIŠMA; 476 NN; 477 NN; 479 NN; 478 NN; 481 MIRKO RADIŠA; 480 NN; 484 JOVO VUJASIN; 484 NIKOLA GRUJIĆ; 486 NN; 421 NN; 422 NN; 413NN, 412NN; 423NN; 424NN, 410NN; 411NN, 407NN; 406NN, 402 ANA JURIĆ; 153 NIKOLA BALAČ; 172 NN; 264 NN; 174 DRAGAN KRUNIĆ; 256 NN; 266 GOJKO ĐEPINA; 267 VINKO KRIČKA; 150 RADOMIR BOJANIĆ; 268 NN; 269 NN; 270 NIKOLA ORULA, 160 NN; 159 ZAGORKA OGNJANOVIĆ; 256 NN; 171 ALEKSANDAR BJELOBRK; 244 NN; 243 NN; 242 NN; 241 NN; 170 NN; 158 SAVA BEŠEVIĆ.

There are 44 crosses in the row.

3rd row: 811 PETAR SKORIĆ; 456NN; 464NN; 461NN; 462NN; 584NN; 654NN; 644NN; MIRKO POKRAJAC, MARKO BERIĆ, MILKA BERIĆ, MARIJA BERIĆ, RADIVOJ BERIĆ, JOVO BERIĆ, JOVO 1920 BERIĆ; ŠPIRO 1940 BEZIĆ¹⁶; DUŠAN 1937 DUKIĆ, 614 NN; 609 NN; 608 NN; 607 ZORKA KABLAR; 602 NN; 600 NN; 601NN; 599NN; 594 ILINKA CRNO (possibly a Montenegrin); 587 MILKA DRAGIŠIĆ; 585 NN; 558 NN; 556 RUŽICA MAMIĆ; 557 NN; 595 NN; 586 STEVAN SUČEVIĆ; 547 VASILJ BORAK; 546 KOSA BORAK; 545 MILAN BORAK; 544 DUŠAN BORAK; 543JOKA MAŽIBRADA; 550 MARIJA BORAK; 548 SAVA BORAK; 549 GROZDAN BORAK¹⁷; 535 JOVO DMITROVIĆ; 509 STEVO DMITROVIĆ; KAROLIJA GOJKO 1939-1955¹⁸; 507 SAVA DMITROVIĆ; 506 NN; 505NN; 504NN; 496 LJUBOMIR KOVAČEVIĆ; 498 DAMJANIĆ LAZO; 497 BUAC DUŠAN; 489 VUKOVIĆ MILKA; 490 VUKOVIĆ TANASIJA; 494 DAMJANOVIĆ DUŠAN; 487 NN

There are 55 crosses in the row. Between graves with the 811 number on Petar Skorić and 456 NN a bone was found approximately 20 cm long. In front of the graves with a mark 462NN a bone was found also. Between graves with marks DUŠAN 1937 and DUKIĆ AND 614 NN, there is a surface with the lifted earth, 3 meters long, without any marks or crosses. Graves with the marks 545, 544, 543 are lifted, and there is no grass on them. On the graves with numbers 550, 548, 549 and 533 there is no grass.

4th row: 483 NN; 488 BJELIĆ MARA; 491 DAMJANOVIĆ ĐUKA; 492 VUKOVIĆ BOŠKO; 495 NN; 499NN; 501NN; 500NN; 502 VERA DONDUR; 503 IKA DONDUR; 536 JOVO CEROVAC; 542 VIDOVIĆ STEVAN; 539 GRUBOR JOVO; 540 GRUBOR MIKA; 538 GRUBOR MARIJA; 541 KARANOVIC ĐURO; 537 GRUBOR MILOŠ; 551 NN; 553 NN; 552 TODE MARIĆ; 554 NN; 555NN; 588 SAVA ŠOLAJA; 592 VASO VASIĆ; 591 NIKICA RADOJKO; 590 MAŠA RADOJKO; 589 RADANOVIĆ-LUKIĆ BRANKO; 593 NIKICA PANIĆ; 610 NN; 611 NN; 612NN; 613NN; 615NN; 511 JOVO MRDALJ; 512 NN; 455 NN; 456 NN; 457NN; 458NN; 459 JOVICA PLAVŠA; 460 OBRAD TRIVIĆ¹⁹; 527 NN; 643 STARČEVIĆ SLAVKO, JOVAN BURSAĆ 1911-1955; 582 NN; 463NN; 812.

JOKA VUKOVIĆ 1966; ANKA RAMLJAK 1906-1991; TOME ŽIVKOVIĆ 1903-1911.

Near the grave of Tomo Živković there are three freshly dug out holes, one meter deep and 2x2 meter large. Near all three holes there are remaining parts of the plastic

16 It should be BERIĆ

17 It should be Grozdana

18 It should be Korolija

band with the sign STOP POLICE. On the graves 463 and 812 there is not grass, between graves 463 and 582 a bone was found 15–20 cm long.

58 crosses are in the row:

5th row: CVITA KRUNIĆ 1940–1966; LAZAR MRDALJ 1914–1996; JELENA BLANŠA 1918–1996; MANDA JOKIĆ 1904–1996; MARIJA ZELENBABA 1927–1996; MARA KRNETA 1910–1997

There are 6 crosses in the row — (these crosses have nothing to do with the burials during military operation Storm but are put in the report because of the easier following of the material)

6th row: MARIJA BATINIĆ 1914–1997; DRAGINJA DRAGIĆ 1915–1997, JANJA KRKLJEŠ 1933–1977; MILICA GAGIĆ 1907–1977; MARIJA RADINOVIĆ 1913–1977; PERA VUJASIN 1–1997; SIMEUNA ŠTRBAC 1904–1996; SIMEON RADOŠ 1905–1996; MILICA RADUJKO 1996.

The graves are placed in the big dug out hole 40 meters long and 5 meters wide. On April 19, 1997 from the grave marked by a name MARIJA RADINOVIĆ 1913–1977, a coffin protruded out of earth. Two days earlier a coffin had not been seen by the same monitoring mission visiting the cemetery.

There are 9 crosses in the row (regular burials)

7th row: MARIJA JEFTOVIĆ 1901–1966; IKA RAŠKOVIĆ 1966; PETAR RADUJKO 1910–1996; JANJA RAKIĆ — 1966; ZORKA KURAJICA; DARINKA CUPAĆ 1914–1955; DIMITRIJEVIĆ; ANĐELIJA MIŠLJAN; (a cross without a mark); BRANKO (a grave without a cross); MILIVOJEVIĆ STANA; ZORKA MATIJEVIĆ; VUJO TIŠMA; LUKA ARDALIĆ; ILIJA MILJEVIĆ; DARINKA PRIBOJAN; LJUBICA KANAZIR; GOJKO PLATIŠA; MIRKO ŠUPELJAK 1913–1955; ČUDE BASTETIĆ MILKA 1912–1995; SAVA GRUBOR 1934–1966.

22 crosses and a mound without a cross (regular burials) are placed in the row. The entire row is covered with new earth and later on the mounds were shaped.

8th row: STANA BAREŠIĆ; KATE CRNOMARKOVIĆ; MILA MILOVANOVIĆ 1915–1995; RUŽICA KOVAČEVIĆ; 1904–1995; MARKO VIDOVIĆ; STANA RADINOVIĆ; MARIJA; ĐUKA MARIJEVIĆ; MILKA BRUJIĆ; DRAGINJA RUSIĆ 1914–1995; ĐUKA MATIJEVIĆ; MILKA BRUJIĆ; DRAGINJA RUSIĆ 1914–1995; ĐUKA; MILAN DRAGIĆ; DARINKA VIDOVIĆ 1912–1995; MILICA KNEŽEVIĆ; PERA RADOVIĆ; SAJA ĐELIĆ²⁰; SAVA SUSU²¹; NIKOLA DRAKULIĆ

The gap between 7th and 8th row is not enough to place the bodies without bending them.

There are 18 crosses in the row (two are related to the military action Storm)

9th row, (a cross without a number); 18, 19, 20, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 4 (maybe a number 34); 36; 37; 38, 40.

The graves are new; the new earth was brought. There are 14 crosses in the row.

10th row: 223 NN; 221 NN; 220NN, 219NN; 218NN.

There are 5 crosses in the row.

11th row: 214 NN; 215NN; 216NN; 217NN; 222NN; 224NN.

There are 6 crosses in the row.

19 He is alive.

20 It should be Delić.

21 It should be Suša.

12th row: PETAR DMITROVIĆ; SIMO LUKIĆ; CVITA BORKOVIĆ; ILIJA OPAČIĆ, SOKA ĆURUVIJA; PERE KOROLIJA.

There are 6 crosses in the row — they are not the victims of the military operation Storm.

13th row: 255 NN; 226NN; 227NN; 228NN; 229 DUŠAN VUKADIN; 230 NN; 231NN; 235 NN; 239NN; 236 NN; 234NN; 233NN, 237NN; 238NN, 232NN

There are 15 crosses in the row.

14th row: 200 NN; 201NN; 202NN; 203NN; 204NN; 205NN; 206NN; 207NN; 208NN; 209NN; 210NN; 212NN, 213NN

There are 14 crosses in the row.

318 graves were recorded in the cemetery.²² 256 were victims of the military operation Storm. There are several coffins placed in one part of the cemetery. This fact was established because there were coffins found 25–30 cm below surface.

March 28, 1998: 41 broken crosses were found at the tombstones of the killed persons in the military operation Storm.²³

July 3, 1998: During regular control the CHC activists registered a series of changes on the cemetery. Some graves are exhumed. The cemetery is undergoing a reconstruction to make it wider. A machine dug the row in 1997, 30 meters long, 2 meters wide and 1,5 meter deep. It was buried. 10 persons were buried in the beginning there. The graves were not covered up to the level of the row. The earth was pushed over these graves, mixed with dirt. Some graves, which were formed during military operation Storm was levelled to the ground with a machine and pebbles. Some crosses were demolished, possibly belonging to exhumed graves. Certain graves were maintained such as a grave marked by a sign: *Mirko Radić*.²⁴

January 20, 1999: Part of the cemetery, where the killed soldiers were buried during military operation Storm is heavily neglected. Lot of crosses were demolished or pushed to the ground.

14th row: 207NN, 209NN, 211NN, 213NN, 13th row: 237 NN; 23NN; 11 row: 216 NN; 4th row: 552NN²⁵, 596NN; 512NN; 456NN; 455NN; 458NN; 460NN;²⁶ JOVAN BURSAC 1911–1995; 582 NN; 467NN²⁷ ; 3rd row: 506NN; 505NN, 543 JOKA MAŽIBRADA; JOVO 1920 BERIĆ; JOVAN BATINIĆ 1913–1999²⁸, 2nd row; 170NN; 241NN²⁹ ; 242NN; 243NN; 244NN; 171NN³⁰ ; 356NN³¹ ; 355NN³² ;

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- 22 In several rows there are names of persons who after military operation Storm died, among whom there were persons who did not die a natural death and here we bring all names.
- 23 Five more broken crosses were marked: Prostran Stevanija 1913, Ivković Stevanija 1940–1992; Veselinović Petar 1934–1944
- 24 A worker at the cemetery, who collected garbage, asked the CHC activists what were they doing there, and he said that filming was forbidden.
- 25 The cross was bearing a mark on April 19, 1997 552 Tode Marić
- 26 The cross was bearing a mark on April 19, 1997 460 Obrad Trivić
- 27 The cross did not exist on April 19, 1997
- 28 The cross did not exist on April 19, 1997
- 29 There is a human bone lying besides the demolished gravestone.
- 30 The cross was bearing another mark on April 19, 1997, 171 Aleksandar Bjelobrk
- 31 The cross did not exist on April 19, 1997
- 32 The cross did not exist on April 19, 1997

269NN; 267NN; 174NN³³, 265NN, 467NN; 411NN, 1st row: 425 NN, 420NN, 261NN; 253NN³⁴; 248 DMITAR VUJNOVIĆ; DEBNOIĆ MARIJA³⁵ (?) 1918–1955; 246 LJUBOMIR LJEVAJA; 295 NN (possibly 245).

Some plastic marks fell down and it is difficult to establish the exact grave.

There are 45 demolished crosses.

In comparison with the crosses placed on the cemetery many more persons were buried at the Knin cemetery. The independent sources claim that the victims from the military operation Storm were buried in several layers at the Knin cemetery. When a machine dug a hole, the several layers of dead bodies were placed in one hole. Each layer was covered by earth, trodden down and more victims were put in, and finally the crosses were placed above.

One of the bulldozer workers, originally from Imotski, in charge of digging the graves, stated how that job was the most horrible and scary experience in life. Allegedly, he claimed that he was ordered to re-dig the entire holes with dead bodies inside with the bulldozer, in order to make the hole deeper.

When the victims were finally placed in holes, they were covered by earth by a bulldozer. The gravestones were then put above them and the mounds were formed out of sand that was thereupon washed down by rain. Several persons requested a permission to dig out their relatives. In one case, the body of their mother who had been placed below the gravestone under a mentioned number, was not found there, nor was it found in any other place. The graves in the vicinity were as well opened but the body was not found there.

Manda Tišma, was for example buried in Knin, whose identity was known from the beginning and the whereabouts of their family tombstone was well known to the authorities. Lazo Domjanović was taken to Knin, although he was killed near his home. His wife was not allowed to attend the funeral, and she was promised that his name would be put on the cross. She still does not know under which number washer husband buried. How many names were deliberately avoided, and why were the victims buried far away from their homes? Why?

In that way it was possible to cover up the names of the victims and insist that victims would never be found and identified.

Korenica: August 31, 1995, HRAT has documented 21 gravestones with names NN. Number of crosses is the same as it was on September 8, 1995. Half of them are turned over. There was another new hole dug out. The hole was later on buried, but it was not established whether a body was buried inside.

On July 1, 1998, all NN crosses were demolished and big grass was grown there. The whole cemetery was unattended.

33 The cross bore a mark on April 19, 1997, 174 Dragan Krunic

34 The cross bore a mark on April 19, 1997, 253 Momčilo Marjanović

35 The cross did not exist on April 19, 1997.

Vodoteč, (Brinje): The village is 8 km away from Brinje, right from the road Josipdol-Senj. First HRAT, and then the CHC found 8 crosses from the military operation Storm.

November 1996: 5 crosses were found there: Petar Bukvić 504, 1911–1995. Hinić Vukan 503, 1960–95, Željko Uzelac 502 and 501. Two holes were dug out, and later on buried, one was 5x2. 5 meters, and the other 2x2 meters. It was difficult to establish whether there were any persons buried there. The Croatian army denied any access to the cemetery in Vodoteč in the period from August 4–10. The hole was dug with a bulldozer, approximately 15x2meters. According to the words of the salesman,³⁶ something has been taken to the cemetery but it was not established what exactly. The hole was later on buried with bulldozer.

Zadar: Cemetery Zadar was investigated in 1997 twice, on April 18 and June 24, 1997. "The third central part of the cemetery was divided into a part where stone graves were placed, and the part where the mounds of earth were made. The mounds were made of earth and were situated on the right and left side of the stone graves, which are placed, in the middle. In most of these mounds, dead and killed after military operation Storm and action Maslenica were buried.

On the right side from the entrance 4 rows of crosses were placed on the mounds made of earth. In the first row there are 40 rows places. Most of them are marked with names of the deceased. There is a grave without name: NN 226/96. In the second row there are 44 crosses: Unmarked crosses are NNŽ. In the third row there are 14 crosses. Unmarked are the following graves: NNŽ, NN. In the fourth row there are 8 crosses. One cross is without any mark on it, and on the other there is a mark NN. Others have name on them. Many mounds seem trodden down some 15–20 cm. There are 15 such sagging graves, without any marks on them.

The graves in the part north from the road; there are 12 graves there. One of them is marked by NN 1997. In the other there are 6 mounds buried after military operation Storm and in the continuation there are 13 white crosses without any marks. In the third row children are mostly buried. Among 35 crosses there are the following signs: "Denis 199?", a white cross, "NN Ž", "NN", "NN" "217 NN 1996" "NN44". In the fourth row there are 11 crosses. There are no unmarked graves. In the fifth row the situation is the same; there are 28 crosses there. In the sixth row there are 31 crosses.

In one part, south of road, there are no unmarked rows.

It was not possible to confirm with certainty the number of buried persons from Oluja. However, a whole series of anonymous burials were recorded in that cemetery, although the names of the victims were known. For example, when on August 18, Uroš Šarić and Uroš Ognjenović were killed, and their bodies were transported to Zadar. A son of Uroš Šarić, who lives in Split, waited for the court expertise to be done in order for him to organise funeral. When he enquired about the procedure, they told him that the procedure was already completed and those two persons had been transferred from Kakanj and that they were buried under a number because they were unknown. When the son told him that he knew that one of them was his father, and that he wished to bury

36 T. states that the Croatian army denied the access to the store from August 4–10, 1995 which is located near the cemetery, and was disabled to go to work.

him at the local cemetery he was sent from one to another responsible person among whom only one gave him a number under which these two men were buried. He has not managed to transfer his father to the village cemetery as yet.

At Zadar cemetery there have been noticed several cross with NN mark on them and with a letter Ž and ŽŽ, which possibly means that under these crosses two unidentified persons were buried. Research of the graveyards showed one more fact: some numbers of the buried persons have been repeated, which is not allowed.

The rest of the village cemeteries: — Vrlika, on September 7, 1996. HRAT found on the right side of the cemetery a freshly dug out land, on which six NN crosses were placed.

Krbavica: September 15, 1995: On the village cemetery there are two NN crosses. 10 Croatian soldiers dug out, besides their HQ a hole 4x2 meters large.

Plitvice: On September 17, 1995. A few graves with NN marks on them are placed there. (HRAT)

Donji Srb: April 17, 1997. On the left side of the cemetery, there were traces of fresh holes dug out there, which looks like mounds, 20 cm high, without any marks. 30 such mounds are left on the cemetery. On some places there are traces of dug out earth, while some are covered by fresh grass.³⁷ (Similar mounds have been noticed in the Kunovac cemetery).

The anonymous burials have been registered in Zvjerinac and Doljani.

Devastation of cemeteries

The CHC has received some information regarding desecration of cemeteries or grave-stones, burning and some other way of destruction. The field activists have also documented various cases of devastation, such as destruction of gravestones, theft of some objects and even the theft of the entire fences.³⁸

Bibići, (Drniš): The Catholic church was damaged, and 5–6 graves have been desecrated. The Orthodox cemetery remained intact. (September 12, 1995).³⁹

Krakovići, (Drniš): The Catholic cemetery was completely destroyed, and the church was pulled down. (September 12, 1995).

Polača, (Knin): The cemetery is situated south from the centre of Polača, together with the Orthodox Church. It seems neglected but there are no traces of looting and destroying of gravestones. According to the words of Gojko Crnogorac two bronze sculptures were taken.

Miočić, (Drniš): At the beginning of 1997, at the local cemetery there were two massive gravestones bombed. Near the grass was burnt.

37 At the Serb cemetery, a few gravestones were partly devastated, while 10 marked grave crosses were demolished.

38 In majority of places, which were under the control of the rebel Serbs, were devastated and destroyed at the beginning of the war.

39 All other Catholic cemeteries and churches under control of rebel Serbs were devastated and demolished at the beginning of the war.

Benkovac: A few gravestones were damaged by gunshots, and a few were demolished, (April 17, 1997).

Ervenik (Knin): On the unconfirmed day a few gravestones were devastated. 8 April 17, 1997).

Velika Popina, (Gračac): A few gravestones were partly destroyed. (April 17, 1997)

Zelengrad, (Obrovac): Five devastated monuments were seen, and a few crosses with marks on them were broken. A great part of the cemetery is in a very poor shape, and a few tombstones were emptied. (April 17, 1997)

Lišani (Polača): Nine gravestones were devastated at the Orthodox cemetery in Lišani in the period between October 9 and November 1, 1997 in Lišani. "On October 9, 1997, I together with 20 more families from Lišani came to the village on the invitation of the Office for reconstruction and development of Zadar, in order to establish and register damages on the household objects. There were two persons from that office and a few policemen. Immediately upon our arrival to the village, the residents of the village of Polače, started to provoke and insult us. Two persons dressed in civilian clothes said how "the village burnt without you inside, and the second time it will burn with you inside". That day I visited a cemetery with the others, the gravestones were not destroyed then. The church was looted. On November 1, 1997, I visited the village in order to pay respects at the cemetery where my parents were buried. Nine gravestones were demolished or destroyed."⁴⁰

The gravestones belonging to Nikola Uzelac, (1900–1953), monument of Jokić Danica Subotić (1908–1955), and Sava Lacmanović, Đuro Vojvodić, Luka Cvijetić, Milivoj Medić, Marko Mijović, Cvetko Uzelac and other older gravestones without names on.

Jošani, (Udbina): At the beginning of 1998 the cemetery was burned. (HOMO, Pula)

Pavlovac Vrebački, (Gospić). At the beginning of 1998, the cemetery was burned.

Baljci, (Drniš): During the month of October, 1998, two unknown persons demolished 15 gravestones on the Orthodox cemetery. They also stole a cart for transporting the bodies from the Sveti Jovan church. The gravestones belonging to the families Bibić, Jošić and others were demolished.

Devastation and desecration of the cemetery was noticed in Donji Lapac, Gospić, Obrovac, Čojluk, Vrhovine.

Possible Mass Graves

Besides the Knin cemetery there are some other cemeteries for which we believe are mass graves sights⁴¹ in the region of the former UN Sector South and these are: the hole G. in the region of Donji Lapac, the hole G. in the region of Kistanje⁴², the region called

40 Drago Subotić, to the CHC activists on November 19, 1997.

41 Mass grave is the place where three or more persons were buried together.

42 " There is one hole known to domestic persons who are directed towards. in the war there were four to five persons thrown there. Š. saw one night a truck approaching towards the hole. The lights on the truck

K.⁴³ in the vicinity of Drniš, the former rubbish heap of K; the region of Š. j; periphery of G, J, near Korenica, H, hole O. rubbish heap near Z.; L, P, S, B, P, V, P. We may put a question mark near any of these locations, because it is possible that some of these holes, could have disappeared in the meantime. The phenomenon such as this is known to have happened before.

The CHC activists checked out rubbish-heap, which was previously covered with stones from stone-pit. Many killed and murdered persons were buried there allegedly. The CHC activists tried to visit the possible burials in the Red land, however that was not possible because of the presence of the army. The witnesses point to the possible mass grave in the city of Knin, outside of the Knin cemetery. The statements by the witnesses regarding bones found in the vicinity of Zadar city rubbish heap were documented. The CHC activists tried to carry out the field investigation there, but have not succeeded in their attempt. The information came too late and that piece of land was guarded.

Regardless of the fact whether these statements about individual tombstones were correct, it is true that mass graves sights exist in the territory of the former UN sector south. The fact that number of victims from the period of military operation Storm surpasses the number of crosses obviously confirms that belief.

were dimmed, and it happened around 21 hours until 21, 30 hours. That happened on 14, 15 and 16 of August 1995. It seems that they threw something there and I do not believe that it was garbage. When we approached the hole there we found one shoe and a comb. (K. Š. to the CHC activists)

43 The region of Konja, (Drniš), on August 20, 1995 the witness registered the digging of the hole with the bulldozer. At the middle of May, the hole was dug again by a bulldozer. The truck type RABA was parked there with the register plates belonging to the Croatian army.

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Devastation of Objects

“On 23rd of August the Croatian Government denied the accusations for looting and incidents. Contrary to these statements the special mission of the International Helsinki Federation documented the evidence of systematic destroying and looting of Serb houses and household objects on behalf of the Croatian Army, Croatian police, civilians and “groups for burning” — all of them continue their activities in this region. Statements of the Croatian authorities about data referring to civilian victims, missing persons and total number of dead persons are also contradictory...¹

Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, President of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, based on information from the CHC offices in Karlovac and Zagreb and other sources sent to him to Sumartin on the island of Brač, spoke by phone with the commander of the Croatian Army, general Zvonimir Červenko, on Sunday, August 13, 1995. Čičak informed him that in the UN Sector South, especially in the region of Knin, “something horrible was happening”. He also informed him about systematic burning — destroying of Kistanje and other neighbouring villages and asked for an immediate cease of these activities and protection of civilians. General Červenko answered him that he had also got similar information and that he was already undertaking everything within his capacity. He also said that he was not able to do a lot about that.

It seemed that he was right. In the former UN Sector South, at least 22,000 houses and a number of villages were burned in a systematic and organised manner. All economic plants in villages were destroyed or looted. The complete electricity system and other objects of infrastructure were also destroyed, as well as schools, cultural objects, shopping centres, monuments dedicated to partisans and victims of the fascist terror from the WW II. The city of Knin and other bigger centres were completely looted. Even the electric cables belonging to the railway Knin — Bihać were taken away during day light in front of the members of the Army, police and government. Rich livestock was looted and destroyed etc. The concept of “burned soil” was implemented in this region as if those who conquered and liberated it would never stay there for a day or would never come back. It was a time of permissible terror, crime and loot.

In that chaos the less damaged were Orthodox Churches, whilst their interior: icons, books and other inventory, were taken away or destroyed. In some villages, while everything else was in flames, armed policemen stood on guard by these churches.²

1 IHF to the OSCE, August 25, 1995

2 Police guarded the church of St. *Nedjejice* (St. Sunday) in Karin, which nevertheless was mined on August 23, 1996. Witnesses as well as the CHC activists claim that during their visit to the church on August 20, 1996 one policeman stood in its front. Where was a policeman on August 23rd it was not communicated.

During their visit to the commander of the Knin military unit, general Ivan Čermak, the International Commission of the IHF, warned him that in Knin and its surroundings were occurring war crimes, killings of civilians, unnecessary and organised arsons of houses and all other economic objects, except Orthodox Churches.

From the ECMM reports

August 15, 1995 in Zrmanja Vrelo nine houses burning.

October 3, 1995 in Vukovići — 2,45 p. m. one house is burning (in the village looting is underway)

October 4, 1995: Korolije — 4 p. m. two stables and four haylofts are burning (looting underway);

October 6, 1995: Donji Lapac — 2,45 p. m. number of haylofts burning in Gajine;

October 7, 1995: Opačiči — 0,15 p. m. one house is burning (three policemen on the spot);

"The UN officials saw and still see even more concerning events: arsons, killings of civilians and looting", stated on October 10, 1995 Alain Forand, the former commander of the UNCRO-a in the UN Sector South. According to his data, the UN military observers visited 320 villages and counted 22,000 burned houses, which is 73 percent of all houses in these villages. On the same occasion it was said that the UN possessed the documentation of 128 killed elderly civilians.

"In the whole Krajina region houses were burning and even today, more than five weeks after the last battles, they are still burning. Destroying big complex of Non-Croat properties can lead to the conclusion that this was not done only by mobs and that the

3

General Zvonimir Červenko, stated on November 5, 1995 in a daily "Vjesnik" that general Čermak, who was "military and governor" of Knin, did not report on anything and that he is accountable for everything that was happening in that region. In weekly "Nacional" from November 5, 1997 Červenko said: "It is not true that he was in Knin somekind of civil person. These are rubbish, he was a military person. How can someone be a civil governor in military uniform with general's rank with the military units who support him?! This is simply funny..."

whole affair was tolerated by the Croatian government...Result will be an efficient impediment of the Serb return to their houses and it will also create more difficultite for people to settle down again in this region. It is impossible to identify the accurate range of destruction, but the largest portion of property in rural parts of the former Sector South is, roughly speaking, partially or completely destroyed, which is evidently the violation of the Resolution of the UN Security Council No. 1009 from August 10, 1995. General destruction happened more in the former Sector South, than in the Sector North. Some bigger towns like Knin, Benkovac, Obrovac and Drniš were spared and serve as showcases for public..."⁴

Systematic destroying: first looting and then burning, mining and devastating of family houses, economic, industrial, cultural and other infrastructure objects in other ways, mistreatment, intimidation, expel and killings of people seemed not to be directly ordered from the main headquarters of the Croatian Army. Namely, during the operation "Storm" existed so called "*parallel ordering command*" under which the most incidents of terrorism and violence took place (even the main headquarters can not remain isolated from these incidents and is not completely "innocent"). This command, allegedly, was coming from the Ministry of Defence. General Čermak, mostly did not communicate with the main headquarters and did not send reports to his boss Červenko. He did not report about atrocities that were occurring in the region under his command. Moreover, he tried everything to cover up the incidents in public, justifying all that happened by emphasising that it was the conflict with Chetnics. In one word, he tried to minimise the whole problem. In the year 1997 he started denying the whole thing trying to explain that he, being in general's uniform, was merely in charge only for civilian questions, mostly for public kitchens and public utilities, thus he was powerless. Furthermore in the continuation of the report he would express only hints about a large-scale destruction in the former Sector South. The destruction that left the whole region pauperised and levelled to the ground although there was no "encounters" or real war clashes with the Serb military members that fled with civilians (in some cases even before them).

*From the Report of the UN office for humanitarian crisis
(UN Sector South — excerpts)*

August 10, 1995: "There are still significant limits of freedom of movement for the UN human rights teams (HRAT). They are only granted the access to the roads in Knin but not the contact with civilian population."

August 11, 1995: "From today at noon it is promised to the UN full freedom of movement."

August 10 and 11, 1995: "The Kenyan battalion noticed houses in flame or a while ago set on fire in several villages, for example: Polje, Lunići, Ružić, Ditunci, Kunići, Kričkici, Treskavica, Civljane, Donji Lapac. They have found evidences of loot and systematic arsons perpetrated by soldiers of the Croatian Army."

4 Special report of the European Union which the CHC published in its entirety in a daily "Novi list".

August 14, 1995: "HRAT visited yesterday Benkovac and reported on houses on fire in Kistanje and surroundings. Kistanje, Đevrske, Otrić and other villages became practically non-inhabitable as a consequence of actions which took place after the battle."

August 15, 1995: "Arsons continued in Vrhovine and Popovići, and other smaller villages east of Drniš. In the village of Mirčete all houses are fresh burned in the presence of six armed soldiers of the Croatian Army...A large scale destroying of property of Non-Croats is co-ordinated and ordered process, apparently supported by the highest officials..."

"The Television crew of WTN, tried to record a house on fire near Drniš: seven Croatian soldiers caught them on the spot, took them into the house and told them in an extremely rude manner that they are not allowed to take pictures. Their videocassettes were confiscated, documents were checked in details and from the wallet of a member of the crew more than 1,000 German marks were stolen. After that the soldiers delivered them to the Croatian policemen who menaced them with confiscating of their passports. "

August 21, 1995: "The team of ECMM noticed loot and arsons in the region between Benkovac and Knin. The UN military observers noticed houses on fire in Kaldrma, Kistanje, Brušani, Široka Kula, Serdari and Podgornja..."

August 22, 1995: "One team noticed 13 houses in flame..."

August 24, 1995.: "HRAT saw five houses in flame in the village Doljani in the region of Oročaca. One inhabitant stated that other houses were set on fire the previous day, some 25-30 houses..."

August 25, 1995: "The team searched a big cloud of smoke and found the whole village (Grubori), some twenty houses and other objects in flame. Allegedly on that morning ten members of the Special police unit dressed in camouflage uniforms, were seen while arriving to the village Grubori..."

August 28, 1995: "The UN military observers reported that the loot and arsons continued in the Sector."

August 31, 1995: "Military observers saw larger number of houses on fire, especially in the region of Gračac. The teams of observers from Otočac, Korenica, Sinj and Donji Lapac reported also on numerous fires. EC monitors noticed houses on fire in the valley of Plavno."

September 1, 1995: "Observers reported on four houses in flame near Udbina and other four near Gračac..."

September 2, 1995: "Around 9 p. m. in the vicinity of Knin the huge fire blazed up. The UN military observers and staff headed towards the place of fire, but the members of the Special police forces turned them back with an excuse that from 8 p. m. started the curfew. The next day investigation discovered that five houses were burned out to the basement..."

September 5, 1995: "The EC monitors saw four Croatian soldiers and one military policeman of the 66. Brigade in the region of arsons in the village Rusići, near Plavno. The EC monitors saw tractors and other vehicles on the road to Zadar loaded with furniture and other household equipment. Some of the drivers wore uniforms of the Croatian Army..."

September 7, 1995: "According to the EC monitors reports arsons and loot continued further..."

In Očestovo, near Knin, first house burned on August 6, 1995 set on fire by the Croatian Army, was the house of Savo Šolaja, ill and disabled man. The owner who was still alive was set on fire together with his house.

In Padjeni the Croatian Army first the railway station⁵ on fire and then several houses in Dragojle and Smudje, where they killed Miku Smudj. They cut off her head and threw it into the well and the decapitated body was found leaning against the wall.

The same day around 5 p. m. the Croatian Army arrived on tanks in Mokro Polje which they found empty. When the infantry arrived to the village of Japundžić they immediately set the house on fire belonging to Mica Japundžić. Furthermore they burned the house of Teodor Kostić, named "Tode". In the centre of the village where the tanks stopped, soldiers set the house of Ivan Sučević on fire. Then Ruža Babić, born in 1926, a disabled woman was killed. The shell blew off Milan Demir, born 1942, and his house was set on fire.⁶

Soldiers caught in Mokro Polje a married couple Ruža and Stevo Manojlović, who were driving on tractor from Kistanje. On the first floor of the local shop they maltreated them. They raped the woman in front of her husband's eyes then they slaughtered and massacred her. They also slaughtered and massacred the husband Stevo. Afterwards they threw some old clothes upon their dead bodies and set them on fire. They were buried in Knin without any names on their crosses.⁷

The same day the Croatian soldiers caught three Krajina soldiers. They were disarmed and killed in Ponori.

"South from Drniš towards Knin and its surroundings hundreds of houses which were looted were also set on fire. The village of Kistanje that counted around 2000 residents was completely looted and burned. The village of Srb was completely burned and 70 per cent of Donji Lapac was destroyed. Siverić, Kosovo, Vrbnik, Radučić, Kričke, Ivoševci and Žagrović were seriously damaged (many of these small villages did not have any more signs with their names on proving that they were removed). On August 18 (1995.) the members of the Mission, driving on their way back from Knin to Drniš, stopped and took a photo of the building which was not burning when they were passing by in the morning of the same day. The Mission was driving back in late afternoon on August 19, on the same road and took photo of the houses which were in the last stadium of burn out — these houses were not burning on the same day in the morning when the Mission first time passed by. The Mission members also saw intact houses with the following graffities "Croatian house" and "Don't touch, Croatian house!" as well as intact houses where the Croatian flags were hanging..."

The town of Kistanje was completely destroyed. There were no military clashes in it. The IHF Mission visited the town on August 17, 1995 and saw "official persons dressed in civilian uniforms..." shooting at houses. After a while many of these houses were set on fire. That very day the IHF Mission "saw a group of four soldiers entering the

5 On the reintegrated region the most of railway stations were destroyed and the rail road Knin-Bihać, out of use during the war, is completely demolished

6 "When soldiers on tanks arrived to the center of the village near the church, they immediately opened the church doors by the rafal fire from the automatic guns, took the rope and rang with one bell. Along with the terrible noise they were shouting: 'F. their Serb mother, we buried them all. There is no Serb, nor chetnics, they all are killed. '..." (Testimony of B. A.)

7 "Grandma' Manda, who was nearby, heard them begging not to slougher them..." (Ibid)

houses and walking around them... *While the Mission was still in Kistanje the smoke started to spread from houses located in direction of the main road leading to Knin...*

The members of the Mission noticed that the only undamaged building in Kistanje was the Orthodox Church. When the Mission members asked the colonel of the Croatian Army (in charge also for giving information) how come that the churches were not destroyed he answered 'We do not want to look like Serbs!' This is a very interesting answer, especially because the Croatian officials claimed that loots and arsons were acts of Croatian civilians, acts inspired out of revenge and that it was very difficult for government to prevent such pouring out of emotions. *If Croatian civilians are destroying Serb houses, why they are not destroying orthodox churches? If Croatian government can protect Orthodox Churches why they can not protect Serb houses? ...*⁸ Witnesses claim that Kistanje was burned by a group of twenty six men: twenty two Croats and four Srbs.

"When the Croatian Army arrived to Kistanje I was not here, I hid. However, my house was a clear example of the fact that the village was destroyed deliberately and in an organised manner. The fact that my house remained undestroyed means that somebody from the military unit, which was here, knew about it. See, nothing is destroyed, somebody was only shooting inside and killed my dog who was hiding in a wardrobe... What should I tell you about the present conditions here? See, I have only electricity but no water, no shop, no bus... only desert..." revealed to the CHC activists Ivica Katalenić, Croat from Zagorje on July 5, 1996, who has lived in Kistanje since 1948.⁹

In the centre of Kistanje there was a monument with the names of the victims of the fascists terror (from WW II). On its stone basement there were written more than 1,000 names of civilians from the region and surrounding area, killed during the Second World War. The monument was first damaged then totally demolished and finally taken away. When the marble boards with names were broken, on the nearby cement wall it was written "All combatants were crashed down by black shirts".

In the village of Ivoševci on August 12, 1995 the local school "Stanko Tišma" was burned as well as number of family houses. Later on even those houses that were temporarily occupied by the members of the Croatian Army were also burned.

Donji Lapac, a small town in Lika region bordering with Bosnia and Herzegovina was seriously destroyed, crashed down and burned by the Croatian police — the special police units under charge of Mladen Markač. One of the central directions of the Croatian Army attack was from the direction of Gospić via Novi Lički Osik, Ljubovo, via Bunić I. and II., then via Udbina and parts of Lička Plješivica (especially Zuleševica) to Donji Lapac.¹⁰ In Ljubovo CA clashed with the Serb units. In Ljubovo, several Croatian officers and soldiers were killed as well as two UNPROFOR soldiers. Many Croatian military units were positioned in the centre of Ljubovo, mostly men from Rijeka, island of

8 Report of the IHF Mission to the OSCE, August 25, 1995.

9 During our next visits to Ivica and Desa Katalenić they were complaining against the Croats settled there from Janjeno (Kosovo) who threaten them more and more frequently and severely. They "advise" them that the best solution for them is leaving the region. When they got the knowledge that *Ivica is Croat and that he lived during the war with, as they say, chetnics and that he is married to "chetnic" their personal security became significantly aggravated. They leave the house only when they have to.*

10 After or even together with the CA units there were a lot of refrigeratr trucks, owned by Jakopec and others. "When we started asking why it was said that they were for cattle. But, how can you collect cattle if the battle is still going on..." (Ibid.)

Pag, Lovinac from Lika and others. Croatian soldiers task was to reach Donji Lapac and to approach as soon as possible to the border zone with B&H. Soldiers did not receive an explicit command to kill all Serb inhabitants they caught, however they got the notion that "no war prisoners can be taken", because there has not been any special units for taking care of civilian prisoners.¹¹

When the first Croatian police officers entered Donji Lapac, some of them were killed in the vicinity of the textile fabric "*Stojan Matić*", which was producing military uniforms during the war, as a result of the mine planted at the door of a persona vehicle in the region. A "*high police officer*" gave an order to burn down Donji Lapac, but to live for them enough roofs so they would not be under the open sky.

"Before we entered the village, we were told that it was mined, the car also, and that some guys were hurt while entering the village in order to cleanse it. We were told to throw first the bomb at the house...*A lot of uniformed people were seen carrying cans with gasoline and fuel towards buildings. When they returned everything was on fire...*"

In order to prevent uncontrolled burning of needed goods, CA and police were ordered to choose objects and to mark them by capital letters "HV" or "MUP". That was a sign that these objects should not be burned or mined. Smaller units (or groups) of Croatian soldiers, located in houses and other premises, had to put the guards in front of entrances. "*Not because they feared that the Chetnics would surprise us, it was impossible, but to prevent our guys from burning us...*"¹²

In Donji Lapac the first house which "was rocekted into the sky" was the house of the member of the Croatian Parliament, Milan Đukić. "It was a big explosion". One man from the Croatian Army was specially boasting about it, born in surroundings of Lapac ("*Milan or Mile*"), how "he blew it up into the sky".

A witness, upon arriving to Donji Lapac, saw six burned dead bodies at the local inn.¹³ He saw some corpses at the nearby self-service store. Some of them were dressed in military and some in civilian uniforms. He also saw corpses of unknown persons on

11 "It was said in a way if you have a prisoner you must take care of him, but you in that first attack did not have neither time nor personel for that..." (Statement of M. H., soldier of CA to the CHC activists on May 22, 1998.)

12 Donji Lapac: "It was noticed on the ground that more than 80 per cent of houses were destroyed, looted and burned out. In comparison to many other visited regions in this town a lot of soldiers and policemen are present. In Donji Lapac we met Željko Piplica, the Governmental Appointee for Donji Lapac, who told us that from 3, 500 inhabitants, only 20 per cent of them accepted the appeal of the President of the Republic of Croata to stay in the town." (Report of the CHC activists on September 30, 1995.)

13 "In the local inn (in Donji Lapac) I ordered to some Serb to ly down on the table. *He decently laid and I killed him on the table.*

On the same day I captured six Serbs. I ordered them to stand in the line. They with the hands on the back looking on the floor and me laughiung. I was killing one by one. Every next knew that it was his turn. There is no bigger satisfaction then when you are looking him sweating and he knows that you are going to kill him...On the front we were getting amfetamines which increase courrage and force so you do not have a need for slipping and you are more well-conditioned. They made of us machines which do not feel anything human. It was only important to eliminate no matter in which way. Sometimes we had to use a knife. When you stick the knife into a man and feel his blood on your hand, you have a feeling like you sloughtered a pig. It was a classic elimination without a masacre We also could use a wire. The best is a wire of a guitar and two rings of the bomb sefety fuse..." (Anonimus Croatian soldier in a daily "Jutarnji list" Mys 4, 1998.)

several locations. He did not know what happened to them. The enigma was bigger because of the fact that neither on the old nor on the new graveyard in Donji Lapac there was there adequate number of graves. On both graveyards bigger grave holes were dug out but in them there were only four graves with the sign "NN" unknown.¹⁴

In Donji Lapac reigned complete anarchy with constant conflicts between soldiers and police. After two days came regular police — "*plavci*", thus in town "*total anarchy*" started to reign. "Without government. *Arsons. Loot. Trucks loading...*" There were even big conflicts between soldiers themselves, because some of them wanted to loot and burn, others were against that, so they were fighting even physically. The situation "changed drastically when they found a Croatian soldier killed with a bullet in his head" few days after the liberation of Donji Lapac. It was said that the "Chethnic" bullet killed him, but his death was a consequence of the conflict between soldiers and police. After that soldiers "*started to look at police (members of MUP) with hate so nobody wanted to contact them any more*", because they behaved towards soldiers in an "arrogant" manner.

While the situation was like that there, no wonder that Donji Lapac was completely destroyed. Around 90 percent of houses were burned, everything was looted, factories emptied...Serbs burned several objects like hotel "*Kamensko*", (which was a Serb hospital during the war), the municipal building and police station, before they fled the town. Markač's special units burned down the local morgue and four Serb prisoners in it. They "*checked*" graveyards and broke tombstones of villagers, killed in an operation "*Medački džep*" 1993. On the forest hills between Korenice and Donji Lapac, a "forest house", *cottage used by the forest workers* — was also burned down.

Srb¹⁵, a small town in the former municipality of Donji Lapac. Place suffered great damages after the military operation "Storm". Majority of public houses, buildings and family houses were burned. Factories "*Ličanka*", "*Vrelo Une*", forester's office and post office were burned while the hotel "*Srb*" remained intact. Monument of the Day of Uprising on July 27, 1941 was mined and all other memorials were destroyed or damaged. Interior of the elementary school "*National Hero Miloš Rastović*" was completely devastated. Damaged inventory, books littered around.¹⁶ All shops, inns and a gas station

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- 14 "The only thing which surprised me after all these events was when I saw an elderly woman leading a cow, seeing soldiers and everything, but still proceeding peacefully in front of me with a cow. If you would see us you would have been frightened for sure, because we were disguised, coloured and armed completely. A horror, they said. But she, that grandma', cold-blooded leading her cow, behind her some civil guy of around 15 years old passing by on a bicycle..." (*Testimony of a Croatian soldier M. H., to the CHC activists on May 22, 1998.*) Remark: The CHC activists could not find in Donji Lapac "*woman with cow*" and "*guy with bicycle.*"
- 15 Srb: "In this small town approximately 100 percent devastation — houses destroyed and burned. From the contact with the local police we got an information that in Srb remained few inhabitants..." (Report of the CHC activists from September 30, 1995.)
- 16 In Srb and in its surrounding remained twentieth inhabitants. Those who were not killed or burned out, were taken to the Assembly center in Zadar, where they were staying for approximately three months. On their return they were settled in a deserted family house in the near village of Neteci, which they were allowed to leave after one month upon receiving the new Croatian ID documents. Example: *Dane Rajak*, born 1937, was in the Assembly center in Zadar, then in Neteci. After that he took refuge in someone else's unburned house because his house was destroyed. His wife passed away 30 ago, his daughter is in Belgrade. With him in the same house his sister in law Mara Zec, born 1927, also took refuge. *D. Rajak* is a pensioner of the former enterprise "*Komunalac*" from Srb. He had not receive a pension as of April

were destroyed... *"Damages are results of the artillery attacks and later on of burnings and mining. On the house the traces of infantry weapons were visible as well as various graffiti. "This is a house of the Croatian soldier, stop loot".*¹⁷

In the vicinity of Srb, villages Kunovac Kupirovački and Šijani, more than 90 percent of them were burned down systematically, prior to that houses were looted. Villages were on completely deserted on April 17, 1997.

In Lička Kaldrma, the majority of houses were burned down. Dušan Bursać and his father Savo, born in 1911, remained at home. Dušan tried to guard the houses of six of his neighbours. He did not succeed, all of them were after the military operation "Storm", first completely plundered and then set on fire. His father was killed on August 24, 1995 in his house. He was buried on the nearby meadow.

The CHC team that visited on September 30, 1995 the greater part of the UN Sector South observed the current situation:

Mazin: *"In this village over 90 percent of houses are burned while others are looted and devastated. Around 300 inhabitants lived in the village but on the day of our visit only three elderly women were found, the youngest of them was born in 1929..."* Five persons from the village were missing.

Hamlet of Bajići: *"During our visit to this region we found out that 100 percent of houses and other objects are destroyed and burned. We did not encounter any person, only animals who were roaming the streets freely."*

Dnopolje: *"In this village we also noticed many persons wearing uniforms of the Croatian Army. The village itself was partly looted and burned. Cattle roam the roads alone."*

Prijevoj: *"A small village on the road to Srb. From the road it is visible that a house is burning. On the way to Srb one can see a lot of remaining parts of cars, trucks and other vehicles."*

The CHC team on July 18, 1996 in the village of Neteci counted at least ten family houses burned deliberately.

In the village of Suvaja the majority of houses were burned. Among 153 inhabitants nine of them stayed at their houses. One of them, Djuro Puvača died soon at the Assembly centre in Zadar where all of them were forcibly taken, except for Ankica Rodić and Dušanka Dubaić, who found shelter in the forest.

The majority of houses and other objects were burned also in Dobroselo, located between Donji Lapac and Srb. The most serious arsons were visible on the road junction towards Mazin, where we found the police check points even on July 18, 1996, controlling all vehicles passing towards Donji Lapac. On the road there were lot of car wrecks and messages such as: *"Police of Dubrovnik", "112. Artillery division Rijeka"...* The cattle farm Boričevci suffered great damages also.

In the village of Dnopolje, according to the statements of witnesses Sveto Opačić and Marica Tišma, 40 houses and economic objects were burned.

17, 1997. *Mara Zec* also used to get a pension, but now there is no any. "I don't have a pension. I did not file a request. We do not have any transportation how am I supposed to go there? I asked them to resolve that for me so I could only sign, but they answered that I should go there personally. I am not able to go there, thus there is no pension....", noted the CHC activists.

17 Report on the visit of Srb, July 18, 1996.

In the region of Drniš numerous houses were burned or mined. The majority of houses in Biočić,¹⁸ Miočić¹⁹ and Kanjani were burned after the military operation "Storm". For example, the village of Kanjani (in which on the day of April 19, 1997 only two elderly women lived: Stojka Ladjević and mentally retarded Pera Vujić), was burned in September and October 1995. Only a few persons remained there. In the hamlet of Kadina Glavica, inhabited mainly with Croats, there were around 25 Serb houses with around 100 people. Only five Serb houses remained intact. Milka Pavlović was burned together with her house. Some other houses were burned or mined at the end of 1996.

In the hamlet of Velika Popina, where the Croatian Army entered on August 7, 1995, 335 Serbs and 34 nationally not declared inhabitants lived. Only four elderly women remained²⁰ living there together with one blind man who died in 1996. Their houses were burned as well as many other houses in the hamlet. Public buildings were also destroyed.

In the village of Zelengrad, more than half of the houses were burned. In some stables the cattle were also burned. The interior of the local school was also completely devastated. In the village there were no inhabitants on April 19, 1997. Before the war there were 512 458 Serbs and 52 Croats living there.

Hamlet of Pristeg: "According to assessments, around 80 percent of houses were looted and burned or destroyed. In the village we caught a person who was looting goods which remained intact in houses and other objects. No traces of life..."

Villages Ceranje Donje and Ceranje Gornje: "Almost all houses burned or destroyed. In these region numerous persons were circulating in uniforms of the Croatian Army. Around 500 inhabitants used to live in the vilalge before, while during our visit we found only six of them — two married couples and two elderly women. They all had problems — starting from loot of household appliances, cattle untill physical harassment and mistreatments..."

Villages Miranje Gornje and Miranje Donje: "In this village we did not find inhabitants but only looters. More than 80 percent of houses were destroyed burned and looted. It was evident that lot of houses were mined..."

Vrana: "This is a village inhabited mainly with ethnic Croats. During the war the village was not occupied (by the rebel Serbs). Still, twenty Serb houses were mined."

Lišani Ostrovački and Bribir: "Passing through these villages one can notice that both of these villages were levelled and burned to the ground."²¹

18 In Biočić in 1991 there were 490 inhabitants of Serb ethnicity and one Moslem. In village remained 28 of them and as of April 19, 1997 more six persons returned. During the operation "Storm" 30 houses were burned and five house more later on. The village is completely looted and devastated.

19 In Miočić the majority of houses are burned. Only five elderly women stayed at their homes. Two of them died in the meanwhile and one fled to the FRY, while *Mara Miletić*, born 1934, was burned dead in the village.

20 These are: *Ljubica Stojisavljević*, born 1920, *Mara Stojisavljević*, born 1906, *Jovanka Djakula*, born 1919 and *Anica Jovanić*, born 1920. Nobody of them, except of *Lj. Stojisavljević* who gets 240 kunas from the social care service, gets any help from the Croatian state. Besides their houses which were burned all of their properties were looted also. It is difficult to find them in the village. When they notice someone arriving to the village they quickly go and hide themselves in nearby wholes and karst depressions in fear of looters mistreatments, already suffered.

21 Report of the CHC team visit on September 23, 1995.

1570 inhabitants of Serb ethnicity and 32 inhabitants of Croat ethnicity used to live in Ervenik before. 23 inhabitants remained in the village. The Croatian Army took them into the Collective Centre in Zadar on August 8, 1995. They remained there until September 13, then they stayed three days in Knin where they received new Croatian ID documents and then returned home. They found the village completely looted, without cattle, while the majority of objects, houses, economic and public houses were burned.²² Interior was devastated, even walls were destroyed, as well as stoves at the elementary school "Jovo Martić" from Kistanje, and the regional department "Dušan Balač" in Ervenik. Inventory was broken or taken away, and books littered around. A plant of the textile factory "Ponosna (Proud) from Zagreb was also completely destroyed". The village did not have electricity nor water supply. There were no stores. In the hamlet of Kovačevići, only four women were living, while in the hamlet of Kanaziri there was no one alive.

The village of Vrbnik, consists of Vrbnik valley and Vrbnik hill. It counted about 1500 inhabitants, only 60 of them remained in the village. More than 70 percent of houses were completely destroyed — burned. Other were devastated and looted.

Ružić: "600 inhabitants (mainly Croats, only 100 of them were Serbs) used to live in the village before the war. Through interviews with returnees it became obvious that the village was 90 percent damaged and burned at the very beginning of the war."

Meštrovići: "The village was inhabited mostly by persons of Croat ethnicity. According to the witnesses, it was evident that about 50 percent of objects were burned and destroyed. The school was completely devastated."

Siverić: "The village was inhabited mostly by Croats. Looking from outside the village seemed to be well preserved. However, according to the statement of one returnee the village was completely destroyed."

Trounje: "In this village the Catholic Church (built recently) inside was completely devastated."

Velušić: "The village inhabited mainly by Croats. Houses damaged before the beginning of the war..."

Raić: "The village inhabited mostly by people of Serb ethnicity. It is located above the village Velušić. According to free assessment about 90 percent of houses and other buildings were completely burned and destroyed..."

Bibići: "This village was inhabited mostly by Serb people. About 90 percent of houses and other buildings are completely burned and destroyed...In the village there were a Catholic and Orthodox Church built side by side. The interior of the Catholic Church was partly damaged as well as 5–6 graves at the cemetery. The Orthodox Church and its pertaining graveyard was no damaged."

Okljaj: "The village inhabited mainly by Croats. It was burned completely at the very beginning of the war."

Katilići: "This village was liberated two years ago and it is evident that the life is gradually normalising. According to the statements of villagers the village was partly destroyed. Katilići is a Croatian village."

22 "More than one third of objects were burned after the military operation "Storm!"..." (Stevo Mrdalj to the CHC activists on April, 18, 1997.)

Pirovice, Pakovo Selo, Žitnić, Konjevrate: "...It is evident that the houses were partly damaged. On the Orthodox Church façade in Konjevrate there were no visible damages although the icons and other inventory in the interior were thrown around. On the graveyard near the church there were no visible damages."

Dragišić and Gaćezezi: "These villages are populated by mixed Croat and Serb inhabitants which did not belong to the so called ex-Krajina. One can notice that the houses were recently burned and levelled to the ground. The following graffities were found on some of them: 'Don't touch! Croatian houses'"

Čista Mala: "The village inhabited mainly by Serb population. Houses and other farm object were completely destroyed. The village was completely destroyed."

Ladjevci: "Previously completely burned and destroyed by the so called Krajina military. A Croat village."

Krkovci: "Situation identical with that in Ladjevci. In this village it was evident that inhabitants were working on reconstruction of damaged objects. Church and graves in this village were completely destroyed."

Pavići, Djevske: "These two villages were inhabited mainly by Serb population. Nobody lived in these villages because houses were destroyed and burned. Big monument from WW II was not damaged."²³

Bjelanovići: "*Only one house was found complete in the village but the other remained burned and destroyed. A lot of killed animals spread terrible stench...*"

Varivode: "Srb village completely burned and deserted by its people."

Smrdelji: "Little village inhabited mainly by Serb population. Greater number of objects were damaged and burned. On several locations unknown persons were seen collecting abandoned goods in deserted village."²⁴

Village Čuić Krčevina (Korenica) was burned some time between August 27, and September 1, 1995. 35 households were burned. Houses, which did not burn, were mined. Lot of owners were refugees, like Nikola Čuić, named Nikica, nationally not declared, and many of them lived in other parts of Croatia or abroad, like Luka Antolović, Croat in Zagreb, Marica Čuić, Croat in Rijeka, Stefan Bajser, German in Frankfurt, Rosa Čuić, Spanish citizen in Germany, Majda Čuić, Sloven in Zagreb, Branko Drakulić, Serb in Rijeka, Miloš Čuić, Serb in Rijeka, Desanka Kačar-Čuić, Serb in Zagreb, Čedomir Drakulić in Osijek.²⁵

In Doljani, near Vrhovine and Otočac, majority of family houses and household objects were burned, others were looted.

"I remember that I first visited Zalužnica five days after the beginning of the Croatian military operation "Storm" on August 9, 1995. Then I counted nine burned houses together with household buildings. According to the statements of people who fled the region not a single house was damaged during the military actions except for one stable in the hamlet of Hinići. It means that the village remained intact upon departure of its

23 Damaged later on.

24 Report on the CHC field team visit on September 12, 1995.

25 A request for reconstruction was submitted, no answer has been received as yet. Due to the fact that their village is within the region of the National Park of "Plitvice" where one can live only according to a special regime for the protection of nature, it was decided allegedly on the "competent instance" to destroy the village. (?)

inhabitants. *All damages and arson done later was a result of arbitrary actions taken in retaliation, revenge and hatred...*

Today, five and a half months after the entrance of the Croatian Army into the village, the situation is still horrible. This is not Zalužnica any more, it is a dead village. All together 69 houses and 65 household buildings are burned or destroyed in other ways. From this number 48 houses together with household buildings belonging to these house were completely destroyed...The houses that remained complete were thoroughly looted. There were no windows and doors seen left any more, not to mention mobile properties or household tools...General burning started upon the entry of the Croatian Army into the village. After the leave of the Croatian Army there were no further burnings recorded in the village..."²⁶

The CHC activists found no one in Plitivički Ljeskovac on October 28, 1996. They registered five burned houses while others were devastated. Some roof tiles were taken away at some of them. The following graffities were observed on many houses: "*Croatian property*", "*Please do not destroy*", "*Croatian house*", etc.

The attitude of the Croatian state towards the property at the reintegrated regions was clearly illustrated in an example from Očestovo, the village distanced 8 km from Knin. The village was entirely deserted. Only ten persons remained there. In the beginning of October 1996 two elderly women returned from FRY to their houses. In the middle of this month the members of the Fourth Croatian Brigade arrived to the village. At the local school, without pupils, they exercised shooting, mining and other destruction skills. They turned the school building into a complete ruin.

In the hamlet of Frkašić, close to Bjelopolje, at least seven houses were mined and three of them burned.

Besides an intensive burning and destroying of Serb family houses and household buildings during and after the operation "Storm", the terrorism continued in following years. The obvious example of this terrorist acts is the village of Polača. The CHC activists visited this place in June 1996. Houses in Serb hamlets were devastated, many of them burned but not entirely destroyed. However, in January 1997 the "hamlets of Petkovići, Uzelci and Čupšići were destroyed by the dredge machine. These hamlets were inhabited exclusively by Serb population, and they were part of the village Polača in which inhabitants of Croat ethnicity lived."²⁷ Family houses and all other objects belonging to Serb owners were completely destroyed. Building material was taken onto the field roads and was placed in the wells of the surrounding rocky ground. Owners protests, who live in other parts of Croatia have not resulted in any feedback as yet neither from the local government of Polača, who ordered such action, nor from the highest state officials.

A Serb prison (15–20 people) was located in the former elementary school, which was out of use even before the war. Serbs, who avoided military service, Moslems caught smuggling and Croats were imprisoned there. Slobodan Rašeta, a military official of the former Yugoslav Army moved the prison location from Željava to Frkašić. After him the commander of the prison was a person with the surname Kenjalo, a captain of the former

26 *Dragan Hinić*, originated from Zalužnica, at that time in December 1995, was a member of the Croatian parliament.

27 The CHC report of 22 March 1997

Yugoslav Army, and the last was some Mirić, also a military official of the former Yugoslav Army. The prison was closed on August 4, 1995. It seems that the prisoners were mistreated and tortured because the screams for help were heard. In some rooms the CHC crew on July 17 and 18, 1996, found traces of blood. Furthermore, ropes that supposedly served for hamstringing prisoners during abuse were found below eaves.²⁸ Although there is no exact evidence of prison maltreatment, later testimonies indicated that executions of people might have occurred in that prison. After the military operation "Storm" in the village of Frkašić, two men from Sinj arrived to the village claiming that they were imprisoned there and mistreated: "...These two men were knocking on my door shouting 'Open or we'll break the door! After a while I had to open... When they entered they calmed down a bit. They said that they were from Sinj and that they were imprisoned and tortured in that prison. One of them asked me whether we heard what they were doing to the prisoners here... Other said that he would not mind so much if we were in war with Serbia and if he suffered like that in prison in Serbia, but the fact that he had to pass through something like this in his own country hurt him and he could not get over that easy." (*Nedjeljka Rašeta*)

In the hamlet of Šijani, near Srb, 10 elderly persons remained, eight women and two men — among them parents of the volunteer of the Croatian Homeland War Milan Lučić, a Serb who together with his best friend Croat Ivan Car, used to visit them. The policemen who were "guarding" this region after the operation "Storm" knew about that. Their son together with his friend visited the village on September 3, 1995 and found out that everything was in order, nevertheless all the surrounding villages were almost entirely deserted and without inhabitants.

When son's friend²⁹ on September 1995 came to the village the scenery that emerged in front his eyes shocked him. The village was deserted, all houses burned down, and cattle missing. A day before, the police took the inhabitants of Šijani by force to the collective centre in Zadar allegedly for the "security reasons" only for "a couple of days" promising them that their property (even cattle) would be returned to them. Even if the villagers did not believe in that, they were able to avoid taking them from their homes and deporting them to collective camps because of the "security reasons". After their departure, the village was deliberately and systematically destroyed. CHC gathered exten-

28 "...If they were killing they would strongly hide it among themselves...They were beating, it was heard...There were rumors about one Croatian soldier whom they allegedly caught. He came from Australia, his wife is still living in Široka Kula, near Ličig Osik. They were allegedly deporting him somewhere, he allegedly oposed to that and hit someone of the escort and they allegedly had to kill him from the reason of their own security. Nobody talked about that exactly but the story circulated throughout the village..." (Đuro Klačnja, born 1931, told the CHC activists on July 17, 1996.)

"There was some Stipe from Slavonska Požega. He used to go out and to chop the wood to people, except to my mother and me..." Where is Stipe? "That I don't know. There was his father. He searched for him and showed his picture.... Without any result." (*Nedjeljka Rašeta*, born 1956., to the CHC activists on July 18, 1996.)

29 Information about the incident in the village Šijani, brought personally to the CHC office in Zagreb Ivan Car, a Croatian soldier and the war volunteer on 6 September, 1995. He expressed his disagreement with the incident and asked for perpetrators to be punished and to help people of Šijani. "I am shocked with this and many other crimes. *I can not accept what has done to my Serb fellow combatent with whom I shared good and bad during the whole war. Neither can I forget the scene when a Croatian soldier killed a cow, cut of its head and placed it on the road ...*", he stated.

sive documentation of similar examples. In almost all cases recorded where police officers (somewhere even military policemen) evacuated people because of the "security reasons" to collective centres, people who managed to return did not find anything or very little of their mobile property. In most cases their homes were destroyed. Croatian authorities did not reimburse damages to anyone. They refused to recognise the incidents that happened. They also refused to help the people in rebuilding their houses and farms.

Ivan Car and tens of other people turned for help to the CHC asking for some kind of intervention and help regarding the events occurring in the liberated regions. They expressed their disagreement as well as the Canadian colonel E. S. Fitch to the CHC member³⁰. He stated that he was in the beginning of October 1995, a witness to a large-scale plunder and devastation of houses carried out by the Croatian soldiers. He "felt humiliated as a soldier" after all he had experienced during the operation.

In Zrmanja Vrelo, M., born 1933, and D. Č., born 1932, on August 17, 1995, saw three Croatian soldiers burn their property. They set it on fire by firing a grenade from a hand thrower. The cattle in the stable was burned, Dušan's smithy was destroyed... Today they are living in somebody elses' relatively preserved house. As of April 17, 1997 the Commission for Assessment of the War Damages from Gračac has not visited them in order for them to file a request for reconstruction or any material help.

Burning continued. Only in the village of Kričke (Drniš) several tens of houses, at least 25 family houses were burned or mined. The house of Milka and Petar Čakić was mined by unknown perpetrator on April 20, 1996 at one o'clock a. m. It was a new uninhabited house, which their son, who was living in Split built. The house was destroyed in retaliation because a day before the CHC activists visited this family and intervened at te Drniš officials asking for an access to electricity for the family. The CHC activists refused to accept "an excuse" that this family could not have an access to the electricity due to the damages on the installations. Contrary to the official promise given to the CHC activists that the family would get the electricity within "eight to ten days", the electricity was connected to them that same day because the plant supplier was only 50 meters far from their house.

Seven houses were mined or burned in this village in May, six of them in only one night, on May 6, 1996. An old woman, seriously ill, *Stoja Popac*, almost got killed. "I have already gone to bed, she told to the CHC activists on May 18, 1996 when I heard someone shouting from outside to get out immediately, otherwise I'll be burned dead. I eventually noticed then that the house was on fire and that it was burning right under my bedroom. I told them that I would not go out and I would rather burn together with my house. Then the policemen and firemen took me out of the fire. After that they transferred me to Knin, but yesterday they took me back because there was no place for me there..."³¹

Only four houses were burned in Udbina. One building was partly burned before the arrival of the Croatian Army. Witnesses claim that this house was burned deliberately by Serbs before their departure or "that something inside it set it on fire". However, in the

30 Jasminka Domaš-Nalbantić

31 *Stoja Popac* finally realised that her only chance was to go after her son's family, but she could not get the passport. The CHC activists took her on June 8, 1996 to the Police station in Drniš, where they promised to make her passport in a couple of days.

surroundings of Udbina, almost all villages were set on fire. Systematically the following villages Komić, Poljica, Ondić, Deringaj, Kijani, Omsica near Gračac were burned on August 12, 1995. The people who did not manage to escape on time were killed in these villages. The CHC found out that the Croatian soldiers came on tanks into the village. They searched each house and set them on fire. They even practiced shooting by killing cows. The evident example of such a violent behaviour was the village of Komić which was systematically destroyed, (see before).

In the beginning it was not clear how deserted Udbina did not suffer the same destiny as other places. Soon it became clear. Croats who came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the Catholic priest *Anto Trgovčević* lived in Udbine. Trgovčević's behaviour supported by the archbishop of the County Riječko-Senjska *Tamarut* as well as by the local government of Udbina, would soon show why the burning squads did not burn the houses in Udbina region. Udbina had to be converted back to Catholicism as soon as possible. It was an ultimate order given by the priest Trgovčević and the local leaders. The neighbouring villages have always been passive and the soil unfertile, so the Croats brought from other parts of the former Yugoslavia did not want to settle down. In order to prevent Serbs from returning to their native town the houses were destroyed.

In this region the following places were also seriously devastated: Mazin, Bruvno, Mogorić, especially Ploča, where the majority of houses were burned down. B. J. did not escape. He was observing his burning house from the nearby forest. The family house of Nikola Banjeglav, who lives in Karlovac, was also burned despite the fact that nobody lived in it for more than ten years. In the village of Mogorić, Mirko Đaković found only the walls of his house upon his return. The house of Slobodan Đaković was only partly burned. Obviously someone did not execute his duty properly. Stana Čanković was burned on January 6, 1997, together with her house. More than a half of buildings were also burned in the villages of Ličko Petrovo Selo, Novo Selo, Arapov Dol... Houses in Škare, Mokro Polje and houses in twenty other villages were burned and mined in the following years. Police never found the perpetrators of the above mentioned cases of arson.

The public knew everything about fires in Kistanje and was partly introduced to what was happening there afterwards. However, the public knew very little about systematic burnings of the villages Đevrske, Smrdelji,³² Krnjeve, greater part of Gošići, where the mass executions of people occurred. It also knew little about burning of Kakanj after the operation "Storm". Varivode, Macure in greater part and Plastovo were also burned down... The village of Brgud, located on the road between Benkovac and Obrovac was also deserted, mostly burned down. Even electric pillars were pulled down and taken away. The UN published the report on 22,000 burned objects in the late 1995. The CHC estimated that this number was even larger but they did not have the possibility to count each of the burned, mined or in other way destroyed object.

Along with the systematic burning and mining of family properties the factories were also destroyed. Machines were looted and buildings devastated in Mokro Polje,

32 In Smrdelji, four big houses were burned, property of four brothers Lapčić. *Milan Lapčić*, who lives in Karlovac, during the war could not visit his village as well as his brothers. When he came to the village after the operation "Storm", he found only stone walls of his and all of other houses. He asks for the reconstruction but nobody answers his requests.

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Violence

Croatian soldiers used to mistreat and torture the villagers in many places long after the operation "Storm". One military unit was camping in Mokro Polje from October 24, until November 23, 1996. They were located in public buildings in the centre of the village. First they looted everything, even the school directory from the year 1945 until 1995. At the time the checkpoints were installed in the village in order that the inhabitants be put under a severe control and their movement restricted. The soldiers threw a can full of petroleum into the well of Nikola Sučević and consequently the residents had to find drinking water at the spring two kilometres away. They left emptiness behind them. The tanks destroyed vineyards, gardens, stone fences, trees around houses. Two months later terrible stench could come from the garbage hole where the soldiers dumped trash. After their withdrawal they did not bother to cover the hole.

Mileta Amić stayed in his house in Bjelopolje, near Korenica, because he heard "*on Friday at six p. m. Tudjman saying that we were free to stay and that nothing would happen to us*". On August 7, 1995 at 8, 30 p. m. three Croatian soldiers with shaved heads broke into his house. They shot dogs and beat them. One dog was named "*Chetnic*", and the other "*tramp*". They asked M. Amić whether he had a gun and why he stayed. When he warned them that his hearing was poor, one of them told him: "You will hear better when I cut off your ears", then he pulled out his knife and placed it against his neck. Then his wife came. She was frightened and ran away. They moved and went out to the meadows and shot at cows. The day later upon his return from pasture he found his house completely devastated. His wife was not there. After a long search he found her in the bush behind his house shaking from fear. She stopped speaking and three days later she passed away.

A few days later on August 11, 1995 around 6, 30 a. m. somebody wounded him by the rifle shot, which resulted in an amputation of his arm. He was taken to Gospić then to Rijeka and back to the collective centre in Gospić.¹ Five days later his nephew took him to the Military hospital in Dubrava, Zagreb where he stayed for several months due to the wound complications. When he came back his cattle was stolen (he had four cows, three calves and 51 sheep) and valuable mobile property. He did not have any right to compensation or social care.

1 "From Rijeka they took me to the gathering camp in Gospić as if I were young and healthy. There I did not have any medical help. Five days and four nights I lied there on the concrete with handcuffs. I was completely helpless, urinating and defecating under myself. There was terrible like a fold for animals...Then came my nephew and took me to Dubrava the Military hospital in Zagreb. There I spent a winter then I returned here..." (Statement in a review "*Identitet*", December 1, 1996.)

In the village of Palanka two armed men in the Croatian Army uniforms on September 28, 1995 tortured and wounded Bogdan Brkić, born 1926. They broke his two ribs so the UNCRO staff took him to the hospital in Knin. *"One of them after getting out of car pulled out immediately out a pistol and started to shout: 'Go inside the house, cattle!' They put me on the couch throwing detergent on me and cutting the couch with knife. They took my radio, 100 kuna and 20 German marks. They started beating me, threw me down the staircase and took me to the wall by the river. I thought they would kill me. Then one of them hit me with boots in my breast and I fell into the water. They had yellow-green mask uniforms on. I remember them saying: 'If you tell this to anyone we'll kill you! '...'"*²

Members of the Fifth corps of the BH Army were also violent. On August 5, 1995 they liberated Ličko Petrovo Selo, in Prijeboj they captured about 120 Serb soldiers, forcible mobilised in Serbia, and then they liberated the suburbs of Korenica. In Ličko Petrovo Selo and other villages they killed more people.

*"Around 7, 30 a. m. (August 5, 1995) soldiers of the Fifth corps arrived. A car belonging to "Elektra" stopped in front of my car and a soldier got out of it. He asked me whether I knew to which brigades he belonged and then he told me that I was arrested. He pointed his gun at me and took away my TV set video camera, chain saw, glasses, watch, pension documents, and 100 German marks. The whole affairs lasted for 20 minutes. Other soldiers arrived from the direction of Bihać. They surely killed Pepa (Petar Bobić, called "Pepa", born 1933) Two of them took me to the local shop where more than hundred persons had gathered already. They beat me, then they took me to the local ambulance in front of which a dead man was lying. They asked me whether I knew him, but I did not know him. After that they took me back home to release the cattle out of stables. Then I saw Petar lying on his stomach while his back was filled with bullets. After that they took me to the shop and forced me to load the staff into the lorry..."*³

Savo Mijakovac, born 1922, survived after the severe physical mistreatment because of his excellent physical condition and health. After his return to the Republic of Croatia, he had to stay at his cousin's house because other people occupied his own. Between May 15 and 16, 1996 several unknown men broke into her house. They put a blanket over her head and threatened to kill her if she only made one move. In meanwhile others were beating S. Mijakovac. They were beating him with legs and hands all over the body and then left. S. Mijakovac ended up in Knin hospital in a serious coma condition. After he recuperated his strenght he left Knin and Croatia. Neither he, nor anybody else knew the reason of this attack.

Two elderly persons Stevanija, born 1929 and Ilija Barovnica, born 1928 in the intact and far away hamlet of Barovnice were frequently submitted to the severe and dangerous mistreatment. Armed persons in military or police uniforms as well as civilians threatened them twice. First time in January 1996 and second one March 4, 1997. They

2 *Bogdan Brkić*, born 1926, to the CHC activists on October 11, 1995.

3 *Dušan Bobić*, called "Duje", born around 1930, to the CHC activists on July 1, 1998. He was taken to the prison in Bihać, where he stayed until January 27, 1996, when he was exchanged. "...They took us out of the cell to the warehouse and beated us the whole night with legs and guns. We had to beat each other because they threatened to kill us many times...Every night they used to take out in shifts several people and beated them. Usually two guards used to do that, one of them was called Osman..."

used to put knife and guns under their throats or against their forehead and beat them with legs. All of their property was looted. The house of their daughter Dušanka Bijelić, who had been living for years in Switzerland, was looted and partly burned. Together with furniture, they stole the stove for central heating, radiators and other installations in front of her parents' eyes that were not allowed to say anything. In the beginning of January 1996, Stevanija Barovnica found herself in the following situation: "On that day I went to visit my daughter's house. I heard a car stopping in front of the house doors. I did not have a time to hide myself. Three persons entered the house: one in uniform and two in civilian clothes. They did not say anything. One in the uniform pulled out the knife and asked me: 'See this, see this?' Then he pulled out the pistol and started shooting in the direction of window, beside which I was standing.

The bullets were exploding all around me..."⁴

A policeman from Gračac broke into the house of Smilja, born 1924, and Ilija Radaković, born 1919, in Bruvno, who did not leave their house, on March 1996, around 3 a. m. They were banging on the door and when the woman opened, they yelled, cursed and pointed guns at them. They asked the old man Ilija to stand up, but he was not able to do that quickly because he was moving only with help of two sticks. They turned over a bed together with an old man. They did not allow them to dress properly thus they took them half-nude to the Police station in Gračac, blaming them that Chet-nics were gathering at their house. They did not want to believe that the visitors from Zagreb visited them, originating from the village, brought them some food. Policemen tortured Ilija, threatening him with slaughter, scaring to cut off his ear... They held these old people at the Police station in Gračac until 4 p. m. After their arrival home they realised that they were looted. The meat belonging to four pigs which they were drying for themselves and their daughters who lived in Zagreb was taken away together with brandy, watch, other objects including even a package of coffee. On the same day they tortured an old woman Sava Obradović, born 1926. They tried to cut off her ears, too...

Or, another example. In the hamlet of Drakulić Rijeka, near Korenica, lives only one person alone who is Draga Drakulić, 83 years old. "When I see somebody passing by I quickly lock the house and hide in the court behind the house. Today came some people from Zagreb, yesterday from Rijeka. They have taken everything, even some clothes, what for. I don't know... They are taking everything, beds, armchairs, mattresses, and tables. even sacks with animal flower then wood... Everything that can be taken... The other night around midnight one civilian descended from the hill and started banging on the window by fist. He broke the glass. I begged — God help you, I am a poor woman living alone, I do not have anything to offer you. He took the stone and broke the door... I opened the door and wanted to switch on the light but he did not allow me to do so because he did not want me to recognise him. He took even my battery lamp. He ordered me put my shoes on and to come with him... I refused saying I would rather be killed at home then on the road... He said: 'I have a right to kill you and to set you on fire as well because my three brothers were killed in the war.' I did not kill your brothers, I replied. I used to have three sheep and two lambs. *One night someone took them away. One lamb came back, I fed him for three days then someone took him again... Now I have only a few hens, three cats and a dog...*"⁵

4 Stevanija Barovnica, 18. lipnja 1998. aktivistima HHO.

5 "Feral Tribune", August 12, 1996.

Three male persons came on March 8, 1997 around 6 p. m. to the house of Teodore "Toja" Rašković, born 1945, in the hamlet of Žagrović, by car with the licence plates TG 451 HA (Tomislavgrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina). They did not wait for the door to open because they broke the glass on the door claiming that they were owners of this house asking them to leave. The husband Jovo, replied that this was their house asking them to show them as proof any official document. They refused to do that and started to beat Jovo Rašković over head and face insulting and cursing them. When he fell on the floor the soldiers continued beating him with foot. When the wife Toja started to cry for help they hit her so she fell and hit the head on the fridge. The neighbours eventually heard the noise and called the police. The police took victims to a hospital. The perpetrators were never found.⁶ On May 10, 1996 around 6 p. m. a group of unknown persons broke into their house. They tried to expel them from the house while they pushed Teodora down the staircase. She broke her hip. As a result of that accident Teodora became disabled.

Marija Đujić, born 1951 was a refugee in the Danube Region. After obtaining the Croatian documents on citizenship on March 9, 1997 she returned to Knin. A day later she visited her family houses in the hamlet of Kovačić — Burum that was occupied by the Croat family of Marko Zoraja who were resettled from Banja Luka. They kindly welcomed her and allowed her to approach the house and come tomorrow to take a picture of her house. However, the day after while she was walking towards her house from the neighbouring house (property of a Serb Vaso Tišma who fled the house) she was approached by two persons. Mario Barišić and a female named Nevenka. They verbally and physically assaulted Mrs. Đujić⁷ She ended up in the hospital and immediately left Knin.

Ceranje Donje and Gornje were abandoned on August 3, 1995, and when the Croatian Army "walked in" there remained only nine elderly persons. The CHC activist learned about the incidents on September 23, 1995 the following: "In the villages and vineyards we have found a lot of uniformed persons collecting grapes...*In Ceranje Donje we encountered Sofija (born 1920) and her husband Luka Čubrilo (born 1920). The house door was broken. TV set and radio as well as the trailer were taken away by the uniformed persons. Sheep (27) and 500 block paces for house building awere also taken away from them. Looters denied them the exit from the house. Sofija showed us the bandage over her hand as a consequence of beatings she received from the uniformed looters. People were frightened. To a married couple Čubrilo Miloš (1923.) and Milica (1921.) the car, two cows, electric machines, chain saw and grinding machine were taken away. Čubrilo Miloš was physically attacked, mistreated, his front teeth were pulled out and*

6 In Žagrović, hamlet of Kulundžije from March 1–5, 1997 three houses were burned just in time when the owners were supposed to return.

7 "One young and tall woman jumped out. I heard one man calling her Nevenka, but her surname I don't know. She suddenly grabbed my hair, pulling them out and dragged me along the street. She cursed my chetnics mother and shouted: 'I will drink your blood!' I did not hit her back just tried to defend myself and protect eyes. Then she repeatedly shouted dragging me: 'If you only tell this to the police the bullet is yours!' When I already thought that she would let me go one man, I think his name is Mario Barišić, who was watching us together with Mladen Bogdić (living in the house of V. Tišme, op. a). He took me and hold me strongly with hands while Nevenka was beating me severely. I tried to escape but she hit me so strong in a lower stomach so I started to bleed immediatelly. Then came my ex neighbour Joso Zorko and rescued me..." (Marija Đujić to the CHC activist on March 1997.)

his jaw was still blue and swollen. *Some uniformed persons came to their vineyards and stole grapes...all around the village we saw a lot of killed cattle. We counted 12 donkeys shot dead by bullets straight in head...They did not have electricity, no bread supply, and no connection to Benkovac. Looter were cutting down and taking away almond trees. We encountered around 50 uniformed persons. Policemen did prevent them from taking away their personal belongings."*

Mirko Šaponja, born in 1956, from Ceranje Gornje, served four years in the Croatian Army. After demobilisation he did not receive any compensation from the state: no pension, no bonds, no help for rebuilding of his house...*"I used to sleep in the water on the mountain of Velebit for four years and now they give me nothing...My father at least had some pension from the WW II because he was blind but now they don't want to pass that to my mother. Doctor told her to dig her eyes out in order to get help..."*, stated to the CHC activists on June 18, 1998.

"Her husband died 8 years ago and she fled during the military operation "Storm"., then she returned in May 1998. Upon her return she found her house completely looted together with the building material for another house. She wanted to clean the house in order to move in. She brought some furniture as well but the Croats from Bosnia who were occupying neighbouring house prevented her in doing that. They took her furniture away, mistreated and threatened her and in that way scared her off her property.

On the walls of her house they wrote insulting and threatening messages like: *"You old bitch don't you dare to return alive!"* She used to visit the house every day but the Bosnian Croats started to send children over to beat her up. *Older children shouted on her: 'Go back to Milošević'.* Each time she arrived, they threw fruits at her, stones and water.. *These attacks were reported to the police but the police did not do anything in order to punish the perpetrator..."*⁸ (Helsinki Watch, March 1999.)

In Kovačić, near Knin, violation and torture continued in 1997. Thus on March 13, 1997 Marija Đujić, was beaten up. On April 3, 1997, a bomb was planted in the courtyard of Đuro Jejina, 80 years old. While the house of a returnee from Eastern Slavonia on September 14/15, 1997 was set on fire. While Bosnian Croats occupied her new house, she took refuge in her old house. On November 28/29, 1997 in the pigsty of Marija Djuić three fattened pigs were killed.⁹

"The main problems of the inhabitants of Kistanje were systematic loot, mistreatment and harassment undertaken by the Croats resettled in Kistanje. On April 12, 1997 there were cases recorded of breaking into the house of Desanka Katalenić¹⁰. The ma-

8 Her name is Milica Kolundžija.

9 *"We are seriously concerned because of the crime committed against animals...in the stal for pigs owned by an elderly woman Marija Đujić (74) in Kovačić-Burum (she did not leave Knin during the operation "Storm") To plan and to commit such a massacre — to cut off animals into peaces — can do only seriously ill persons or pscopaths dangerous for the environment. This is much more than a simple harassment of the family Đujić (in these days the old woman visited son and daughter with families)..."* (Olga Šimić, the CHC activist in her letter to Zvonko Gambiroža, head of the Police station in Knin, on December 1, 1997. Perpetrators never found, police never answered.)

10 *"The house has a floor, but it is an old building. I could not save unless my sister return to live here. I have three more sisters. We four are the owners of the house...If you could see the villages, I am simply ashamed...Over the railroad if you could only hear them how they choose and take furniture away. all somebodyelses. They even sell it..."* (Desanka Katalenić, to the CHC activists on April 18, 1997.)

majority of property was looted and destroyed there. Dušan Zjalić's house was broken into on April 14, 1997. In both cases there was an indication that looting was committed by the Croats resettled there from Janjevo (Kosovo). The police came out to investigate but did nothing. Luka and Milka Jelenović were constantly submitted to harassment and mistreatment. According to witnesses, there were numerous cases of resettled people breaking into other peoples' houses recorded. One of them threatened M. Jelenović: "I am Ustasha!...I will firstly kill you and I'll leave the old man for later!" (To the CHC activist on April 18, 1997.)

Mining and burning of houses, both private and public, continued with the same intensity. In Karin¹¹ on August 23, 1996 the Orthodox Church was mined. It was levelled to the ground during the visit of the Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mate Granić to Belgrade where he signed the first contract on normalisation of relationship.¹² Karin is a weekend settlement of mostly Serb owners. Together with the church three more houses were destroyed and burned. The following graffitties were written on them: "Occupied by Croats", "*Occupied by MUP*"... The Croats from Bosnian Posavina and Bosanski Brod (BH) mostly resettled there. During the military operation "Storm" the village was deserted. Until April 19, 1997 only three Serb refugees have returned.

In Kadina Glavica 25 Serb houses were burned or mined after the military operation "Storm". In November 1996 the houses of two sons of Lazo Manojlović, were mined and burned. On March 22, 1997 the house of Špiro (81) and Milica (75) Lađević were burned also. Supposedly the rumours were heard that his son was on his way back home.¹³

Old Milka and Dane Kalember from Jezerce at the Plitvice Lakes, were burned together with the house around 1 o'clock a. m. on February 27, 1996.¹⁴ The police conducted

11 According to the 1991 census in Gornji Karin lived 876 inhabitants from whom three were of Croat and 851 of Serb ethnicity.

12 "I was here when the orthodox church went in the air. On that day twenty minutes to eight a. m. while we were drinking coffee we heard a horrible explosion...I was thinking many times whether it was done by Serbs or ours..." (Policeman Preradović to the CHC activists on April 19, 1997.)

13 "After the "Storm" the house of my parents was devastated but remained whole. *It was not for suitable for living. My parents Špiro and Milica Lađević went after the "Storm" to my sister in Pula. They returned on October 20, 1995. At that time me and my husband Croat from Čavoglave returned from Germany. We fixed our house and started to live together with our parents. My father with a help of my husband slowly repaired his house and made it suitable for living. He was living in his house during the day. He used to sleep in our house...On March 22, 1997, in the evening the house was set on fire. We do not know who did it but we have heard that it was done because my brother allegedly filed a request for return documents. We are sure that it was not done by our first neighbours...Three of four sisters we are married to the Catholics...*" (Slavka Jukica, born 1962., on April 19, 1997 to the CHC activists)

14 "On the place where were the houses of our parents we found only site of a fire, firemen and police. We asked police what happened shocked by what we could see. He said that parents were killed and houses burned around 1,00 a. m. The policeman in civilian clothes (today on February 28, we found out that he was a chief of the Police station in Korenica named Ivo Ugarković) did not even introduce himself although we told him who we were. He said that my parents are unfortunately dead and that they were expecting that the bodies be deported to the pathology to Zadar...When my husband phoned to the Po-

investigation on the same day and buried their bodies without informing their daughter *Nedjeljka Brozović*, who lives in Duga Resa (Croatia) as a refugee.

In the village of Pišač, Krbavsko Polje near Korenica, on June 25, 1996 Dušan Cvijanović, born in 1926, was killed by the booby trap. Đuro Masnikosa, born 1932, was seriously wounded and Nikola Cvijanović, born in 1919 and a son of Dušan Cvijanović, Nikola, born 1953 who lives in Zagreb, suffered from minor injuries. They were digging potatoes nearby their family house and they stepped over a tripwire mine. The explosion also killed a horse that was dragging a "digger".¹⁵

A retired general of the Yugoslav Army, Milorad Mišćević, 75 years old, was killed on August 14, 1996 around 2. p. m. by the explosive device. Explosive device was planted under the destroyed doors of his family house. The CHC informed the public that M. Mišćević was killed by deliberately planted explosive device. The commander of the Police station of the Ličko-Senjska County, *Ivan Dasović*, denied that publicly claiming that the mine that remained after the war killed M. Mišćević. The media, apart from publishing the agency news, did not pay the attention to this event. The exception was a weekly "Nacional", whose journalists conducted their own investigation, which resulted in full confirmation of the CHC statements.¹⁶

In Srednja Gora, (Udbina), an explosive device planted in a hay killed Jovan Čanković, (m), Serb, born 1939 on April 8, 1997.

On September 13, 1997 in the village of Korana, in the courtyard of his house brothers *Mičo* and *Rade Hajduković*, Srbs, killed Marijan Ferderber, Croat, 38 years old from Smoljanac and Mile Valentića, Croat from Zagreb by lethal weapons. They were on their way to the Korana river for fishing at 10 p. m. The murder caused severe reactions among the Croatian media and some political parties, especially the rightest HSP, who used the tragic incident for attacking all Serbs claiming that they were returning to Croatia to "kill Croats again". The brothers were sued and sentenced to 10 and 20 years in prison. Killings and inflicting serious wounds to the members of Serb ethnicity could be find only recently in the Croatian media (example, the murder of *Nikola Karleuša* in Brlog).

Booby trap planted under the bottle near the house doors inflicted serious wounds to Đuro Radaković, 60 old on April 15, 1995 early in the morning. He lost his hand.

Booby trap planted in the feather couchen and left on the chair near the bed of Dragana Čupić, 35 years old, resulting in serious wounds on May 11, 1997 around 12,30 in the village of Medak, near Gospić. Injury left heavy and permanent consequences on her

lice station in Korenica the commander told him that the burrial was done on the same day because the judge and pathologist did everything at the Plitvice. They even told us that they could not find any of relatives...Zoran Špoljarić shooted in August, soon after the "Storm" on the walls of our old house and on that occasion my mother only by miracle survived then...Why they did not press a charge against named person for attempting murder instead of cover up made by the Croatian Army allegedly because "he was insane"? ..." (Nedjeljka Brozović in her letter to the CHC published in "Naš glas" numbe 2/3 1996.)

15 The Police from Korenica gave a false statement to the CHC members claiming that these were mines remained after the war.

16 "No doubt that the murder of the general Mišćevića was a terrorist act planned to intimidate Serb returnees before the announced normalisation of relationships between FR Yugoslavia and Croatia after which a greater number of abolishe Serb returnees was expected. General Mišćević surly was not chosen by chance..." (Željko Peratović in "Nacional", August 23, 1996.)

health condition. The consequences might have been even more serious had not she been a member of the Croatian Army while fighting in the homeland war.

On May 14, 1997, at 9,15 a. m. in Podudbina a booby trap inflicted serious wounds to Danica Radočaj, born in 1922. The mine was planted under the board over which she was supposed to take her cows out. Neighbours — settled Croats from the local inn did not want to call an ambulance. The police did that when they arrived to the scene of the crime.

In the middle of May 1997 in the village of Ostrvica, near Lički Osik, Nikola Dimić was seriously wounded by a surprise mine.

In the same village on May 31, 1997, around 10 a. m. the booby trap seriously wounded the married couple— refugees: Ljubica, 55 years old, Serb and Tomo Čorak, 60 years old. He received serious injuries on his head and his wife received heavy wounds along the whole body.¹⁷

On July 8, 1998 Slavko Maričić in Biljani Donji activated a booby trap by his tractor which wounded him and destroyed the tractor. When workers who were helping him rebuild the house went for help by their car, a vehicle activated another mine that destroyed it completely. In the same village on March 26, 1998 in the courtyard of Svetozar Škorić two bombs were thrown in. In both cases the victims were returnees.

On November 6, 1998 while Miroslav Zaklan was visiting the garden a booby trap exploded and wounded him. On November 9, 1998 while digging manure in a stall in Mogorić Gojko Korica and Radomir Đaković were injured.

During the investigation of death of Nikola Karleuše caused by the booby trap, Zvonko Delač was wounded in Brlog on February 3, 1999. Etc.

11 persons were killed and twenty were seriously wounded in the Ličko-Senjska county only in the period from January 1, 1996 until February 2, 1999. People were frightened and did not dare to cultivate the land.

17 The son of Ljubica and Toma Čorak, from Ostrvica, remained heavily invalid after the Patriotic war.

Looting

While the CHC monitors visited the reintegrated region they could see the following messages on many houses: "Don't touch, Croatian property! *Croatian house! MUP (Ministry of Interior)! Police! Croatian owner! Owner in the Croatian Army!*" etc. Photocopies of "citizenship paper" and other Croatian ID cards were stuck on some houses and served as "trade marks" for reserving property. In other words all these messages meant that this was Croat property and should remain untouched. The rest of the houses were Serb property and one was free to take anything one pleased. However, in many cases even these "protection labels" did not guarantee the safety of the property at issue, however the looters tried to enter the marked houses but more cautiously.

The Serb property was left available to everyone who wanted to take away anything. Deserted houses were completely looted and after that burned down. Together with mobile property everything else was looted also — roofs, wood, building material, fences etc. Large-scale plunder was taking place in presence of the police and state authorities. The looting was even more encouraged by claiming that the property at issue belonged to the "state". The State did not protect from loot even industrial plants. Temporary or permanently deserted property was looted systematically and in an organised way. Persons of Serb ethnicity who did not leave their homes during the military operations remained also without their valuable property. Neither police nor the state authorities tried to protect them. The looting stopped actually when there was nothing else left to take away. The Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights reported almost thousand cases of plunder. It also reported various cases of harassment, mistreatment and killings of owners during these past years.

In the beginning, the principal thieves were soldiers and policemen. After them all others. Especially benevolent was the attitude towards the thieves — resettled Croats. They were even instructed on how to "manage themselves" if they needed anything. The Croatian authorities used to give them illegal permissions for taking away somebody else's property in many cases, especially regarding objects such as doors and windows. By doing so, the government deliberately violated the provision of Law on Temporary Take Over of (the Serb) Property that prescribed taking good care of this property in a manner of a "good manager".

In continuation we shall publish only some excerpts of of thousands of reported cases.

Ivan Jarnjak, the then Minister of Interior published the following statement on October 18, 1995. He said that until that day the police received 1996 cases of serious plunder and arsons. "Out of 884 cases, the police resolved 619 cases and pressed charges against 751 persons involved. Based on indictments 17 persons were arrested for looting and "devastating in the liberated area." (Novi list" October 19, 1995.) Jarnjak published

that the police controlled 160,000 vehicles and 224, 587 persons in this area. "Among the accused ones, only one person was a member of the Croatian Army and all others were civilians dressed in military uniforms..."

"The fact that criminals took military uniforms and committed crimes was a shame for the Croatian military and police who were brilliant in exercising their duties in liberating actions..." (Nataša Rajković, spokesperson of the Office of President of the Republic of Croatia, October 20, 1995 in a daily "Slobodna Dalmacija".)

"I entered a house by the road in order to find something to eat and drink. On the road five meters ahead I saw the members of the Croatian Army passing. It was a road leading to Varivode. So, the road was full of soldiers and me in the house by the road. They had signs of the CA but I was not able to see signs of their units. They wore some dark ribbons and were bareheaded, armed with "Kalashnikovs". They were young soldiers in the camouflage uniforms, but I did not see anyone wearing black uniform.

Inside the village of Očestovo, shots and the sound of broken glass were heard. Soldiers were engaged in stealing the electric household appliances like refrigerators, stoves etc and taking them out of the house. There were also TV sets, furniture and stuff like that placed on the road. After that a truck type "FAB" arrived, it did not have military plates but civilian from Šibenik or Zadar. The truck was loaded with appliances and furniture. The house I was hiding in was burned so nobody paid attention on it. I took the chance when nobody was watching and crossed the road..."¹

The similar events occurred throughout all villages in the entire region. Most of the villages were systematically burned. First the members of the army would steal the valuables, then all this stuff would be loaded on the civilian or military truck and taken away. Finally these house would be set on fire.

Example: ECMM crew, September 21, 1995

"In first 100 days there were cases of looting, intimidation, mistreatments on a daily basis".

Hamlet Bezbradice: 14 Serbs remained. Last week two cows, nine hams, ten sheep, eleven pigs were looted.

Hamlet Rađučić: 27 Serbs remained. Four died recently in a natural way. An old woman was mistreated on November 16 by three young men in civilian clothes (they had a small truck). They took away her new windows, door, tools and a pig...

Hamlet Ervenik: 22 Serbs remained. At 1, 20 p. m. the local police stopped a car type "Zastava 101" green colour (plates ZD 101 H) driving three pigs in its trailer. Ten minutes later we saw the vehicle with pigs driving to Obrovac...

Other typical cases in this period:

Saturday, September 30, one ECMM team reported:

Hamlet Popovići: One elderly Serb woman stated that a group of uniformed CA soldiers during three last days took her money and several sheep away. In the same village three elderly Serb males were looted, their house was vandalised; TV set destroyed and they were physically mistreated.

1 K. Š., February 11, 1999. to the CHC activists.

Hamlet Biskupija: Three civilians in uniforms of the Civil protection reported to us taking away wood and vine from one house. They said that they were collecting cattle in the region.

Hamlet Plavno: *We witnessed the looting carried out by four civilians and soldiers and policemen of the 72. brigade. They were taking away horses, furniture and other staff from the house. Looters had vehicles with the following license plates: ST 569-CS "Opel Kadet" (11, 45 h), IM 763 — I Mercedes light truck (12,05), ST 294 — A, "Mercedes" (12,06), ST 879 — OP, "scania" big truck (driving along the Plavno valley taking staff away), ST 897 — DL, wight "Škoda", pushing a horse in a trailer, ST 892 — CZ, big truck, ST 523 — CI, "Fiat" and two more vehicles with uniformed soldiers with badges of the 4th. Brigade: ST 350 — DU and ŠI 216 — D....*

Hamlet Golubić, October 12: Patrol of heUNMO and CALO saw four looters (two soldiers and two civilians) killing seven sheep and taking meet away in three sacks. They also took away the humanitarian aid distributed by the UNMO team to the villagers a day before...

Hamlet Matijevići, October 14: *The villager stated that after the "Storm" uniformed persons took away: 100 goats, 80 sheep, five cows, three calves and two horses. At 12, 15 ECMM team stopped three men in a car type (red "Lada" ZD 208 — AJ) who openly said that they are looking for pigs..."*

Looting of Serb property (and every other deserted by the owner) in this region,² has been daily practice. Stealing of all available goods went on openly. The police registered cases upon reporting claiming at the same time in its statistics that they were "efficient". However, real situation was completely different, number of cases of looting had not decreased. Thus, since the end of the military operation "Storm", until the end of September 1996, for example in the County of Šibenik (in the reintegrated area) 1750 criminal acts were registered. 1252 cases happened in 1996, which is only 8 percent of total number of cases registered in this County. The police station "resolved" 977 cases, but there had never been published nor made known the names of the perpetrators. Neither had been presented the explanations of how were these cases "resolved". *"Even local Croats are not protected from looters but their property in general is usually found and given back. In case of the Serb citizens their property in general is never given back even in cases when perpetrators were caught committing looting. Villages are still plundered during the day light by the people in cars without license plates who are taking away staff from the deserted houses. Furniture and household appliances were taken away in the first wave, now people are taking away wooden boards, doors, windows, beams, bricks and other building material..."*³ These actions continued until today.

From the end of the operation until September 1996 the police of the County Šibenik registered 2009 criminal acts committed by 2396 perpetrators. They "solved" 1605 or 79, 9 percent. However, in four months after the operation "Storm" the police in the

2 "This region is an oasis of criminal without sanctions, region of self proclaimed giver of justice, looters, mobs who their criminal acts cover up primitively with false patriotism and revenge based on war frustrations and traumas. All data show that the worst situation regarding criminal is widespread in the region of Knin, Korenica and Gospića, mostly covered by the Police station of the County Zadar-Knin " ("Everyone loots, what ever they catch...", *Davorka Blažević*: "Slobodna Dalmacija", October 19, 1996.)

3 *Olga Šimić*, Head of the CHC Regional center Knin in "Slobodna Dalmacija", October 19, 1996.)

County Zadar–Knin registered only 1015 cases of criminal acts although at that time “crime activities were spreading in this region like an epidemic”.

These two examples show the difference in efficiency of these two police stations. If you take into consideration the number of registered criminal acts in a region spread by this “epidemic”, the situation in the County of Šibenik is much better. The police authorities in the County of Zadar–Knin, which encompasses the reintegrated area of Benkovac, Obrovac, Gračac, Knin, Donji Lapac and Korenica, however, showed benevolence towards undisturbed looting and destruction of property of the Serb minority.

The deputy commander of the Police station of the County Zadar–Knin *Ivan Brzoja*, stated in a daily “*Slobodna Dalmacija*” how he was annoyed when the EU monitors and international organisations for human rights “made tragedy of grapes taken away from a Serb’s vineyard”. He also added: “After all, we had several cases of Serbs remaining in the region after the military operation “*Storm*” who looted the houses of their neighbours. There is one of such examples in Oton. Do you think that they took all of that property just in order to take care of that!?” The police regularly used to deprive looters of that staff but they never responded what have they done with that later on.

It is not known whether among “solved” cases is the case of Dane Blanuša from Rijeka, who in the village of Kruge, near Donji Lapac, in the eve of the war built a first-class both residential and office building. After the operation “Storm” the CA soldiers stayed in it for a while and made a promise to take care of the property and at the end to return the key to its owner. On July 4, 1996 the owner found out that the soldiers left the house but they did not return the key. They also took away all mobile property. Nobody wanted to talk about that with the owner and his relatives neither in Donji Lapac, nor anywhere else.⁴

The members of the Croatian Army took all valuable staff and several sheep from Ljubica Stojisavljević, (she was born in 1920 in Velika Popina), after the operation “Storm”. The second time on December 1, 1995 persons in military uniforms, in a car with license plates of Rijeka took 13 sheep away from her. Unknown persons took the last two sheep away from her on March 16, 1996.⁵

“After “*Storm*” my husband (*Luka Pašić*, op. a.) wanted to protect some valuables of his relatives. He brought them home because the looting spread all over the village. Our neighbour’s son in law Ante (Bucu) Pavlov helped him while bringing some of the staff. He now lives in Knin. Later on he came with the police claiming that we looted this staff. The police took my husband into a prison where was captured for 26 days. The police

4 CHC on several occasions asked for information, by letters or publically, on perpetrators, their names and the results of prosecutions. Neither the CHC nor any other organization received the accurate date except for statistical figures which, as the Amnesty International stated “make the truth dizzy”. The CHC in its Statement No. 27 from October 2, 1995 stated: “The Committee also wants to deny the information on 300 persons arrested allegedly for crimes committed on the liberated parts of Croatia. The truth is that only the court procedure is initiated against them. So we call upon the Croatian authorities to publish the accurate data on the number of suspected persons, how many of them are imprisoned because of that, how many of them are subjected to a misdemeanor process and against how many of them a criminal charge is raised...”

5 CHC asked from the Ministry of Interior to protect this old woman (and other four elderly persons remained in Velika Popina). The Ministry confirmed the loot of sheep, not 13 but 7 sheep according to the report of the police in Gračac. The Ministry also stated that the old woman signed a statement on that on December 1. *Ljubica Stojisavljević*, however, claimed that nobody neither asked her anything about taking away her sheep nor did she sign any paper about that. (!?)

took that entire staff together with many of our own possession. We were not able to present evidence.⁶ So, they treated us in that way because of our relatives' staff and later on they left looters to take away everything..."

In Mokro Polje, a rich village, everything was looted: deserted cattle, all mobile properties, agricultural and household appliances, and various parts of buildings... Before the operation "Storm" started in the village there were 9000 sheep and goats, 600 horses and cows, three combines, 400 tractors, mower and milling machine, 22 brandy stills. All of that was taken away. In the beginning of 1996 in whole village there were only eight cows, 60 sheep, a goat and no pigs. Industrial plants for making clothes and shoes were devastated and the equipment was looted. "They took everything away. I have only five sheep left. In the night of April 27, 1997 at 2 a. m. some lightning woke me up. I thought it was a storm. When I looked through the window I saw three men with the lamps taking away my sheep and hens, two radios and food given by the Red Cross. I ran out asking 'What are you doing to me, people?' They shouted back: 'Shut up!' One of them kicked me in the knee with a stone. *I still have a wound today, see... Policemen came, but nothing. A day before they took everything away from me the policemen had come asking me whether I had money or not... Looter came a day after and took all my money...*", stated Ruža Kanazir, born 1923 in Mokro Polje

* Ilija Babić spent some time from November 7 until December 4, 1995 in Knin and later on Zadar hospital. When he returned he was happy because his neighbour succeeded in guarding his two cows and two calves, the only property he had. But on December 8, 1995 two armed thieves with automatic guns and earrings arrived. They wanted cows. "I told them that I am ill and that I need milk and let them take one cow. But they came the next night and took away both cows and calves. I was not allowed to move.

Biljane Gornje: "Don't touch, written on the house of Pero RADMANOVIĆ (Shot on July 21, 1998.)

The police did not prevent them, on the contrary they supported them and when we complained they told us to right down the license plates. When I did that they said: 'Don't expect from us to prevent that!', thus reporting was useless.

After soldiers came looters who took until the end of 1995 all cattle, worthy household and agricultural appliances and then they started to take other property away. "They started to take down windows and doors from houses, iron fences, manure, hay while threatening us constantly so we continued to fear for our lives to the same extent as after the "Storm" in August 1995..."

Looters constantly stole from the old man Jandrija Kostić (80 years old). In 1995 in fall, four men, two in police uniforms and others in civilian clothes, came to his house. The policemen ID-ed him and enquired about his problems. "While he was talking with two uniformed men, the others were taking his sheep and loading them the truck. When J. Kostić went out, he saw two vehicles without license plates. All his agricultural tools and valuable appliances were taken away from the house. All looters were aggressive and armed so nobody dared to resist..."⁷

6 Dragica Pašić, Oton — Bender, born 1934 to the CHC activists on July 11, 1997.

7 Report of the CHC activists, January 1996.

The continuous looting eventually provoked a sense of rebellion inside Jandrija Kostić. The looters came to his courtyard on March 1996 at two a. m. again. They tried to take away his five lambs. The owner saw them and threw two bombs at them shooting from the hunting gun as well. Looters shot back and wounded him. The next night the same looters came again, beat Jandrija Kostić and took his lambs away too.

In Biovčina Selu, near Kistanje, looters took away all cattle and every valuable piece of property from the inhabitants. A perpetrator had not been found. From the end of the operation "Storm" until June 27, 1996 around 2,000 sheep and lambs were taken away from the inhabitants of the village. Unknown persons, mostly armed and in military and police uniforms, looted cattle while their owners were absent for business during the day. Or they stole property during twilight, by night or early in the morning.

On June 27, 1996 at 9 p. m. several unknown persons came to the village. The villagers saw only two men. One of them carried an automatic weapon and the other a stick. They broke into the courtyard of Mara, and Sava Masnikosa, to whom all objects were burned down, and at whose house stayed their neighbour Todor Malbaša at the moment. Threatening them with an automatic weapon they made them sit on wood in front of the burned house and then asked them to turn towards the wall and lean against it with her hands up. After insulting them, threatening and "pushing" them around pointing guns at them, they took them by force to the stall (the only non burned object). There they threatened to kill them if they come out or shout for help. During their imprisonment in the stall 59 sheep, 46 belonging to the Masnikosa family and 13 to Todor Malbaša were stolen.

The same evening, the same group of people looted 50 sheep of Kojo Masnikosa, named "Stevica". Kojo was returning home and suddenly came across the same two men near the house of Ilija Masnikosa. They made him raise his hands and enter the house. They ordered him to look at the wall and to hold hands crossed on his head asking from the host vine, money and some other "valuable staff". Vukosava Šešo, while returning home came upon the thieves. She was ordered to raise hands upward, and the gun was pointed to her left cheek. Vukosava was hit in the back by gun and forced enter the house of Stevanija Masnikosa. Both women were threatened to death in case they even look through the window or yell or try to go out.

Next day the incidents were reported to the police. They organised a search by tracing sheep tracks which led to the village of Medveđa. Suddenly someone shot from bushes at the police, and they immediately stopped the search stating that the whole affair "became too dangerous". At that point everything stopped.

Ten days ago in the same way ten sheep and ten calves were looted from the sheepfold of Dara and Tode Đurić, in the nearby hamlet of Biovičina Selo. The owner saw looters who ordered him not to leave the house if he wanted to stay alive. Neither this case was solved.⁸

Đuro and Ruža Džepina from the village of Golubić, had numerous encounters with looters. In the night on June 11/12, 1996 several unknown persons looted their chicken and stole their washing machine. Prior to that on several occasions unknown persons, stole eight hams from them, several lambs, a telephone, curtains and radio. They used to

8 Some time ago at night time an unknown persons took away from the stal of Dara and Tode Đurić a cow with a calf.

report the incidents in the beginning but later on they gave up because there was no effect anyway.

The looters locked their neighbour, Milka Džepina, in the house during the night of July 15/16, 1996. She managed to jump out through the window and although she sprained the ankle she ran away. Unknown persons took away 30 kilos of fat, two hams and food received by the Red Cross as a humanitarian aid. She used to report these incidents before but she stopped doing that because she was afraid.

Ilinka and Đuro Kesić were attacked by two younger men on July 15, 1996 at 11 p. m. They blinded Đuro with an unknown spray content while the wife managed to escape. The Croatian soldiers who stood on guard in front of the near barrack helped them. The day after they noticed that somebody entered their house and garage through the roof.⁹

The Croatian soldiers accompanied by the military police took away all the building material from the court yard belonging to the old woman, Danica Perić from Plavno. They loaded it on five cargo trucks on July 5, 6, 7, 1996. The material was prepared for construction of two houses for her sons that were working abroad.¹⁰ D. Perić tried to prevent them crying and asking them to kill her also. The military policeman answered her: *"We might do that in case other thing would not be possible."* Perpetrators have not been discovered and the material never returned.

Slavko Ivančević from the village of Zalužnica, near Vrhovine confirmed how dangerous and aggressive the perpetrators had been. He experienced that on his own skin. Ivančević hid for eight days in the nearby wood without any food and water in June 1996. He was afraid of looters.

Stana Ćuk did not want to leave her house in the village of Biovičina Selo. Her son fled together with the family. He longed to return to the village. His mother tried to guard and protect his property but in the end could not manage to do that. Various persons used to come and take away everything they wanted. The old woman used to report to the police that the looting continued. On June 15, 1996 two young men and a girl came who stole the rest of furniture, doors and windows. She begged them not to do that; she even sat down at the door in order to prevent them from taking stuff away asking them to kill her as well. It did not help, they took furniture and wood and carried it over her body. She did not report the incident to the police at all.

The fact that the houses of the elderly women Ika and Stana Dragišić, around 80 years old, were located in the most remote place in Plavno did not help them at all. There was also a completely deaf old man living with them but when he saw what was happening he eventually fled to the FRY. In the middle of 1996 the thieves entered this village also and took five sheep away. They returned soon and took the rest of the sheep too. Stana Dragišić cried to leave at least one sheep to them, but she was beaten and pushed to the bush.

The inhabitants of the small town Vrhovine and its wider region used to live in great fear after the military operation "Storm" took place. Numerous groups of armed looters in military uniforms, mostly from Gospić and Otočac, used to break into the villages and

⁹ The owners suppose that looters wanted a revenge because they could not find anything to take away from their house and garage.

¹⁰ Croatian soldiers killed her husband Petar on August 6, 1995 with a knife at the courtyard.

take everything away. In the village of Rudopolje, near Vrhovine, explosions and shootings from the automatic weapon could be heard very often and the lightening bullets were also seen frequently. These were meant to frighten the remaining residents. At the railway station of the village of Rudopolje the looted staff was loaded onto the wagons and driven away. In the village of Škare we interviewed the families of Đuro Narančić, Iso Pavičić, Dušan Svilar and Dugandžija who testified that their property was taken away in the similar manner. All roofs, doors, windows, central heating appliances, floors, bathroom appliances and everything else were taken away from their houses in June.¹¹

The land was also expropriated. We noted some characteristic examples like the case of *Irena Cindrić*, called "Hungarian" a Croat woman resettled to the hamlet of Raškovići near Knin from Vojvodina (FRY). The Croatian government "gave" her around 500 acres of somebody else's land for the "temporary" use. She got the land not only of those Serbs who fled to the FRY but also of those who live in other parts of Croatia or even in Knin. While the "Hungarian" was ploughing their fields and cultivating their gardens, destroying fences and cutting of the trees, the neighbouring Serbs did not dare to come out of their houses. They were so terrified that they did not want to raise their voices against such occurrences. When some of them reported the incident to the police they were severely attacked even in the presence of police patrols. The "temporary" user would arrogantly present her official permission for using their property. The landowners have not been given back their land taken by the usurpers.

A hundred year old man Petar Rašeta from the village of Frkašić, near Korenica was not spared of such crimes. First all his mobile property was taken away by the Croatian soldiers who stayed for a couple of months in the village. Later thieves in military and police uniforms beat him up because he had no property left for taking away.

The family of Đuro Rusić, born 1910 from Plavno, did not flee their home in Croatia during the military operation "Storm". Due to the lack of medical care and other facilities for a normal life they pay visits to their relatives from time to time. In the night of June 29/30, 1997 the thieves took the roof off their family house. They reported the incident and confirmed the license plate number of the perpetrators to the NGO for humanitarian aid "The Pope *Giovanni*", but the roof was never returned to them.

Other property was also taken away from the village like: electric and telephone pillars, wire, furniture from school and other public buildings. Thus the village of Brgud, located between Benkovac and Obrovac, was completely burned and deserted. There was no electric pillars left in the village. They were cut off by chain saw and driven away. In the village of Plavno there was a telephone connection supplying 300 consumers. Telephone pillars together with wire were systematically cut off and taken away. Electric suppliers of the railway Knin — Bihać together with other valuable property were also taken away in presence of the police and government authorities.

In the village of Dobropoljci, long after the military operation "Storm", unknown persons destroyed a kilometre long electric network and took it away on a truck in the broad daylight. In Dobropoljci, mostly people of Croatian ethnicity live. Some of them

11 The CHC reported in written to the Croatian government and Ministry of Interior these and many other cases of loot at the "loading" railway station of Rudopolje but never got an answer.

Looting

stayed there during the Serb occupation and waited for the Croatian soldiers. The villager Luka Ivković, Croat, warned the looters and begged them not to destroy the electric network, but it did not help. The looters told him that they did not deserve the electricity because they "lived for four years with Chetnics there". The people of Dobropoljci had not received their electricity back so far.

Dušan Damjanović, from Zagreb, born in Srb, tried to protect their family's property and the land of his father *Petar*¹², but he did not succeed. Everything was looted and a great part of their land and property was burned long after military operation "Storm" ended. He used to report these incidents to the police, both verbally and in writing. The police were supposed to take care of the property in the village. In his letter to the police officials sent on April 16, 1997 he estimated the damage by 50,000 kuna and added: "It doesn't matter so much to me whether this damage would be reimbursed or not. What mostly matters to me is that the perpetrators be found in order to prevent him/her further looting. If the Croatian Serbs behaved in an uncivilised way why the Croats should follow their example..."

As a result of these incidents, the Serb population who did not leave their homes in Croatia, became pauperised and driven to the edge of the existence. At the same time the possibility of surviving for those who wanted to return was reduced to a minimum.

12 *Petar Damjanović* disappeared in August 1995.

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Settlement

Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina first had refugee status in Croatia. Today they are citizens of Croatia resettled in the houses of Serb owners who fled the region during the operation "Storm"

In the beginning only small number of them received the permission from the Croatian authorities to settle in Serb houses. Most of them however moved into these houses illegally. This status was legalised by the approval of the State Commission for Administration of Certain Property, i. e. by the Government's appointee for Knin and other municipalities. There have been many cases so far in which one family occupies not one but several houses. The newcomers even used to sell the houses that they did not need. This happened to Anđa Torbica, born 1948 to whom a house of her husband's brother was offered for 5,000 German Marks in the beginning of March, 1997. The person who offered such a purchase explained that her brother, who used to temporary occupy this house, was willing to leave it to someone else for that price because he got an apartment in Drniš so he wouldn't need the house any more.

Darko Paradžik did the similar thing. He said that he came from Konjic (Bosnia) although he had a car with license plates of Grude (Herzegovina). He sold to a family house of Aljoša Biserko, born in 1946, Mato Perić, a refugee from Kupres (Herzegovina) for 5,000 German Marks. Paradžik is an employee of the firm "Dinarka", and his wife works for the Office of the Government's Appointee for Knin. He claimed to the owner Biserko, who returned to Knin on September 1, 1996 that he did not want to live in somebody else's property and that he was waiting for a flat. He promised, as soon as he received the flat, to inform the owner of the house to take over his rightful property in the well preserved state. Instead, however, D. Paradžik moved into his flat in the beginning of March 1997, taking all mobile property from Biserko's house. He also sold his permission for using the house temporary claiming that the owner would not return from refuge at all!

A "Croatian soldier" sold the house of Cvijo Marinković in the Getaldić street to two Croat families resettled in Knin. The owner's son used to live in that house until the operation "Storm". Immediately after liberation of Knin, the Croatian Army took over this house for their purposes.

Jovanka Rnjak, born in 1925 from Knin, did not leave Croatia during the operation "Storm" but hid in the village of Orlić. When she came back to Knin (her "citizenship paper" ID was issued to her on August 1995) she found Ante Katalinić, born in Briševa near Zadar, with the residence in Lipovača (Vukovar) in her house. He did not allow her to enter the house but he promised to leave the house very soon. In the beginning of March 1997, A. Katalinić left the house but immediately after that Slavko Tešija from

Trogir broke into the house without any permission. The owner Jovana Rnjak hasn't been able to move into her house so far.

The village of Žagrović, consisting of three hamlets: Žagrović polje (well known as "Raškovičko", by the river Butišnica), Žagrović and Gornji Žagrović is located in the vicinity of Knin. Houses in this village remained mostly intact. Soon after the end of the military operation "Storm", the Croats from Tomislavgrad (Herzegovina) and other parts of Croatia (Imotski, Ervenik etc) settled in deserted houses. "Recently there have been more Croats from the Central Bosnia moving into the Serb houses taking away from the domestic people their property, burning their vineyards, verbally and physically harassing them." (June 17, 1997.)

Several hundreds of Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina together with Croats from other parts of Croatia were settled in Udbina. A reverend *Anto Trgovčević* came with them. On January 8, 1997 he received a family house of Neven Jerković for the purpose of establishing a parochoy and Catholic Church there. That was done because all Catholic and Orthodox Churches in the region were destroyed during the WW II and had not been rebuilt. When the owner returned he filed a request for the return of his property. However, his legitimate request, based on the Croatian Constitutional rights was denied. Moreover, it disclosed the final goal of the Croatian government in this region: no more the Serb majority in Udbina again. Catholicism should be returned to Udbina at any cost. The Bishopric of Rijeka-Senj, plays an active role in achieving that purpose through the reverend Ante Trgovčević focusing on the following statement "*and what they (the Serbs) did to us*". Thus there was no surprise when the reverend Trgovčević said that Neven Jerković had no more rights to his house because he left voluntarily in 1995. The Bishop *Anton Tamarut*, is of the same opinion.

A special Agreement by the governmental working group on operational activities in the returning process¹, regarding the temporary used houses envisaged:"4. *The Ministry of Development and Reconstruction in co-operation with the local government's commission will offer through its office one of these solutions:*

- a) A solution which stipulates the date after which the owner will take over this property back, or
- b) A solution by which the potential returnee gets an adequate (in large and quality) accommodation near his place of residence within a certain period of time until he gets his house back. The exact date after which the accommodation could be used should be written in a decision..."

On August 26, 1995. *Jure Radić*, the Minister of Development and Reconstruction said to the resettled Croats from B/H: "You should consider your resettlement as permanent!" *That was the attitude of the Croatian government towards the Croats from B/H.* They did not treat them as refugees any longer but as rightful citizens of Croatia. From their persistence to resettle the Croats permanently in deserted places after the operation "Storm" which were for centuries populated by Serbs — derives numerous problems. It heats up national intolerance, violence and terrorism, plunder as an element for econo-

1 An agreement signed in Osijek on April 23, 1997 on behalf of the Croatian government by *Stjepan Šterc*, on behalf of the UNHCR by *Eduardo Arboleda* and the UNTAES by *Gerard Fischer*.

mic destruction, unemployment in order to prevent Serbs from returning in greater numbers or to force those who are already living there to leave.

Kistanje, a small town was burned systematically for months after the end of the military operation "Storm". It was considered as a right spot and place for the resettlement of Croats from Janjevo. The Croatian government expropriated from the owners the majority of houses. They had been rebuilding the houses to a great extent at the government expense in order to resettle the Croats from Janjevo. At the same time the government was building 120 new family houses. Only 20 of them would be given to the Croats who were already occupying Serb's houses. According to the CHC, 50 families that requested their houses back were registered. Nobody knows what will happen to other 30 families whose property has been occupied and obviously will not be returned.

Building of the new settlement for Croats from Janjevo confirmed the thesis that the Croatian government wished to change the ethnic structure in this region previously predominated by the Serb population, i. e. to create unconditionally the Croat/Catholic majority. Analysts also saw a connection with the Orthodox Monastery in Krka, in the vicinity, which the Croatian regime wanted to separate even physically from the place of residence of the Orthodox believers. This plan was being achieved by building of these houses in a certain location in Kistanje in a way that these houses "cut off" the main road leading to this Monastery. In order to reach the Monastery one would be forced to take another road from that period.

Despite the fact that the Croatian government did not want anyone of resettled Croats to go back to their previous place of residence and kept insisting on that, there were people who wanted to return. However, they did not dare to speak up about that publicly because they were afraid to lose the benefits... The attitude of the Croatian government towards them, except of its ethnic background, had deep religious character which was clearly seen through their opinion about the Orthodox Monastery of Krka.

The settlers from B/H, faced a series of problems, especially in the region of the former Sector South, which the Government, despite given promises, would not be able to fulfill in the near future. Many of them suffered because of the fact that they were occupying someone else's house. They did not have better choice because the local government refused to give them other accommodation even when possible. The actual government, by denying the return to B/H wanted to preserve the changed ethnic picture of this region as a result of the military operation "Storm".

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Return

"If you recall, in one of the agreements between me, Dobrica Ćosić (the then President of the FR Yugoslavia) and Milošević in Geneva in 1992, we agreed upon the first steps towards establishing the normal life conditions and we emphasised that we shall facilitate 'voluntary resettlement'. But things went in a different direction and what happened, happened despite the personal tragedies of these peoples, but the outcome will be positive because the role of Serbs will be so minor like it was during the Turk's times..." (Franjo Tuđman in an interview to Olga Ramljak in "Slobodna Dalmacija", 1995.)

Although the Croatian government signed a Basic Agreement in Erdut on November 12, 1995 it did not respect its orders especially those on return of property and fair compensation. Therefore, the paragraph 8 stipulates: "All persons will enjoy the right to return of all property taken from them in an illegal way or which they had to leave, and they will enjoy the right to a fair compensation for the property which can not be returned." And the paragraph 9: "The right to return of property, receiving a compensation for an irreplaceable property and receiving aid in rebuilding of property will be equally available to all persons."

Soon after their arrival to B/H and FRY, upon the lessening of tensions many of Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity started to hurry to the Croatian borders wishing to return to their homes. A great number of people put an enormous pressure upon the CHC asking for their rights. The CHC turned to the Government, to the Prime Minister *Nikica Valentić*, to the Office for refugees headed by *dr. Adalbert Rebić*, to the Ministry of Administration etc. in order to get a first hand explanation.

By systematic monitoring, analysing and double-checking of received information and complaints together with the direct monitoring at the check-points on the borders, the CHC confirmed the allegations according to which the Croatian government did allow the Serbs to return. The Croatian government in fact is firmly determined to prevent any return of Serbs, mentioning all the time, the President Tuđman's proclamation according to which the Serbs were told to stay in their homes, but nevertheless they left voluntarily.

Until December 31, 1995 after waiting in long queues for hours 25,000 Serb refugees managed to file their request for the return at the Croatian Embassy Office in Belgrade. At least 4,500 relatives filed in requests for the return of their family members at the Government's Office for Refugees, enclosing numerous documents showing that they are the Croatian citizens. At the same time about 4,000 persons turned to the CHC for help in organising the return. The first request for return was filed in at the Office for Refugees on August 11, 1995. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, *Mate Granić*, confirmed in his talk with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, *Klaus Kinkel* that the Office for refugees received 4,500 requests for return. Granić, how-

ever, did not mention requests, which received the Croatian Embassy in Belgrade. During the talk of *Ivica Kostović, Ljerka Mintas Hodak and Damir Zorić with the representative of the U. S. State Department John Shattuck, they stated that the Croatian government approved the return of 2007 persons within the project of "reunion of families."* But according to the CHC record until the end of 1995 only 615 persons returned. They did not explain what would happen to the requests filed in Belgrade and how would persons who did not fit in the project of "reunion of families" be able to return.

The Serb community in Croatia at the same time published data containing a number of 26,000 refugees who turned to the Helsinki Committee in Serbia. 52 % wated to return to Croatia immediately under any condition. 25 % of refugees wanted to return under specific circumstances like safe life conditions and aid in rebuilding of destroyed farms etc. *"Only 13 percent did not want to return to Croatia any more claiming a compensation for their property..."*

Regarding the situation the explanation was demanded from the Prime Minister *Nikica Valentić* and the Head of the Office for Refugees *Dr. Rebić*. The Prime Minister never replied, but *Dr. Adalbert Rebić* wrote on September 5, 1995 that *"the Croatian citizens who fled Croatia during the operation "Storm" and now want to return should turn to the Office of the Republic of Croatia in Belgrade", and that "those persons should present any identification document with the photograph (ID card, passport, driving license end so forth.)"*¹ Based on these guidelines the Croatian Office in Belgrade only collected requests but not a single person returned until the end of 1995, because of impossibility to obtain ID or permission to return from the Office in Belgrade. To obtain any ID one needed the Croatian "citizenship paper" which one could get only personally at the Registry Office in the place of birth in the Republic of Croatia. One could enter the Republic of Croatia, however, only with the new Croatian passport, which one could not get without "citizenship paper" and in order to get citizenship paper one had to have the new passport.

Many people, whose relatives lived in Croatia tried to cross the Croatian border. These people managed to obtain documents such as: birth certificate, residence certificate, marriage certificates and staff like that, by presenting the old or new Yugoslav passports or old certificates issued by the Socialist Republic of Croatia. Neither that helped. The new Croatian authorities did not accept the original certificate of citizenship, in which it was clearly written that the person was a Croatian citizen. It was rather easy for the refugees of Croatian ethnicity to cross the border in cases they presented the certificate of being baptised in the Catholic Church or in case they could receive a forged document on that.

Because of the fact that the then Belgrade Office of the Croatian Government did not have an authorisation for diplomatic activities it was not possible to authorise written proxies according to which their relatives and lawyers in Croatia could get various IDs in Croatia. The Croatian Embassy in Budapest was then besieged by thousands of

1 The assistant to the Minister of administration, *Mira Martinac*, answered to the CHC on January 12, 1995 that the requests filed in Belgrade were invalid because that Office was not authorized for any diplomatic and consular capacity. When the highest person responsible for problems of refugees did not have a notion about that no wonder that thousands of persons did not know to whom and in which way to approach, or was such situation made and kept deliberately?

refugees in order to file in a "request for issuing the permission for the transborder pass"² or other proxy. In general they could not get any IDs and those who even paid for that they did it in vain. Nowhere in Croatia, was it possible to obtain "citizenship paper" not only until the end of 1995 but until the end of 1997 (with rare exceptions). The CHC demanded in writing the explanation from the Ministry of Administration quoting concrete places where no proxy regarding any issue related to the refugees was recognised.

The Deputy to the Minister of Administration *Mira Martinac* answered on December 5, 1995 that: "the state bureaucrat — register clerk is obliged to issue citizenship paper to the citizen registered in a book at his personal demand or at the demand of his lawyer or other proxy regardless of his ethnicity." In spite of the fact that the explanation seemed clear, the clerks stuck to the old practice and to "other instructions".

The CHC insisted and received on January 12, 1996 from the same *Mira Martinac* an additional explanation. "In order to notarise the signature on the proxy by the diplomatic and consular representative of the Republic of Croatia, a citizen must present his valid ID card or the new passport of the Republic of Croatia. The notarisation is not valid upon presenting the old ID card issued in the Republic of Croatia in 1991 or the old invalid passport of the SFRY." Now the issue became clear: register clerks knew that they had to act only in favour of those who possessed the valid (new) Croatian IDs. For notarising of signatures one needed new documents which one could get based only on citizenship paper. In order to receive citizenship paper, one had to come to the Register Office personally and this was impossible without a new passport.

The only solution would be that the Office for Refugees of the Croatian Government issue a permission for return. The closest relatives would be the ones to demand this permission. According to the statement of the new head of the Government Office for Refugees and Displaced Persons, the office issued 615 permissions for return of exclusively elderly people until December 28, 1995, because of "humanitarian reasons".

Border Crossing Procedure

The CHC promoted in general the permission for return to all those people who wished to return. That is the right guaranteed by the Croatian Constitution. However in very difficult cases of elderly and ill persons who had descendants in Croatia and other close relatives, the CHC used to undertake vast actions. For example, after numerous failures in trying to get permission to cross the border the CHC asked the Croatian government to allow nine elderly people to cross the Croatian border in Terezino Polje on September 22, 1995. Their relatives were waiting for them in Hungarian town Barczs, for days. The CHC demanded help from various institutions such as the Government Office for Refugees and Displaced Persons help them, as well as many other distinguished persons like *Dr. Ivica Kostovića*, the high Government official, Archbishop *Franjo Kuharić*, Bishop *Jezerinac*, Head of the County of Osijek-Baranja *Branimir Glavaš*, *Zoran Pusić*, the Pre-

2 Instruction of the Minister, *Dr. Ivica Kostović*, 22 September, 1995

sident of the Citizens Committee for Human Rights and the Center for Peace and Non-Violence from Osijek. The CHC published a request with a list of names of persons involved. After hours of negotiations, pressures and waiting at the border crossing, seven persons were allowed to enter the Republic of Croatia except for the married couple Jančić who were sent back.

They repeatedly came to the border crossing every day to Terezino Polje, but they were always sent back. The CHC sent two activists on 7 October to investigate what was going on at the border crossing and to try to bring these old and seriously ill people to their children in Croatia. They hardly survived the period of the Serb rebellion because they remained alone in the so-called Krajina region while their children continued to live in the non-occupied territory of Croatia. The negotiations with the border officials in order to let these people enter Croatia lasted 6 hours because they did not have valid documents. Finally it was concluded that these persons would have been allowed to cross the border even on September 22, 1995, when the permission from Zagreb arrived by fax after the CHC put enormous pressure on the Croatian Government. It was not clarified why was this permission kept secret in a drawer of the border police.

More and more people started to turn to the CHC complaining about the racist behaviour of the border clerks especially of those at the border crossing at Terezino Polje where most people waited to cross over. The CHC thus decided to send its two activists again on December 8, 1995. They went to Hungary to a hotel in Barzd to take the old and paralysed woman Zorka Maravić who did not possess new Croatian documents. The CHC succeeded in obtaining the permission for her return from the Office for Refugees since she was in a very serious health condition, she could have died alone in a hotel in a foreign country without money.

At the border crossing as soon as the border policeman saw red passport of the former SFRY, he asked whether the old lady was of Serb ethnicity. When he got an affirmative answer he said: "Then there is no theoretical chance for her to enter Croatia. Turn your vehicle back and drive her to Hungary!" The CHC activists begged the policeman to realise that the old woman was paralysed, seriously ill and that she might die on her trip back home. But, it did not work. Then the CHC activists turned to the commander of the border police. He asked the same question, whether the old lady was of Serb ethnicity. He gave back her "old" passport and ordered her to return to Hungary. When the CHC activists asked whether she could enter if she were of Croat ethnicity, the commander replied affirmatively adding that they were acting according to "*the higher instructions*".

After four hours of trying and making numerous phone calls when the old woman could not speak any more and almost lost her conscience the CHC activists decided to cross the border without permission in order to take her to the nearest hospital. They took her to the hospital in Virovitica where she stayed for several days and her life was saved at the last moment. In the meanwhile the CHC managed to get "a valid" permission for her return.³

3 The CHC activists did not want to take passports and went without them. At the center of Virovitica, the CHC office vehicle was stopped by the police ramp (trucks with reflectors) and a group of armed policemen with automatic rifles. When we stopped the loudspeaker asked us to get out with hands up. The old Zorka Maravić of course was not able to get out, she was not able to understand what was going on. When the policemen informed the authorities that we were stopped on the border crossing and that the old lady

The CHC helped to an old married couple of Croat ethnicity who were waiting for the permission to return for days in a Hungarian town Mohacz after they used all legal means to receive it. The CHC activists took an old Serb woman Danica Jančić together with the married couple Krznarić to Mohacz. Negotiations at the border crossing in Donji Miholjac, according to the usual screenplay lasted from 13, 40 until 17, 50 when the "deal" was finally "made". The Croat married couple Krznarić was allowed to enter Croatia, but the Serb D. Jančić was refused a permit to enter Croatia. She had to return to Hungary in spite of the fact that her daughter was waiting for her.⁴ The Croat married couple Krznarić tried to help refusing to leave with their daughters for Zagreb without the old lady Danica. It did not work.

Danica Jančić was returned to Hungary, Harkany and a married couple Krznarić left for Zagreb. After numerous interventions including those of foreign embassies, D. Jančić eventually received the permission for return on January 5, 1996.

In order to monitor the situation at the border crossings and to inform accurately that the Croatian government did not want to let the Serb refugees return to Croatia, the CHC teams repeated on a number of occasions the similar actions in course of 1996. These actions, together with everything that happened during and after military operations "Flesh" and "Storm" confirm the fact that the current Croatian government insisted in its decision to disable the Serb refugees to return to Croatia, or at least to allow the entrance to those underlined by the international community. These and other future actions were in line with the statements of the former Head of the Office for refugees of the Croatian government, Damir Zorić. He stated on December 28, 1995, that "*Serbs would never again make a majority in Knin, Vojnić, Vrginmost, Donji Lapac and in any other Croatian place*", on what he insisted in achieving.⁵

Position of the Residents who Remained or Returned

"During his victorious visit of the conquered regions, President Tudjman stated that this military action removed a hundred years security risk in the Croatian border zone —

"seemed dead", the panicky command was heard: "Take her to the hospital immediately. She must not die. We are finished." Various police vehicles escorted us on our way to hospital. Afterwards, one of the CHC activists was taken home by the relative of the old woman Zorka to Zagreb in order to be spared the expected police procedure). The other activist and the old lady son were interrogated at the Virovitica police station until early morning hours when the command came from above that they be released.

4 Danica Jančić cried on her knees and begged the border policemen to release her. The CHC activists advised her to surrender to the Croatian government and to say that she "committed crimes against Croats". If they arrest her she would easily prove that it were a bitter joke. She accepted that and stated to the policemen that she during the Krajina government "did all sorts of eavel things" and that she wants to bear responsibility. The joke did not work because the policeman asked for evidence of doing so and besides there was no warrant against her and at the end she was too old and ill to be capable of "committing crimes".

5 Statement given to the then Executive Director of the CHC, Petar Mrkalj and repeated to the CHC President Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, while threatening physically to Petar Mrkalj who was overburdening him with "stupid requests".

which the Vienna Monarchy populated by Serbs once upon time which served as a bulwark against the Osman Empire. The contemporary Croatian government made a decree on "temporary use of deserted property". He gave to the Serbs— refugees a ninety days deadline for requesting their property back. Bureaucratic obstacles and closed borders between Croatia and Serbia made practically impossible to respect that deadline. "The temporary use. "was meant to last long..."⁶

The CHC put constant pressure on the Croatian government to respect the undeniable right to property and return, and also other NGO's for human rights in Croatia. For example, the Anti-War Campaign in October 1995 asked publicly the Prime Minister to respect these rights and that the Government apply equally the Constitutional rights to the Serb refugees as well as to the Croats. Anti-War Campaign asked that the procedure of return be precisely defined and widely published. They also demanded that the Government's Office in Belgrade competently solve these issues. The NGO's also demanded to "abolish any kind of a deadline for filing requests for the return to Croatia", and to declare an automatic right to the Croatian citizenship of those whose names were on voter registration lists in 1990 in Croatia. "To those whose relatives have already filed requests for return of the refugees at the Government's Office for Refugees and Dispalced Persons, the travel documents should be issued immediately". The public statement, was signed by *Vesna Teršelić* on behalf of ten NGO's has not been respected.

Thousands of those who fled the region, wondering around, tried everything to return to their homes and villages. Others who believed in President Tudjman's call for stay and remained in their homes — if they survived — had to leave later on because of the unsafe conditions of life in the region. One of those was Tode Šarić, 57 years old from Krnjeuve, who left Croatia on March 1, 1996 with new Croatian documents. This is his story. He remained in the deserted village together with other six elderly persons. The second day of the operation "Storm", he was arrested at his house by the military police that took him to the town Benkovac, where he was imprisoned for four months. He was tortured, beaten up severely and asked for information on weapon, Chetnics and many other things that he did not know. When he came back he found his home devastated and looted. He was left without anything and was forced to join the rest of his family who were using somebody else's property.⁷

Through the Program of Reunion of Families until April 29, 1996 some 3, 639 Serb refugees returned to Croatia. Thus slowly the life in Obrovac started to return to normal again. "At the moment 1, 200 persons are living in Obrovac, most of them are refugees from B&H and some twenty returnees of Serb ethnicity. Four returnees came back to Krupa (two of them killed themselves with bomb), two persons returned to Kunovci and 15 to Obrovac. The police commander (Maksimilijan Savić, op. a.) emphasised that (Marko

6 Title in German newspapers "Die Zeit": "Who did not escape had to die", October 6, 1995.

7 "One can not live there any more...Houses are looted, there is nothing in them. My house is not burned but everything is destroyed and taken away. Only desert in which looters are running around. In the beginning soldiers were looting. Now civilians are coming. They are taking everything away and we are looking that. If someone asks anything they say this is a Croatian state. I am also a Croatian citizen, I said to one of them but he replied 'You have nothing to do here, you'd better be going.' I just can't take it any more..." (Tode Šarić, March 1, 1996.)

*Šukara, one citizen of Serb ethnicity, remained all the time in Obrovac, and nothing happened to him...Božo Majstorović is the first returnee and is staying in his flat..."*⁸

The Agreement between the Croatian government and the UNTAES on operational steps of return from the end of April 1997 was supposed to ease this process. *Aldo Tenisci*, Head of the Co-ordination Centre of the EU Monitoring Mission in Knin. "A lot of people are still returning individually but not in organisation of the Croatian government thus it is normal that they are facing all kinds of problems, especially in returning to their flats again. "This Agreement on Two Way Process Return of both Croats and Serbs to the Danube Region and from the Danube Region, is a good step forward in order to help people return to their homes..."⁹

After his visit to Udbina, Gračac, Donji Lapac and Knin and meeting with the mayor of Knin Milivoj Tomaš on June 18, 1997 the American Ambassador *Peter Galbraith* stated: "The attitude of the American government regarding the basic human rights on return to home and property is entirely clear, as well as the opinion on the return for all Croats expelled from the Danube Region, but also for Serbs who fled from Knin, Gračac, Udbina, Donji Lapac...as well as for the Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosniaks who wish to return to their homes and get their properties back. The Croatian government must allow all Serbs who want that to come back..."

Similar attitude was expressed by *Bill Richardson*, after his meeting with President Tudjman on July 20, 1997 on the Island of Brijuni who promised to allow the return of Serbs.¹⁰ Only three days before, on July 17, 1997 at the Croatian government a meeting of Croatian heads of county districts where the different attitude was expressed. Regarding this issue the Head of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, *Jure Burić* stated: "What kind of state we are when so many Serbs can return without our knowing? What are the Croatian border officers doing, will they allow every drunk Chethnic from Trebinje to enter the country?" He also suggested a revision of citizenship papers because there were lot of citizens whose papers should be annuled.

At the same time the UN Security Council was working on draft *Resolution No. 1120 based on the Report of the Secretary General from June 23, 1997 regarding Croatia. In this document the UN Security Council reminds the Croatian government on its obligations in this respect, saying among other in the point 4: "The SC urge the Croatian government to remove immediately all administrative and legal obstacles for return of refugees, especially those from the Law on Temporary Take Over and Use of Certain Property; to ensure necessary security conditions, protection of social and economic perspectives for those returning to their homes in Croatia including the payment of the pensions; and to initiate the successful realisation of the Agreement on Operational Steps for Return*

8 CHC field research on April 19, 1997. Commander of the Police station *M. Swić* claims that "a special attention we pay to the returnees of Serb ethnicity to whom police helps in solving their problems (*taking photographs for their documents and offering flats to some of them*)..." (Report on April 23, 1997.

9 Daily "Novi list", May 15, 1997.

10 "It is of the greatest importance that all people regardless their nationality leave their history behind them and turn to a common work and to the future. First of all it is of the utmost necessity to make the local government start working. U. S. A. and UN can only facilitate this process but this process has to be realized by the people who are living in this region..." (Bill Richardson, on July 20, 1997 at the press-conference after his meeting President Tudjman on Brijuni according to a daily "Novi list" on July 21, 1997.)

treating all refugees equally regardless of their ethnic background...." (According to "Novi list", on July 16, 1997.)

American Ambassador was personally informed about the situation on the terrain, on how the process of return was unfolding and about the situation of the persons who remained at their homes. In many cases his Administration put pressure on the Croatian government to allow some people to return.

The CHC activist's met with the American ambassador on April 17, 1997 in the remote hamlet of Zrmanja Vrelo, in the burned house of elderly people Marinka, born 1912 and Marko LUKIĆ, born 1904, Serbs. Mr. Peter Galbraith witnessed personally that all farms were burned down and that they were living in unbearable conditions in a cement basement room originally planned to store potatoes. These people were left without everything, without cattle (two horses, two cows, ten goats). Marko was blind and paralysed. Their son *Miloš Lukić*, 56 years old had an artificial leg and was married to a Croat woman. He fled the village together with others. His parents asked for his return but had not received any reply. Even the CHC activists asked Ambassador Galbraith to intervene for his return by the state authorities because his return will offer the best state care for these elderly people. Soon, *Nevenka* and *Miloš Lukić* returned home.

It was expected that the Program of Return (adopted on June 26, 1998 by the Croatian Parliament) would facilitate and even accelerate the return of property to its rightful owners. However, nothing changed.

The Croatian government did not intend to allow in any region the return of the mostly Serb population. Pressed by the international community to allow a certain number of ethnic Serbs to return to Croatia and give them their property back they soon enough found other solutions in order to make Croats resettled from B&H or Vojvodina (or other countries) stay at their "new homes". Together with resettled Croats from Janjevo to Kistanje the government initiated construction of a new settlement of 120 houses, from which only 20 houses were meant for those who at that time occupied someone else's houses in spite of the fact that the CHC registered around fifty of such requests. In Donji Lapac, precisely in Donji Boričevač it was planned that (for now secretly) 150 houses would be built for Croats in the first phase and 300 in the second phase. In Korenica it was planned to build 300 houses in which 1715 settlers would be settled, approximately the same number as the number of Serbs who used to live there before the war.¹¹

"We consider that 10,000 of them have returned so far...Representatives of the Croatian government claim that 31,000 refugees have returned from which 19,000 from Eastern Slavonija and 12,000 from Serbia, but I think that these numbers are high..." Andreas

11 The Community of Refugees and Displaced Persons of Bosnia and Herzegovina placed a certain pressure on the Government regarding the status of their members and demanded that the status be permanently solved. In that sense the meeting was held with the high officials of the Republic of Croatia, among whom there was a late Gojko Šušak. It was firmly requested that the regions or municipalities be defined in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina for organised care and settling of displaced Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina. After that meeting it was decided that the settled Bosnian and Herzegovinian residents be kept in the various territories in the region, such as Knin, Donji Lapac, Korenica, Gračac, Obrovac, and for the Croats from Janjevo the town of Kistanje in the territory of the former Sector South. In order to compensate for the forcible turning of Kistanje into a town with solely Croatian population, the Government of the Republic of Croatia issued permissions to the Serb residents to return to the surrounding Serb villages, Ivoševci for example..

Kohlschutter, OSCE — Knin, April 1998. At the same time in the region of Knin 20,000 Croats from B&H were settled.

"The organised return is minor because of bureaucratic obstacles which the returnees must face and overcome. That is why we think that the Government Office for Refugees and Displaced Persons blocks instead of facilitates the return process..." (Ibid)

The founding of the Agency for Purchase of Property (APN) was published in the state official gazette "*Narodne novine*" on April 29, 1997. The Agency is, according to the third paragraph (3) of the Provision on Founding "*authorised to buy a certain immobile property under its name on behalf of the Republic of Croatia*". This immobile property "is obliged to allot to the Croatian citizens", and will also grant "loans to domestic physical persons for purchasing a certain property regarding the paragraph four (4) of this Provision."

The local government in Knin kept on hindering the return of Serbs and retaking over their houses. During the meeting of the UNHCR representatives with the Government appointee for the Region of Knin *Zvonimir Puljić* urging for realising the Government's and President Tudjman's promises into the practice, Mr. Puljić denied the right of the Serb owner to the information on his property. According to Mr. Puljić the former owner lost his right to his/her (abandoned) property and claimed that this property belonged to the state...Mr. Puljić denied to the Croatian Serbs, returnees from Eastern Slavonia, the right to enter their houses even if they were empty...in doing so the Serb owner would be considered as a thief.

Comment: *It seems that the local government in Knin has a clear intention to prevent the return of Serb residents. This policy is contradictory to the public statements of the highest officials in Zagreb...In the previous meeting Mr. Puljić stated that he was following the orders from Zagreb and that his policy was supported by the Croatian government...the actual policy should ensure on a long run ethnically clean hinterland of coast towns of Zadar, Šibenik and Split...*¹²

During the talk with the UN High Representative for Refugees, Ms Sadako Ogata President Tudjman seemed tough and "*pretty upset*" because of the pressure for allowing the return of Serb refugees settled in Eastern Slavonia. Ivica Kostović, said that "*Serb refugees may register in order to get benefits as refugees but they should use different application forms from those for Croats.*"

The attitude of Zvonimir Puljić and the Knin local government was widely supported. When Slavica and Boško Čeko (ethnically mixed couple), returned home in the beginning of 1996 from the exile, they were supposed to move into one free floor of their house. They previously agreed with the temporary user of their house *Ivo Kaliger*, who was waiting for his house to be rebuilt because it was mined during "RSK". However, the temporary user had to reject the agreement because the other neighbours threatened to mine his house and to kill him if he would live together with "Chetnics".

"Even if a person moves out of the temporary used house the new one moves in immediately and the Government Appointee's Office issues them a valid permission for the use of house. System is as follows: when Croat from Bosnia or some other region of Croatia come to the Office in Knin, he expresses his wish to settle in Knin and asks for a house

12 Talks between the UNHCR representatives and Zonimir Puljić.

to move in. *The Official's answers: 'Find yourself a house or flat then come again!'* Such behaviour leads to the flourish of a black market situation. It is a common occurrence that those who reserved several houses or flats sell the "right" to others to move in (*for well preserved and furnished house the price is about 5,000 German marks and for a flat 2,000 GM*). *It is necessary to emphasise that each permission clearly states "sent to the owner or publicly published on the notice board". The fact is that in Knin there are neither owners nor permissions hanging on the notice board. The owners can not get permissions even when they ask for them personally at the Office. Mr. Mišić (Željko, op. a.) president of the Housing commission and assistant to the Government's Appointee for Knin (Zvonimir Puljić, op. a.) is very rude with the returnees, he doesn't even want to listen to them He says frequently: 'You are returnees I don't have anything to talk to you about or this is not your property. Where have you been so far? '..."¹³*

The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia revoked some orders of the Law on Temporary Take Over and Use of Certain Property on September 26, 1997. That is how the precodnitions for owners to use the property in issue freely. But in practice it is not like that.

Radmila Kukolj, born in 1941, returned from an exile on January 20, 1996 before the six-month's dead line expired. When she came back she found the flat (she had a tenancy right) unoccupied, but devastated so she could not live in. She had been repairing it for a year and when finally she was about to move in, she found another person in it. It was *Marina Klepo from Sinj*, a clerk of the Government Appointee's Office who stated that she bought this flat from a person called "*Marko*" for 2,000 German Marks. All NGO's have dealt with the return of this flat to R. Kukolj, as well as numerous ambassadors. Local government did not want to protect R. Kukolj and they refused to press charges against "*Marko*" from whom M. Klepo, allegedly bought this flat which she in the end left, loosing allegedly the above mentioned sum of money.

Four unknown men and a woman tried to take over Ljubica Kutlača's house on November 8, 1996 and kick her out of the house. When they broke into the house that day and managed to throw her out she turned to the police which warned "unknown" persons not to do that. Lj. Kutlača came back home but she did not dare to sleep alone in the house and she went to sleep to her neighbours. During the other night the same group broke in and put their lock on the door. The owner removed that lock and put hers again. "*Persons*" broke into the house again determined not to leave this house. Meanwhile they were mistreating the owner. The Knin police advised to the owner to initiate the court procedure. Only after the CHC intervention at the Ministry of Interior, the deputy minister *Zlatko Gledec*, confirmed the incident and ordered violators to be expelled from the house and that the owner be protected. "Unknown" persons, meanwhile became known to the police, left the house eventually on November 12, 1996. In many similar cases, the owner was not that lucky, because in the end, the Knin authorities would issue them valid permission according to which they would be allowed to temporary use the property.

Together with the number of other obstacles faced by the returnees (problems with IDs, pensions, social care, employment, reconstruction etc.) the worst possible thing

13 Izvještaj iz Knina, 7. ožujka 1997.

were death threats, harassment, intimidation in order to frighten them and make them leave the region permanently. Jovanka, born in 1932 and Slavko Maričić, born in 1936, left Biljane Donje before the operation "Storm", on August 4, 1995 at 1 a. m. They returned home in summer 1996. They settled in their friends' house. The owner was living in Australia. They started to rebuild their house with the help of the UNHCR. But on July 8, 1998, at 7, 20 in the morning Slavko Maričić on his tractor stepped over a booby — trap that was planted during the previous night in his courtyard. Except him, his friend Svetozar Škorić, born in 1942 who was in a trailer was also injured.¹⁴ Tractor was significantly damaged. Two other workers took them to the doctor by their car. But upon starting the engine of the car they activated yet another mine. They were not injured, but the car ended up totally destroyed.

"I don't know who could have done it, says Slavko Maričić, on July 21, to the CHC activists. I remember that maybe ten days ago three men came in a green 'Citroen', without license plates. They were only looking what we were doing, saying nothing and went back towards Zadar. Then I saw them again couple a days before the incident, again the same green 'Citroen', still without license plates...Police came on the spot. They say that this was done by individuals, not professional military job...I was ready to move in but now, there is no chance. ."¹⁵

In the Region of the County Ličko-Senjska from the beginning of 1996 until February 2, 1999, 11 persons were killed by the booby traps while 30 persons were lightly or seriously injured.

After these incidents the people did not dare to work on the land. For example, Radoslav Đaković and Gojko Korica, were heavily injured on November 9, 1998 by the booby traps planted in the stall manure. Zorka Zaklan feared to enter the garden in Mogorić because her son had been badly injured on November 6, 1998, by the activated mine while he was opening the garden door. On February 2, 1999, Nikola Karleuša was killed in Brlog by the explosive device (like the one which use the special police forces) activated in a hay stock. A day after, the policeman Zvonko Delač, was injured while making an investigation in the same place. Another hay stock was burned due to the security reasons but the family of passed Karleuša did not dare to touch others despite the fact that they need hay for feeding cattle.

Opinion of the Resettled Croats from B&H

"The Croatian government wants to keep us here by force because of two reasons: first, they use us as a barrier against the return of Serb refugees and second reason is that they need our votes and it is clear to whom we should give them. We are here a simple voting machine..."

14 He is also a returnee and on March 20, 1998 started to rebuild his house with a help of the UNHCR. Unknown persons on March 26, 1998 threw two bombs into his courtyard.

15 "We are concerned because of these incidents happening in fields due to the left mines. But this case is different from others because it includes explosive devices deliberately planted as a terroristic act directed against programe of return and reconciliation. The victim could be anybody — *who is against the Government programe of return which we try to implement...*" (Jeremy Ainslie, Head of the OSCE Office in Zadar, "Slobodna Dalmacija on July 14, 1998.)

I want to say that here in Croatia they hope that Europe and the U. S. A. will get tired and give up on their policy and cease putting pressure on Croatia. Here they expect from us to forget our former homes. They believe that we elderly will soon die and that youngsters will easily remain here.

They also believe that the majority of Serbs, if they continue to be mistreated like today, will give up on the return themselves. The Agency for Purchase of Immobile Property is simply organisation for ethnic cleansing. The pressure is put on Serbs to sell their property as cheap as possible and never come back...

Then you see our status has been changed radically. In the beginning we were refugees. Now we are not refugees any more, our refugee documents have been changed. We became settlers. And finally we became citizens of the Republic of Croatia--.

As Croatian citizens we lost some refugee benefits. We can not get any aid from the Red Cross. Caritas has nothing to offer us because it has been burdened with taxes, it is written on their doors. Thus all humanitarian aid is controlled. Before the greater portion of aid given to the refugees from B&H was financed by the Ministry of Defence. It is now allegedly cut off...

When we heard Pavletić saying that Croatia can accept 80,000 Croats from Germany we tried to say that it was not good for anybody. We did not succeed. These people are arriving in great numbers from Germany attracted by the promising words. After they will be forced to wander around and at the end they will lose everything. They will spend here what they have earned in Germany. They will not get back anything of their property in Bosnia. Tomorrow they will be in a worse position than we are today...

I am watching some Serbs returning to Croatia. I don't know what will happen to them. Croatia is forced to let them return but it gives them nothing. Others take all of their property. Settlers from B&H received decisions last year to leave their houses. The majority of them did not file complaints because they were taught not to do that because these decisions were false and given only in order to show the international community that Croatia respects commitments. In reality nobody will be forced to leave if he/she doesn't want that and nobody will be forced to leave somebody else's house...It is interesting that the majority of these people believe in that. They are taught to be unkind and violent towards Serb returnees, to threaten them and not to allow them to approach their houses. If a settler does not behave according to these instructions he faces troubles, condemnation and he is not able to do anything. People like us, we are threatened to death or by mining houses etc. So please do not mention my name anywhere...¹⁶

* * *

Instead of any comment here are the words of *Mičo Čorak*, a Croat from Vrhovine, a refugee who returned to his village only after the operation "Storm." *"All Serbs should come back. Those who are guilty should be prosecuted. See how everything is deserted, one should work, it would be better for the state to allow Serbs to return and cultivate their farms..."*

Mičo Čorak was guarding neighbours' houses. Owners Serbs, (*Grbić* and *Vukomanović*) fled. He claimed that these people managed to preserve his house during the war

16 Refugee then settler T. K.

and that was not easy for them. Serb rebels on October 1, 1991 took from their hamlet six persons: his brothers *Slavko*, born 1930 and *Vlado*, born 1939, nephews *Stjepan*, born 1935, his wife *Kata*, *Martina*, born 1939 and *Mate*. In this village on October 19, 1991 around 5 p. m. *Marija*, Croat and *Ljubica*, Serb were killed by lethal weapon. In those days 21 from all 23 Croatian houses were burned in this village. In her house *Zorka Čorak*, a paralysed woman — mother of *Vlado* was burned alive.

Where these persons were buried it has not known until today. But *Mičo Čorak* claims that he knows who is responsible for that and that he will "pay some day". "Responsibility for their crimes can not bear all Serbs..." *he says*.

Right to work

Although the Croatian government adopted the Law on Regions Under Special State Administration, it acts in a selective and racist way. It applies discrimination not only towards Serbs who remained in their homes or returned but also towards Croats who lived under the occupation of the so-called Republic of Serb Krajina. The Croatian authorities denied to the majority of these people their right to work. They were allowed to work only under extraordinary circumstances, due to the lack of substitutes of the "real Croats", *the former refugees and settlers from B&H*.

Croats living or who used to live in ethnically mixed marriages were discriminated as well as those who fled to the FRY during the military operation "Storm".

Such revenge and national intolerance towards all those people who were living during the war in the region of the so-called RSK was spread in all fields of living and work. ~~the majority of employees from "Krajina days" were immediately or some time later dismissed. Here are some examples from Knin.~~

Zoja Radić, of a Croat ethnicity, a professor of ethnology, was dismissed from the Museum. Teachers *Zagorka Kablar*, of Macedonian ethnicity and *Branka Bilbija*, Serb were also dismissed in May 1996. They were also denied the right to severance because they did not receive any document of work dismissal. Other people who worked at schools during the so-called RSK regardless of the fact that they were not rebels and they did not leave Croatia were also dismissed. These are: *Marko Čoraš*, Croat, art teacher, *Ruža Dizdar*, Croat, geography teacher, *Boja Gajica*, Serb, pedantic teacher, *Dragica Karanović*, Croat, teacher, *Eleonora Lukić*, Croat, teacher of Croatian language, *Dara Marić*, Serb, teacher of Croatian language, *Sandra Marić*, Croat, physical training teacher, *Đurđa Maričić*, Croat, teacher of geography, *Dragica Ognjenović*, Croat, teacher of physical training, *Branko Orlović*, Serb, teacher of maths, physics and chemistry, *Sibirka Popović*, Croat, teacher, *Ankica Pupavac*, Croat, teacher of biology, *Marija Pupavac*, Serb, teacher of maths, *Ljubica Radić — Matković*, Croat, archaeologist, *Anka Šeša*, Croat, teacher, *Nada Štrbac*, Serb, teacher, *Boris Žapkar*, Slovenian, teacher of arts and others who did not turn to the CHC. Some of these teachers could have solved their problem if the Croatian government con-validated (legally recognised) the length of their working

service during RSK. At the same time the Croatian media was full of information on lack of teachers in Knin.

Dušanka Marić, married to a Croat, upon her return in January 1996 started looking for a job. At the Office of the Government's Appointee for Knin Region she was told that they did not employ Serbs. Similar happened to Dušanka Jankelić, a Montenegrin, post clerk. There was no job for her although people from Šibenik travelled to work at Knin post office every day. The CHC received an official answer that for D. Jankelić there was no place in the Croatian Post Offices as long as there were "*Croats without job*".

Jandre Jejina, Božidar Zunjić, Božo Čimbur and Momir Novaković, all Serbs and a married couple Dobrijević, wife Croat and husband Serb, in the midst of 1996 were dismissed with an explanation that they were of Serb ethnicity or from mixed marriages. Ljuba Gvozden, Serb, dentist, fired on May 31, 1996. Iris Vasiljević, Croat, lawyer who worked for 12 years at the Municipality Office of Real Estate Registry. The explanation for her dismissal was threefold: "*Her mother is a Serb, her husband is a Serb and they stayed in Knin during the Serb rebellion.*"

National exclusiveness and a racist attitude on behalf of the local (and the state) government was exercised in thousands of other cases. Anica Vukadin failed to receive financial aid for reconstruction of her houses. She remained at her house in Vrbnik. When the Croatian Army entered the village she was advised to take temporary refuge at the UNCRO camp. When she returned after tenth days she found only basement of her burned house. She filed the request for reconstruction which was accepted but she was told that "such cases" would come to consideration after rebuilding of all Croatian houses. She has been a subtenant so far.

Conclusion

The Military and Police Operation "Storm" reintegrated a part of the so-called Republic of Serb Krajina (later on under the UN protection named Sector North and South) into a territorial and constitutional and legal system of the Republic of Croatia. 200,000 Croatian soldiers and policemen took part in the operation, together with soldiers of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army and HVO (Croatian Defense Council). All these troops attacked these areas simultaneously from 31 directions. The operation started on August 4, 1995, at 5 a. m. and officially ended on August 7, 1995 at 6 p. m. According to the official statistics the Croatian side had 211 dead and around 1, 500 wounded persons.

Serb Army numbered (together with the units in the UN Sector East) between 37,000 and 41,000 soldiers. Around 200,000, at least 180,000 civilians left the region during the operation in the region of the UN Sector North and South. They left together with soldiers. The total loss on the Serb side is unknown. The Republic of Croatia acknowledged 960 victims both in this and in the military— police operation "Flash" exercised on May 1-2, 1995.

Serb victims were significantly more numerous. Around 600 civilians and an undetermined number of soldiers were killed either during the operation (some of them were killed after their surrender or arrest) or in the following 100 days after the operation in the region of the former UN Sector South. The Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights published the names of 410 victims in this report and indicated that more than 100 civilians were either killed or missing. The exact date has not been discovered as yet.

Besides the fact that many civilians and military persons were unnecessarily killed during and after the operation "Storm", this region of the former UN sectors was systematically destroyed. Several tens of thousands houses (at least 22,000 according to the UN report, although burnings continued after publishing of this figure) were burned and mined. The houses that were not destroyed, were completely devastated. All Serb mobile property was looted, the whole cattle fund was destroyed, as well as public utilities and infrastructure, and all memorials/monuments from the WW II. Industrial plants and factories, all schools, cultural objects, libraries fund etc were also destroyed.

Churches remained whole except for the mined ones on August 23, 1996 in Karin and some other which were damaged. The interior of the majority of churches was devastated, inventory destroyed, precious objects and church books taken away.

About 9,000 mostly elderly citizens remained to live in the region after the military operation "Storm". In the meantime, 30.000 persons returned to both of these former UN Sectors, 90 percent of mostly elderly people. Many of them are not allowed to return to their houses because their houses are temporarily occupied by Croats settlers from other parts of Croatia, from B&H and Janjevo from Kosovo. Some of their houses

are burned or devastated in such a way that they can not be used for living without a proper reconstruction.

The standard of living in these areas was brought 50 years back, thus in many settlements there was no possibility for return and normal life. The Croatian government tolerates the continuous violence against the members of Serb minority and refuses to help them to rebuild their farms and houses. At least 34 persons were lightly or heavily wounded in the period from the beginning of 1996 until February 1999 in this region.

The Croatian government refuses to release data on killed or missing persons for whom there is also a presumption that they were killed and buried in secret places. The Government does not want members of Serb minority to return in a greater number in order not to spoil ethnically cleansed picture made by the military operation. At the same time the Croatian government does not comply with its own decisions and promises given to either Croatian or international public regarding the return of the Serb refugees, the return of their property, the aid for rebuilding their houses and solving all their other problems.

According to the CHC fact-findings the Croatian military and the police in this region violated the International Humanitarian Law. However, the CHC has not been dealing with persons who committed or were held responsible for war crimes. This right and obligation belongs to the capacity of the Croatian highest state authorities as well as to the ICTY in the Hague.

Recommendation

Based on this Report (and other specialised reports on human rights violations in the reintegrated regions) the CHC should demand that the Croatian government primarily apply the Constitutional and legal orders as well as orders from international documents which the Government has already ratified in order to change the situation in this field.

Comment

Department for the most severe human rights violations had not prepared such documents before because it had to deal with incidents and human rights violations of all residents in the region on a daily basis. However, numerous reports on fact-finding missions regarding the issue partly presented in this report were published. Due to the fact that violations of human rights have continued in a drastic way, we felt an obligation to warn the public by issuing this report.

Civilians Killed During and After Military Operation "Storm"

(former UN Sector South)

Notes

1. These are the names of civilians killed during and after military operation "Storm" (started on August 4, 1995, at 5.00 in the morning) in the former UN Sector South, whose names the CHC has registered and investigated before the end of the year 1998. The list is not final!
2. At the end of the list there are the names of civilians who were murdered in different ways in the following years, between 1996, and 1999.
3. Along with the 410 killed during the military operation "Storm", by the end of 1995, the names of 24 people that were killed by various unknown means between 1996, and 1999, can be found at the end of this report.
4. Only 5 or 6 names on this list are questionable, but even if they were omitted, the suffering would not loose any of its weight.

I. Benkovac

Biljane Donje

1. Nikola VUKAŠIN, (m), Serb, called "Niko", Trljuge; he came back to the village from the refugee line and was murdered. The place of his burial is unknown.

*Biljane Gornje*¹

- 2.-3. Aleksa (Dmitar) MILIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1937 and Jeka MILIĆ, (f), Serb, born Gagić, burnt in their own house.

Brgud

4. Milica GRAOVAC, (f), Serb, shot in the head and throat in her house, in the living room. Found dead on the September 12, 1995. Buried on the graveyard in Brgud.

1 N. N., (?) July 21, 1998, near church "Sv. Đurđe", thrown human bones were found. It is unknown to whom they belong. It is possible they are from an already existing grave. (?) The CHC Activists didn't organize the analysis of the found bones.

5. GRAOVAC, (f), killed with *M. Graovac* in front of the house. The place of burial is unknown. The body has disappeared.

Dobropoljci

6. Petrovka (Petar) KUŽET, (f), Serb, born on 1960, an ill person. She was burnt together with her house on unknown day.

Jagodnja Gornja

7. Vlado (Đeko) MARIČIĆ, (m), Serb, around 50 years old, stayed in the village. Four months later he went to Biograd on the coast to get his personal documents, he got killed in Kokin-town. The corpse was not buried for 15 days.

Korlat

8. Stevan CUPAČ, (m), Serb, stayed in the village. Local people from the nearby village Kula Atlagić, Croats, claimed that Croatian soldiers killed him.

- Kula Atlagić

9. Ljubica STEGNAJIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1920, found dead in the well on August 21, 1995, around 6.00 a. m. The day before she was alive. (Two armed men in civilian clothes threatened them)

Ostrvica

10. Milivoj (Janjo) ATLAGIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1940, stayed in the house with his mother. He went to Varivode and disappeared.²

Plastovo

11. Dalibor DOBRIJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1973, is a student from Belgrade. He was visiting his relatives. Wounded on the August 4, 1995, during the bombarding of the village. He had died before he came to Kistanje. The place of burial is unknown.
12. Mile DOBRIJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, wounded during the bombarding on August 4, 1995. He died in a hospital.

II. Donji Lapac

Begluci

13. Rade RAĐENOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1915, killed. The place of burial is unknown.

Birovača

14. Milan MRĐEN, called "Mile", (m), Serb, born in 1931. He was killed after the military operation "Storm". The place of his burial is unknown.

2 He was probably killed because two men in black uniforms killed two male persons in Varivode. These two men were unidentified and buried in Knin.

15. Dane OBRADOVIĆ, called "Daniša", (m), Serb, born in 1907, without hand. He was killed and the place of burial is unknown.

Brezovac Dobroselski

16. Milutin MEDIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1916/17, a mentally ill man. He was shot in the back. He was found on September 6, 1995 and half-buried in the village.³

Brotinja

- 17.-19. Dušan DRČA, called "Dujo" and a son and a mother. They were killed while driving on the truck near Bosanski Petrovac. The plane without marks bombarded the truck.⁴

Dabašnica

20. Darinka VEJIN, called "Dara", (f), Serb, born around 1910. She was ill and disabled person. She was burnt with the house.

Dobroselo

21. Milan (Dane) MEDIA, (m), Serb, born in 1945. He stayed in the village. He was killed 4 or 5 days after the military operation "Storm". The place of his burial is unknown.

Doljani

22. Marko ORELJ, (m), Serb, born around 1930. He was found dead in a well a few days after the military operation "Storm".

Donji Lapac

23. Milan BRKIĆ, (m), Serb, killed. The corpse was buried with the stones near Korenica.
24. Dražen KORITNIK, (m), Croat, born on December 16, 1940, a doctor. He was most certainly killed on August 7, 1995 in a private restaurant in D. Lapac, then buried.⁵ He was seen alive that day around 9.00 a. m. The place of burial is unknown.

Gornji Lapac

25. Gojko (Jela and Nikola) BAJIĆ, (m), Serb, born on November 22, 1932, He was killed. The body disappeared. (He lived in Boričevac, a witness from that village saw a body of a dead man).
25. Jeka VIGNJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1935, killed.

Kunovac

26. Ilija (Ilija) DAMJANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1909. He stayed in the village. Killed, but it is unknown if he was killed with armed weapon on purpose or during the shelling of Gračac.

3 At the end of the August 1995 witnesses saw him alive on the Croatian television program in Dobroselo, Donji Lapac.

4 It was probably the Serbian plane but it is possible the plane was Croatian.

5 Six people were killed in this restaurant and then burnt. One witness saw the body of the man with beard and sport shoes. This description is adequate to the description of the missing doctor Koritnik.

Kupirovo

27. Nikola TRNINIĆ — CVJETKOVIĆ, called "Nine Pavlov", (m), Serb. He was killed after the military operation "Storm". On the November 20, 1995 he was not buried yet. The whereabouts of his burial is unknown.

Lapačka Korita

28. Saja DELIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1904. The members of the 5th Corps of the Army of the Bosnia and Herzegovina beat her up. It is unknown who took her to Knin where she died on December 21, 1995. She was buried on the cemetery in Knin without the name.

Lička Kaldrma

29. Savo BURSAĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1911 and killed on August 24, 1995. He was buried on the meadow not far from the house. The house was burnt.
30. Mićo PERIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1934, Kruškovac, a pensioner. He was killed in the vicinity of his house. The body disappeared.
31. Mika ZORIĆ, called "Milica", (f), Serb, born on 1925, in village Zavlaka. Burnt on August 10, 1995, in her house.

Mišljenovac

32. Milan RADMANOVIĆ, called "Mile", (m), Serb, born in 1926. He was killed after the military operation "Storm".
33. Dušan RAŠETA, called "Dude", (m), Serb, born around 1929, killed. The place of burial is unknown.

Obljaj

34. Boja DIVJAK, (f), Serb, found dead in the well.
35. Milka DIVJAK, (f), Serb, found dead in the well.
36. Soka DIVJAK, (f), Serb, found dead in the well.⁶

Opačica Dolina

37. Mane BLANUŠA, called "Maniša", (m), Serb, born in 1920. He stayed in the village. He was present at the gathering place in Zadar. He was found dead in the well, around October 17, 1995.

Oravac

- 38.-41. Stevo AJDUKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1937; Ruža, (f), born in 1920 and Rade BIBIĆ, (m), born in 1919, Serbs and Marko (Marko) ILIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1940. Croatian army shot them on August 7, 1995, around 15.00 in the village. The place of their burial is unknown.⁷

6 Persons under the numbers 34 and 35 are sisters who never got married. They lived together on the family estate.

7 T., born in 1947, ran from the scaffold.

*Srb*⁸

42. Manda CIGANOVIĆ, (f), Croat, stayed at house. She had a broken leg. She was burnt with the house.
43. Soka KALINIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1915, an ill and disabled person. She was burnt in the house.
44. Mićo (Antonijo) PERIĆ, (m), Serb, born on March 22, 1930, a pensioner. He was killed on August 8, 1995. The place of the burial is unknown.
45. Jovo REPAC, (m), Serb, born in 1948, He was burnt with his house.
46. Đorđe ŠEVO, called "Đoko", (m), Serb, killed in his house and then burnt in it.
47. Dragan TRBULIN, (m), Serb, born in 1939, killed and buried at the unknown place.
48. Đuro VUJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1940, a teacher. He was killed and the place of burial is unknown.

Tiškovac Lički

49. Dušan BABIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1912, stayed at the house. He disappeared after the Croatian army came into the village (August 7, 1995). Witnesses claim he was killed.

III. Drniš*Biočić*

50. Ljubomir (Krst) ĐAPIĆ, called "Ljubo", (m), Serb, born in 1933. He was killed at "Nenadić pump" on the entry to Knin.
51. Mile LUNIĆ, called "Mijo", (m), Serb, born on 1928, in hamlet Tatomiri. He was killed.
52. Pejo LUNIĆ, (m), Serb, born on 1957, in hamlet Tatomiri, killed.
53. Špiro LUNIĆ, (m), Serb, born on 1931, in hamlet Tatomiri, killed.⁹

Bobodol

54. Vlado JANKOVIĆ, (m), unknown nationality, killed on August 8, 1995 and buried in the sand near the village.

8 In the Serbian refugee line nearby Srb,[?] MALENICA, Croatn, around 27 years old, was killed too — strong body, from surroundings of Zadar. According to witnesses statement a Serb refugee captured (?) Malenica and took him with him, because he heard his son, a Serbian soldier, was captured by the Croatian army, so he planned to exchange them. Allegedly, nearby Srb a Serbian refugee heard his son is alive and free, he ordered prisoner Malenica to get out from the vehicle and then shot him near road. The CHC claimed for the certificate of MALENICA's death or disappearance from the official authorities, but didn't get any answer. Nevertheless, the CHC knows that after the police had received these information about Malenica, they searched the spot where Malenica was allegedly shot and found and took away somebody's bones. It has never been announced whose bones were they.

9 Mile, Pejo and Špiro Lunić, were killed on the tractor nearby UNCRO camp, on the entry to Knin.

Cerovac

55. **Branislav (Ilinko) DOKIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1963. He was a disabled person and did not serve the army. During the military operation "Storm", the Croatian army took him outside the house and killed him.
56. **Dušan DOKIĆ**, called "Duško", (m), Serb, born in 1965 (Branislav's brother). He was ill. The Croatian army took him too and promised to bring him back in two or three days.

Drniš

57. **Milan JOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born on May 2, 1935 and killed on August 6, 1995.
58. **Nikola SUBOTA**, (m), Serb, born in 1945. The corpse was found on August 6, 1995. He was buried in Šibenik.
59. **Grozdana ŠEPELJ**, (f), unknown nationality, born in 1958. The corpse was found on August 6, 1995 in Drniš. She was buried in Šibenik.

Kadina Glavica

60. **Milka PAVLOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, burnt in her house.

Miočić

61. **Mara MILETIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in 1934. She was killed and burnt in the house. (Two women were with her, but they ran through the window when the Croatian army came into the house)

Parčić

62. **Draginja VUKŠA**, (f), Serb, killed. The corpse was found in the well.

Trifunovići

63. **Tode GRUBIŠIĆ**, (m), Serb, an old man. He was killed in the house and was not buried for the long time.

Žitnić

64. **Marija PUŠKAR**, (f), Serb, born in 1928. She was buried in Šibenik.

*IV. Gospić**Barlete*

65. **Mile RADMANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1910. After the military operation "Storm" he was in Gospić. He was killed and his head was cut off.

Medak

66. **Marija GRBIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in 1913, a disabled person. She was killed and her corpse disappeared.
67. **Dara MAODUŠ**, (f), Serb, around 70 years old, killed nearby the house.

68. Jeka MAODUŠ, (f), Serb, around 81 years old, killed. Her corpse disappeared.
69. Petar OKLOBDŽIJA, (m), Serb, more than 70 years old, killed. The place of his burial is unknown.

*Mogorić*¹⁰

70. Milko ĐAKOVIĆ, called "Ljubičić", (m), Serb, around 90 years old. He was killed in front of the house. His head was found behind the house.
71. Đuro (Branko) RADAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1952. He was killed in the house by bullet.
72. Janko (Jovo) MILOJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1938, killed, probably during the military operation "Storm".
73. Dane RADEKA, (m), Serb, born in 1920. He was killed in Ploče on August 5 or 6, 1995. The place of his burial is unknown.
74. Rade (Stojan) VURDELJA, (m), Serb, born in 1929. He was killed during the military operation "Storm". The place of his burial is unknown.

Ostrvica

75. Miljka (Nikola) DIMIĆ, born in Radaković on November 10, 193. She was killed in the village.

*Papuča*¹¹

76. Milan TRAVICA, (M), Serb, 70 years old. The place of his burial is unknown.

Pavlovac Vrebački:

77. Đuro DRAGOSAVAC, called "Đuđa", (m), Serb, born in 1945. He was killed between Ploče and Udbina. The place of burial is unknown.
78. Nikola DRAGOSAVAC, called "Nikica", (m), Serb, born in 1942. He came back from Dobroselo because of his mother-in-law. He was killed near Udbina and buried in Zadar.
79. Dušan GRAOVAC, (m), Serb, killed near Udbina. He was buried at the cemetery in Zadar.

Ploča

80. Mika BANJEGLAV, called "Milka", (f), Serb, born in 1913. She was killed in her house. Before that she was maltreated and then scalped and massacred. The place of her burial is unknown.

Raduč

81. Petar (Dane) BJELOBABA, (m), Serb, born on October 17, 1947. During the military operation "Storm" he stayed in Raduč. He disappeared. Supposedly the corpse

10 The CHC's field teams registrate two unknown graves on the cultivated field in the village. On unknown day two persons were buried on the cultivated field. The graves are not marked.

11 In Papuča, on June 2, 1998, a human skeleton was found. It is fortified that it belongs to male person, but identity is still unknown.

found in the village Papuča, in 1998, is his, more likely because the Croatian army arrested him. Mr. Bjelobaba left with the Croatian army in the direction of Papuča.

82. Milan GLUMAC, (m), Serb, born in 1911, in Radučki Drenovac. He was found dead in the middle of October hanging in the stable.

V. Gračac

*Brvno*¹²

83. Nikola GUTEŠA, called "Nino", (m), Serb, found dead in the well on September 1995.

Deringaj

84. Mika JOVANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, old man. He stayed in the house and got killed. The corpse disappeared
85. Rade PETROVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1919, Gubačevo Polje, killed. The corpse disappeared.

Gračac

86. Marija BANJANIN, (f), Serb, 89 years old, a disabled person. She was found without head. He was seen last time on August 6, 1995, in front of the Police station in Gračac.
88. Stevan ĐEKIĆ, (m), Serb, killed in Gračac. He was buried in Zadar.
89. Dušan PERIĆ, (m), Serb, found dead around September 10, 1995, nearby house. Police buried him in Gračac, without informing his family.
90. Milka TOJAGIĆ, (f), Serb, killed in Gračac. She was buried in Zadar.

Ivanići

91. Ana IVANIĆ, (m), Serb, found dead on September 6, 1995, near a brook in the village. The bullet wounds on the right leg were found.

Kijani

92. Dane BOLTA, called "Reklić", (m), Serb, 90 years old. He was killed in the village. The place of his burial is unknown.
93. Sava BOLTA, called "Savica", (f), Serb, around 70 years old, killed. The place of burial is unknown.
94. Branko JELAČA, called "Đukančo", (m), Serb, around 67 years old, killed.
95. Marija JELAČA, (f), Serb, born in 1913. She operated her hipbone and had difficulties walking. She was burnt in the house.
96. Milica JELAČA, (f), Serb, born in 1927 or 1930. She was killed in the village.

12 *Pera Obradović*, (f), Serb, more than 80 years old. She was frightened to death in the collecting center in Zadar, after the military action "Storm".

97. Ana (Milica) JELAČA, (f), Serb, around 50 years old. She was deaf-and-dumb. She was killed and buried in the unknown place.
98. Smilja JELAČA, called "Minja", (f), Serb, around 90 years old. She was found dead in Pusto polje, near the rock. Her legs were broken.
99. Dušan KESIĆ, called "Dujas", (m), Serb, born in 1939. He was killed near the house.
100. Mileva KOLUNDŽIĆ, called "Damina", (f), Serb, around 70 years old, killed.
101. Danica SOVILJ, called "Vojkanova", (f), Serb, around 70 years old. She was killed on unknown day.
102. Mara SOVILJ, (f), Serb, around 75 years old. She was killed near the house.
103. Mira (Mara) SOVILJ, called "Skojevka", (f), Serb, around 50 years old. She was killed in the village.
104. Rade (Mara) SOVILJ, called "Braco", (m), Serb, born in 1947, killed.
105. Vlado (Mile) SOVILJ, called "Vlada", (m), Serb, born on November 27, 1931. He came back home from the refugee line and got killed in the center of the village. The place of his burial is unknown.

Kik

106. Soka PETKOVIĆ, called "Sokana", (f), Serb. She was shot on August 8 or 9, 1995, in front of her house. The house was set on fire. She was buried in a ditch near the house.
107. Branko ŽEGARAC, (m), Serb, born in 1912. He was burnt in his house on August 8 or 9, 1995.

Mazin

108. Đuro KONČAR, (m), Serb, born in 1935, Mazin no 58. He was killed in the village and buried in Gračac.

Nadvrelo

109. Milan (Stevo) MILANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1908 and killed on August 7, 1995 with a knife and then burnt in front of the house.¹³

Otrić

110. Branko GRBIĆ, (m), Serb, born on November 19, 1924. He was buried in the cemetery in Gračac.
111. Ilija VESELINOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on December 8, 1931. He was found dead in the vicinity of the road Gračac — Otrić.

Palanka

112. Dušan BRKIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1926. Croatian soldiers killed him on August 7, 1995. The corpse was burnt. He was buried in Gračac, on September 15 or 16, 1995.

13 The judge investigator *Ladislav Judnič* and an expert *Josip Dujella* wrote as a cause of death: "The stabbed wound in the belly in fact abdomen organs".

Prljevo:

113. Stana BOGUNOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1910, killed during (or after) the military operation "Storm". She was found dead on the New Year's eve in the vicinity of her house.
- 114.-115. Nikola STARČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, 80 years old, father and Simo (Nikola) STARČEVIĆ, (m), son, found killed after the military operation "Storm" in the vicinity of their house.

Rastičevo

116. Manda STARČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, around 80 years old, very sick person. She was killed in her house and buried in Gračac.

Rudopolje

117. Ilija KORDIĆ, (m), Serb, and
118. Stojan KORDIĆ, (m), Serb, brothers, found dead in the well. One of them was a disabled person without hands and fingers on both legs.¹⁴

Tomingaj

119. Branko BRKLJAČ, (m), Serb, around 70 years old, killed. The place of his burial is unknown.
120. Đuro MANDIĆ, (m), Serb, 81 years old. He was slaughtered (and massacred) in his backyard around August 20, 1995. Firstly he was buried in the backyard, then his body was moved to Gračac, under the number 387, but without name on it.

Zrmanja

119. Ilinka (Milica and Petar) BUDIMIR, (f), Serb, born in 1911, stayed at home. Between August 15 and 20, 1995 she was burnt together with her house.
120. Đuro ČANAK, (m), Serbia, 80 years old. He was killed at the end of September 1995. (His son Mirko died as a Croatian soldier).
121. Milka JOKIĆ, called "Mika", (f), Serb, around 80 years old. She was killed in the center of village. The corpse was found three months later in the nearby canal.
122. Gojko KOMAZEC, (m), Serb, born in 1938, killed on September 6, 1995, with three bullets in his stomach. That day he was seen in the Gračac police station.
123. Stevo LUKIĆ, (m), Serb, killed on August 20, 1995. He was buried near the river Zrmanja.
124. Boro MARČETIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1948, killed in August 1995. He was a disabled person. The place of his burial is unknown.
125. Milan (Smiljo) MARČETIĆ, (m), Serb, born on January 15, 1948, an ill person. Two Croatian soldiers took him out from the house on September 29, 1995, around 5.00 in the morning and they killed him with four bullets in the chest, 150 meters far from the house. The mother was watching the execution. He was buried at the local cemetery.

14 Their mother hung herself after their death.

126. Vlado (Marija and Šura) MILANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on October 23, 1936. Croatian soldiers killed him. He was buried in the house.
127. Dušan ŠUICA, (m), Serb, born in 1927. He was killed on September 29, 1995, around 17.0, in hamlet Milanovići — 10 soldiers dressed in the bulletproof vests did it. He was buried at the local cemetery.

VI. Knin

Biovičino Selo

128. Jakov MALBAŠA, (m), Serb, born on April 14, 1930, killed. He was buried in Zadar.
129. Obrad POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, killed on August 7, 1995 in Biovičino Selo.
130. Tode ŠORGIĆ, (m), Serb, who managed to escape under the fire opened by Croatian soldiers on August 7, 1995. He was found dead in the middle of October 1995 in the well, in neighboring village. He was forcibly taken from his house. The signs of struggle were seen in the house. There was a shoe left beside the bed.¹⁵

Cetina

131. Ana BARIŠIĆ, (f), Serb, more than 90 years old. She was killed ten days after military operation "Storm".
132. Sava BARIŠIĆ, (f), Serb, around 68 years old. She was burnt in her house after the military operation "Storm".
133. Stana KURUBSA, (f), Serb, born in 1920. She was killed ten days after the military operation "Storm". The location of her burial is unknown.

Čučevo

134. Stevan KUTLAČA, (m), Serb, born in 1937. He was killed in front of his house on a second or third day after the military operation "Storm". The location of the burial is unknown.

Dvorske

135. Mirko TOŠIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1927, killed on August 5, 1995. He was buried in the village.

Ervenik

136. Milan BALIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1916. He was found dead in a hole full with water.

15 Croatian soldier *Ivica Pešut*, born on April 8, 1963, from 134 regiment, captured *Obrad Popović* and *Tode Šorgić* from Biovičino Selo, who stayed at their houses. Other soldiers came across and opened fire, even though soldier Pešut yelled at them not to shoot. Soldier Pešut and a civilian *Obrad Popović* were killed and *Tode Šorgić* managed to escape. On the place of burial site of soldier *Ivica Pešut*, the 134th regiment raised a memorial on which is soldier Pešut called "*Croatian knight*".

137. Bogdan KOVAČEVIĆ, called "Boško", (m), Serb, born in 1908. He disappeared after the military operation "Storm".¹⁶
138. Obrad MRDALJ, (m), Serb, born in 1930. He was burnt in his house during the military operation "Storm". He died from burns eight days later in hospital in Zadar.
139. Sava ŽEŽELJ, (f), Serb, born in 1920. She was slaughtered on August 8, 1995, in Ervenik, near the road.

*Golubić*¹⁷

140. Mara BIJELIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1930, wife.
141. Petar BIJELIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1930, husband.
142. Dušan DAMJANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1930, husband.
143. Đuka DAMJANOVIĆ, (f), Serb, wife.
144. Boško, (Petar) VUKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1938.
145. Milica VUKOVIĆ, called "Mika", (f), Serb, born in 1927, wife.
146. Tanasije VUKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1935, husband.

Members of 3. Regiment of 4. Brigade in Croatian army extra judicially executed them by shooting in Radljevac (between Knin and Plavno), in front of the house no. 84, whose owner is Đuro Dobrijević. The house was set on fire after the execution, and bodies were collected 25 days later.

147. Glišo ČUČAK, (m), Serb, born in 1937, (?). He was shot on August 6, 1996, in his house. He was buried on August 16, 1995 at the cemetery in Knin. The grave is not marked.
148. Milka GRUBIĆ, (f), Serb, around 60 years old. She was shot on August 6, 1995, in the house of Glišo Čučak, where she found shelter while Croatian army was entering the village. She was buried at the cemetery in Knin without marks.
149. Đuro JERKOVIĆ, called "Nine", (m), Serb, born in 1926. He was killed (slaughtered) on August 6, 1995 in his backyard. His corpse was buried 10 days after under the sign "NN" at the cemetery in Knin.
150. Jovan JERKOVIĆ,¹⁸ (m), Serb, born in 1936. He was killed on August 6, 1995, nearby house of Đ. Jerković. He was buried anonymously 11 days later, at the cemetery in Knin.
151. Zorka KABLAR, (f), Serb, 80 years old. She was killed around August 15, 1995. The corpse was found on September 8, 1995.
152. Tode MARIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1929, (?). He was killed on August 6, 1995, at Kesić well, in the village.

16 There are indications that he was killed in Mokro Polje, and the body was later thrown into the grave of family Trivić in Knin.

17 Townsmen, Serb soldiers, who intended to surrender, Željko (Čedo) Marić, (m), and Branko Milivojević, (m), born in 1956, Serbs were killed too. It is unknown where is the location of their burial.

18 First group of soldiers that came into the village wounded him in arm after what they gave him medical help and left the village. The second group killed him.

153. Jeka OPAČIĆ, (f), Serb, around 80 years old. She was killed on August 6, 1995, on the road nearby her house. She was buried on August 28, 1995, in Knin, without marks.
154. Nikola PANIĆ, called "Nikica", (m), Serb, born in 1935. His head was found 50 meters from the body.¹⁹
155. Branko RADINOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1920. He was shot on August 6, 1995.
156. Maša RADUJKO, (f), Serb, born in 1927, wife and
157. Nikola RADUJKO, called "Nikica", (m), Serb, born in 1925, husband. They were killed on August 6, 1995 from a fire gun in their house.
158. Vaso RADUJKO, (m), Serb, born in 1918. He was shot on August 5/6, 1995.
159. Milica ŠLJIVAR, called "Mika", (f), Serb, born in 1936. She was a disabled person in a wheel-chair. Unidentified Croatian soldier shot her in head with a gun and her head burst. She was buried on August 16, 1995, in Knin, without marks.
160. Vaso VASIĆ, (m), Serb, born on 1922, in hamlet Radinovići. He was shot on August 6, 1995 in his yard.

Gošići

161. Dušan BORAK, (m), Serb, born in 1937, (Buried in Knin under no. 544)
162. Grozdana (Vasilj) BORAK, (f), Serb, born in 1920, (549)
163. Kosara (Todo) BORAK, called "Kosa", (f), Serb, born in 1920, (546)
164. Marija (Savo) BORAK, (f), Serb, born in 1915, (550)
165. Milan BORAK, (m), Serb, (545)
166. Milka BORAK, (f), Serb, born in 1920.
167. Savo (Vasilj) BORAK, (m), Serb, born in 1925, (548)
168. Vasilj (Vasilj) BORAK, called "Vaso", (m), Serb, born in 1927, (547).

Persons under no. 161 to 165 and 167 to 168 were killed in their houses or yards on August 27, 1995.

169. Gojko LEŽAJIĆ, (m), Serb, killed on August 11, 1995, in front of his house.

Grubori

170. Jovan (Damjan) GRUBOR, (m), Serb, 73 years old. He was burnt on August 25, 1995 in his house.
171. Jovo GRUBOR, (m), Serb, born in 1930. He was slaughtered on August 25, 1995 at the meadow while he was guarding caws. (Two caws and a dog were shot too.)
172. Marija GRUBOR, (f), Serb, born in 1905. She was killed and then burnt in her house on August 25, 1995. (*Jovo Grubor's mother*).
173. Milica GRUBOR, called "Mika", (f), Serb, born in 1944. She was shot on August 25, 1995, near house.

19 Soldiers played football with his head.

174. Miloš GRUBOR, (m), Serb, born in 1915. He was killed on August 25, 1995 with two bullets in his head and back. The body was found in pyjamas, near bed, in a blood pool.
175. Đuro KARANOVIC, (m); Serb, born in 1950. He was shot on August 25, 1995. The face was smashed.
176. Petar (Dušan) VIDOVIĆ, (m), around 55 years old. He was killed on August 19, 1995. He was buried in Knin.
177. Stevan VIDOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1945. He was killed at the end of August, 1995, while he was bringing water to a donkey.

Ivoševci

178. Boško GRČIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1937. He stayed in the village and he was seen alive on August 6, 1995 at 15, 30. He disappeared. Victims claim Boško was killed, but the place of burial is unknown.
179. Dušan KOROLIJA, (m), Serb, born in 1949. He was found dead in the well on September 12, 1995.
180. Gojko KOROLIJA, (m), Serb. He was burnt in the house.
181. Milica KOROLIJA, (f), Serb, born in 1912. She was killed few days after the military operation "Storm". The location of her burial is unknown.
182. Milka KOROLIJA, (f), Serb, born in 1907. She was killed on August 9, 1995 in her house.
183. Ruža MANOJLOVIĆ,²⁰ (f), Serb, born in 1937, (wife) and
184. Stevo MANOJLOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1940 (husband). They were killed together in the community store on August 6, 1995, in the evening hours, in Mokro Polje, where they found refuge. They were massacred, then burnt. Forty days later they were buried in Knin, without names.
185. Savo (Jošo) RAŠIĆ, (m), Serb, 78 years old, without arm. He was found dead (the body started to decompose) on September 21, 1995 on his bed in Mali Ivoševci.
186. Jovan RELIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1924. He was killed on August 8, 1995, then burnt on the stairs in a wine cellar. Wine cellar is located below the house. He was buried in the garden, near house.
187. Mirko (Petar) ŠTRBAC, (m), Serb, born in 1910. He was deaf-and-dumb and he could hardly move. He was killed in house and then burnt.
188. Mirko (Vaso) ŠTRBAC, (m), Serb, born in 1943, a disabled person. He was not in an army and he stayed at home. Mirko was found dead in a pool in Cerovac, nearby Relić (Ivoševci).
189. Mirko ŠTRBAC, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. The corpse, which started to decompose, was found in the yard on September 12, 1995.

20 Ruža Manojlović was firstly raped in front of her husband Stevo. After they taken away their remains at the place of liquidation remained Ruža's right arm.

190. Manda TIŠMA, (f), Serb, around 65 years old. She was shot on August 9, 1995, in front of the house. Soldier *Željko Šunjerga* killed her.²¹ He was released from charges at the County Court in Zadar.
191. Ilija VUJASINOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 75 — 80 years old. He was killed a few days after the military operation "Storm". His head was found in a pigsty, few meters away from the body.
192. Jovan (Janjo) VUJASINOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1942, from Vujasinovići, killed on August 6 near Kistanje.

Kakanj

- 193.-194. Uroš OGNJENOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1928 and Uroš ŠARIĆ, (m), Serb, born on September 5, 1920. They were killed on August 18, 1995 in the evening. Three men, two of them in Croatian army uniforms, killed them. They were buried in Zadar, under no. 445 and 446. (*Mirko* and *Radoslav* OGNJENOVIĆ were wounded).
195. Danica ŠARIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 193, killed. Around August 10, 1995 her body was thrown in the water cistern. She was taken out from there and buried in the garden.
196. Vojin ŠARIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1910, shot in the chest, around August 10 and thrown in the water cistern.

*Kistanje*²²

197. Stana BEZBRADICA, killed in the house.
198. Jovanka BOKUN, (f), Serb, stayed in the village. She was found dead on December 13, 1995.
199. Milan JOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1910, found dead on August 7, 1995. He was buried in Šibenik.
200. Stevan KRNETA, (m), Serb, born in 1914, killed. He found shelter in the chapel near church.
201. Dušan LALIĆ, called "Dući", (m), born in 1945 or '46, killed on the road to Stara Straža.
202. Joka MAŽIBRADA, (f), Serb, around 90 years old. She was found shot through in the house cellar. She was buried in Knin, under no. 543.²³
203. Manda MAŽIBRADA, (f), Serb, born in 1910, a disabled person. She was killed on August 7, 1995. They hung to the metal rods for grapevine beside the house. She was stabbed, too. She was buried in Šibenik.

21 *Željko Šunjerga* "...he met her in the village and she kept her hand under the apron and he thought she had a gun in the hand..."

22 International organizations and the CHC registered two killed unknown men near monument in Kistanje, the corpse of unknown man and a female crumbled corpse on the entry to Kistanje, two and a half months after the military operation "Storm".

23 A daughter received a number under which she was buried allegedly. During the exhumation she wasn't found under the given number, even though several persons were buried under that number.

204. Slobodan (Milan) ŠTRBAC, (m), Serb, born in 1959. Slobodan stayed in the house. He told everybody else to stay in his houses. He was killed and the place of burial is unknown.
205. Savo (Nikola) TRAJIVUK, (m), Serb, born in 1944. He stayed in the house. The place of burial is unknown.

*Knin*²⁴

206. Nikola ARULA, (m), Serb, killed on August 5, 1995.
207. Sava BEŠEVIĆ, (f), Serb, killed on August 6/7, 1995.
208. Aleksandar BJELOBRK, (m), Serb, killed. He was buried on the cemetery in Knin.
- 209.-210. Ana JELIĆ, (f), born in 1907, and Ivan JELIĆ, (m), born in 1905, Croats. They were killed in their house on August 7, 1995.
211. Mišo MARKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1961, he was at home between 10.00 and 11.00 on Saturday, August 5, 1995. He was killed and buried without name.
212. Momčilo MARIJANOVIĆ, (m), Serb. He was killed from a grenade on August 5, 1995, nearby "Dinarka" in Knin.
213. Ana MILANKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, killed in the house. He was buried in Knin.
214. Lazar MILANKOVIĆ, called "Lazo", (m), Serb, killed in the house. He was buried in Knin.
215. Zagorka OGNJENOVIĆ, (f), Serb, killed. She was buried in Knin.
216. Miloš TODOR, (m), Serb, around 50 years old, stayed in Knin. He went to Žagrovići. He was found dead (killed) near road, a month later.
217. Jovan (Stevanija and Savo) TRESKAVICA, (m), Serb, born in July 13, 1942, a disabled person, a keeper in the firm "Dinarka". He was killed on August 5, 1995, before noon. Even though his wife was there, the location of his burial is unknown.
218. Dragica VUKŠA, (f), Serb, old between 90 and 95. She was found dead in the well on November 13, 1995.
219. Dmitar VUJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, shelled. Found dead in the hospital in Knin.²⁵

Kovačič

- 220.-221. Milan MILIVOJEVIĆ, called "Mile", (m), born in 1911, a father and Ilija (Milan) MILIVOJEVIĆ, called "Ile", born in 1933, a son, killed from fire

24 1. On August 4, 1995, around 9.00, the UN registered 15 unidentified dead bodies of men, women and children — on the main road in Knin. They were granated. (a few soldiers were found among dead bodies whose bodies were later taken out from plastic bags, then ran over with tanks or riddled with bullets.)
 2. On the entry to Knin 5 unidentified dead bodies between 30 and 70 years old, were found.
 3. Six men on tractor that were coming from Kosovo to Knin to surrender were killed. Four of them wore Republika Srpska's uniforms and they were shot.
 4. On Sunday, August 6, 1999, around 10.00, a truck was carrying a group of dead bodies. The blood was runing and "their brains were runing, too".
 5. In the same time a lot of blood was seen in front of police bulding.
 6. On the entry, near the bar, there were seven dead civilians. One of them — across the road — was in the uniform of Republika Srpska, etc.

25 A female dead body without head was registered in Knin.

weapon on August 7, 1995, in their house. Croatian soldiers in masked uniforms killed them. The bodies were taken on August 12, 1995. The location of their burial is unknown.

222. Nikola VUKMIROVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1953. During the military operation "Storm" he was hiding in the house of Šarić, near hospital in Knin. On Saturday, August 5, he went with a group of refugees to the UNCRO camp. One woman left her purse in the shelter and he came back to get the purse. He was arrested and executed.
223. Pajo VUKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. He was seen alive on August 6, 1995. It means he was killed on August 7, 1995. The place of his burial is unknown.

Mokro Polje

224. Ružica BABIĆ, called "Ruža", (f), Serb, born in 1926. She was killed on August 6, 1995, after 17.00, at the house doors. She was buried in unknown grave in Knin.
225. Sava (Spasenije) BABIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1913, shot. She was shot with two bullets on August 24, 1995 in "fičo", in front of the house. She was buried in Knin.
226. Milan (Rade) DEMIR, (m), Serb, born in 1942. He was killed on August 6, 1995, by a grenade from a rocket launcher, nearby house, where he was buried. His house was set on fire in the same time.
227. Jeka (Luka) KANAZIR, (f), Serbia, born in 1928, on August 17, 1995. She was thrown in so-called Pavlović's water cistern. Forty days later she was buried in Knin.
- 228.-229. Mirko (Stana and Obrad) POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1952, (son — mentally retarded) and Stana (Mile) POPOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1926, (mother). Two Croatian soldiers shot them in the house on August 7, 1995, around 15, 30. (in the same occasion *Obrad POPOVIĆ, a father and a husband was wounded*). They were buried on the meadow 800 meters from their house.
230. Stevan (Draginja) SUČEVIĆ, called "Stevo", (m), Serb, born in 1934, shot on August 9, 1995 on the road called Supleće — bullet in his back. Soldiers burnt him and his remains were taken to the cemetery in Knin 40 days later.

*Očestovo*²⁶

231. Savo ŠOLAJA, (m), Serb, an invalid person. He was burnt alive in the house on August 6, 1995. His house was first set on fire in the village.

Orlić

232. Vladimir (Petar) ČOLOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1934, killed. The location of his burial is unknown.
233. Todor MARIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1931. He was killed on August 13, 1995, at 14, 30 in front of his house. Three men in a yellow car, wearing army uniforms came to him. He was buried near house.

26 In Očestovo two unknown killed persons were buried. They were found near church in Pađeni.

234. Predrag (Đurđa) SIMIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1965. He was killed on August 6, 1995, around 16.00, in his yard. He wasn't a soldier because he refused it. He was in Serbian prison in Bruška, where "Captain Dragan" was in charge, for eight months. He was buried on August 9, 1995 in the yard near his house.

Oton

235. Milica KARANOVIC, (f), Serb, born on August 14, 1909. She was blind and ill. She stayed at home and was burnt in the house.

236. Nikola PAŠIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1948, shot from a gun behind the family house. His stomach was cut through and he was stabbed in the heart. He was buried in the garden.

237. Branko (Nikola) SUDAR, (m), Serb, born in 1937. He was killed in the yard, near well. His head was stroke with a gun or something else because the top of the head was picked. He was buried in the nearby well.²⁷

238. Ilija (Dmitar) SUDAR, (m), Serb, born in 1922. He was shot from a fire weapon in his yard on August 18, and found dead on August 24, 1995. He was buried on the meadow near road.

239. Marta VUJNOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1910. She was shot from a fire weapon on August 18, 1995, in the afternoon, nearby house. Her son *Jovan* buried her there.

240.-241. Marta (Mato) VUJNOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1905, a mother and Stevo (Marta) VUJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1939, a son, were shot from a fire weapon on August 18, 1995. Marija was massacred in the house and Stevo was massacred, too, in front of the house. They were found dead on August 21, 1995. The other son *Momčilo* found his mother's skull in the house on September 6, 1996.

242. Đuka ŽUNIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1910. He was killed on August 6, 1995, and thrown in the well.

Pađane

243. Marta ILIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1908. He was found dead in the house. (A rocket fired by Croatian army hit the house).

244. Milica SMUĐA, called "Mika", (f), Serb, born in 1923. Her head was cut off on August 6, 1995 and thrown in the well. Her body remained standing upright and leaned against the wall. The corpse decomposed and remained unburied.

245. Mirko ŠUPELJAK, (m), Serb, killed on August 6, 1995 and thrown up into water cistern. He was buried in Knin.

Plavno

246. Pero (Petar) BURSAC, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. He was killed in the garden.

247. Luka BOJANIĆ, (m), Serb, around 75 years old. He was killed in the nearby church and buried at the local cemetery.

27 On August 10 or 11, 1995, a witness found dead B. Sudar and a slaughtered goat in his house.

248. Joka (Spasenije) CVIJANOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1902, Cvijanovići — Plavno. She was found dead on November 25, 1995, around plum trees in the village Japalaci. She was buried at the cemetery in Zorici.
249. Milka DRAGIŠIĆ, (f), Serb, born in February 28, 1926. She was found dead on August 20, 1995 on the meadow nearby house. She was shot in the eyelid. She was buried in Knin.²⁸ (Donkey and two sheep were shot in her vicinity. One sheep had a telephone machine around the neck)
250. Lazo DUBAJIĆ, called "Major", (m), Serb, born in 1920. He was shot several times in front of his house. He was buried in the meadow nearby house.
251. Savo ĐURIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1942, a disabled person in a wheel chairs. He was thrown alive into the fire on August 6, 1995, around 18.00. Soldiers didn't allow his mother to save him from the fire. He was buried at the local cemetery.
252. Kuzman PAIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1900. He was killed in front of the house, even though he raised his hands as a sign of surrender. He was buried in the nearby meadow.
253. Petar PERIĆ, called "Pero" (m), Serb, born in 1920. He was killed (slaughtered) in front of his house while his wife was bagging soldiers not to burn the house of their son.
254. Branko RODIĆ, (m), Serb, around 65 years old. He was killed nearby the school. The corpse disappeared
255. Anđelka RUSIĆ, (f), Serb, around 43 years old, a mentally ill person. She was killed nearby the house of a forester Jovo Starčević.
256. Anđa RUSIĆ, (ž), Serb, 97 years old, killed in front of her house and buried in the nearby ditch.
257. Miloš (Marko) SAMARDŽIJA, called "Mile", (m), Serb, born on 1927, or 1928, in Pađeni. He was guarding sheep with people from Plavno in the mountains. He was seen "in the possession" of the Croatian police. He was found dead six days after military operation "Storm". He was shot on October 12, 1995. A dead sheep and a dog were found near him. They were also shot. He was buried at the nearby mountain hut.
258. Todor (Dane) SAVIĆ, called "Dušan", (m), Serb, born on October 22, 1908. He was cut — massacred in the shed. He was buried nearby the house. (Together with his neighbor Kuzman Paić).
259. Ramiz SLIJEPČEVIĆ, (m), Muslim, around 45 years old. When Croatian army was approaching him he raised his hands and said: "I am a Muslim". They answered him: "That is what we need" and shot him.
260. Milica STARČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1934, or 1935, a teacher. She was killed and the location of her burial is unknown.
261. Branko ŠIMIĆ, (m), Serb, born on 1949 in Karanovići. He was killed in the yard of his house. He was a mentally ill person. When Croatian soldiers entered the house, they took the watch from his hand and took Branko with them. *Vasilije's mot-*

28 Her husband Lazo Dragišić, b. 1919., and disappeared after August 13, 1995

her bagged soldiers to leave Branko because he is ill. They replied that they were taking him to the doctor but they killed him nearby the house. His mother buried him there with the help of the neighbors.

Polaća

262. **Ilinka CRNOGORAC**, (f), Serb, born in 1928. She was shot in the back on August 16, 1995 in her house. She was buried in Knin — line number 594. Her house was set on fire later.
263. **Mika CRNOGORAC**, (f), Serb, born in 1928 and killed on August 29, 1995. A Croatian soldier shot her.
264. **Mile (Stevo) DRAGIČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1933. He was found dead on December 28, 1995. A judicial expert stated the time of death "around five months ago". He was killed on August 5, 1995, around 10.00 at Kovačići.
265. **Nikola DRAGIČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born on 1935, in Turići and **Savo ČEKO**, (m), Serb, around 40 years old. They were killed on August 5, 1995, at 10.00 at the crossroad near Kovačići. They were driving on the tractor towards Knin while Croatian army fired at them.²⁹
266. **Đuka MIRKOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, an old woman. She was killed in the village.

Radljevac

267. **Jovan MARKELIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1937. He was killed on August 18, 1995. He was found dead on the street, in front of the house of *Branko Markelić in Donji Markelići*.
268. **Vojin TINTOR**, (m), Serb, killed in the village.

Ridane

269. **Milan BALIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1919. He was shot in his yard at the beginning of September 1995. His property was set on fire.

Rudele

270. **Mile (Petar) GRULOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born on March 10, 1946. He was killed on September 1, 1995 in Rudele. He was hung on the chain and a water bucket was on his head. He was found dead on November 1996 and buried in Kistanje.

Smrdelji

271. **Milan (Miloš) VRANJKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1941. He was shot in the village on August 6, 1995.
272. **Nikola (Dušan) VRANJKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in December 19, 1952. He was wounded on August 6, 1995 and he died in hospital in Šibenik. He was buried in Šibenik.
273. **Savo (Mirka) VRANJKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1936. The grenade killed him on August 6, 1995. The place of his burial is unknown.

²⁹ Mile and Nikola Dragičević and Savo Čeko, were driving on the tractor towards Knin. Four persons were with them. Witnesses claim that those persons ran after the fire was open from the tank. They assume they rescued themselves

*Strmica*³⁰

274. Mićo (Vojin) BAČKONJA, (m), Serb, around 40 years old, a mentally ill person. He was killed on August 5, 1995, and buried nearby house.
275. Jovica (Maro) BURSAĆ, (m), Serb, killed in the vicinity of the tunnel. He was buried in Knin.
- 276.–277. Anđa, (f), around 60 years old and Draginja DRAGAŠ, (f), around 65 years old, Serbs, (sisters), were burnt alive in the house ten days after the military operation "Storm".
278. Jeka KRIČKA, (ž), Serb, around 50 years old, a mentally ill person. He was killed in the village.
279. Đuro LOŠIĆ, (m), Serb
280. Jovanka (Maro) MIZDRAK, called "Joka", (f), Serb, 51 years old. She was killed on August 5, 1995 and buried in the meadow in Mizdrakovac, in the ditch made by a grenade.
281. Stevan (Ante) MIZDRAK, called "Stevo", (m), Serb, born in 1910. He was killed in front of his house near the main road Knin — Bosnia and Herzegovina, on August 5, 1995. The place of his burial is unknown:

*Varivode*³¹

282. Jovan (Vasilije) BERIĆ, called "Jovo", (m), Serb, born in 1920 and killed on September 28, 1995.
283. Jovan (Jandrija) BERIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1939. He was killed on September 28, 1995 around 17, 30 in the village.
284. Marija BERIĆ, (f), called "Mara", Serb, born in 1930. She was killed on September 28, 1995, in the village.
285. Marko (Golub) BERIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1913. He was killed on September 28, 1995, in the village.
286. Milka BERIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1924. She was killed on September 28, 1995 in the village.
287. Radivoj (Tomo) BERIĆ, (m), called "Rajko", Serb, born in 1926. He was killed in the village on September 28, 1995. (Husband of *Marija Berić*, under the number. 284.)
288. Špiro (Mile), BERIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1940. He was killed on September 28, 1995, in the village.
289. Dušan (Marko) DUKIĆ, (m), called "Dujo", Serb, born in 1937. He was killed in the village on the September 28, 1995.
290. Marija POKRAJAC, (f), Serb, born in 1911. She was killed in the village.

30 In one of the hamlet of Strmec, the CHC registered two unknown graveyards. After the military operation "Storm", at least two unknown persons were buried inside them in the meadow.

31 Three unknown civilians killed in Varivode have been registered: they were two men and a woman for whom is presumed that she was raped before she was killed.

291. Mark POKRAJAC, (m), Serb, born in 1911. He was killed on September 28, 1995, in the village.³²

Persons in black uniforms shot those nine persons from Varivode.

Uzdolje

292. Duja BERIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1920.

293. Janja BERIĆ; (f), Serb, born in 1931.

294. Stevo BERIĆ, (m), Srb, born in 1930.

295. Miloš ČOSIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1924.

296. Jandrija ŠARE, (m), Serb, born in 1934.

297. Krsto ŠARE, (m), Serb, born in 1930.

298. Milica ŠARE, (ž), Serb, born in 1922/23.

Three Croatian soldiers shot them in the village on August 7, 1995. They were ordered to sit and then they shot them.

299. Stana ŠARE, (f), Serb, born in 1915. She was burnt in the house.

Vrbnik

300. Đuro AMANOVIĆ, called "Đoko", (m), Serb, a civilian, born around 1925. He was killed during the military operation "Storm" in the center of village near the Social club. The corpse disappeared! (Members of the Croatian army).

301. Radovan (Mara and Špiro) AMANOVIĆ, called "Rade", (m), Serb, born September 20, 1957, a civilian, a disabled person. He was killed in the center of the village, near the Social club. The corpse disappeared! (Members of the Croatian army).

302. Lazo (Luka) DAMJANIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1933. He was killed on August 6, 1995. Three soldiers, two of them with long hair and "pony tails" took him out from the house. He was ill and he could hardly move. (His head was crushed, as well as jaw. His stomach was perforated and his legs were broken.)

303. Ilija DUJAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 29 years old. He was arrested and put in prison. He was beat up and transported to another prison. Allegedly he was killed during the transport and his dead body was thrown in the ditch in the village of Bobodol.

304. Mihajlo DUJAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1942. He stayed at home. He was put in prison and than beaten until he died.

305. Stevo KNEŽEVIĆ, (m), Serb, an old man. He was killed in the center of the village, near the Social club. The place of his burial is unknown.

306. Staka ŠKARIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1919, or 1920. She returned to her house from the refugee line. Very likely she was killed on August 7, 1995, in her restaurant. She was buried near the house.

307. Dušan VUKADIN, called "Duško", (m), Serb, born in 1947. He was killed near his house where he was buried as well. Before that he was beat up and on August 5, 1995, between 17.00 and 18.00 he was shot.

32 Persons killed in Varivode were buried in Knin, even though their relatives wanted to bury them with dignity on the local cemetery.

308. Savo VUKMIROVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 73 years old. He was burnt with his house. He was ill.

Zečevo

309. Janko ČAKIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1937. He was killed after the military operation "Storm", on August 18, 1995. He was shot in his house and then burnt together with the house.³³
310. Ljeposava MANDIĆ, (f), Serb, killed on August 8, 1995. Her corpse was on the road until August 29, 1995. She was raped. The place of her burial is unknown.
311. Vuk MANDIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1953. He was last time seen in the village on August 9, 1995, when Croatian army took him and killed him.

*Žagrović*³⁴

312. Obrad BOJANIĆ, (m), Serb, around 46 years old. He was killed in the village.
313. Jovo DMITROVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1936. He was killed on August 5, 1995, in the afternoon, in front of his house. He was buried in Knin, 21 days later.
314. Stevan DMITROVIĆ, called "Stevo", (m), Serb, born in 1943. He was shot five or six days after the military operation "Storm". He was buried in Knin, 21 days later.
315. Ika DONDUR, called "Đedika", (f), Serb, around 70 years old, Bradaši — Stara Straža, killed. (Croatian army)
316. Vera DONDUR, (ž), Serb, around 50 years old. Bradaši — Stara Straža, killed. (Croatian army)
317. Tode MILOŠ, (m), Serb. He was killed on the road to Gornji Žagrović.
318. Tode NONKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1914. He was hung.
319. Ilija PETKO, (m), Serb, born in 1950, a son and
320. Milka PETKO, (f), Serb, born in 1925, a mother. They were shot on August 6, 1995, around 16.00. They were found dead in Rašule.
321. Đuro RAŠKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1924. He was shot near his house. Croatian soldiers forced Anđa Rašković, a neighbor and *Mile Zelembaba* from Knin to bury him near his house, in the garden, near creek called Radljevac.
322. Đuro RAŠULA, (m), Serb, born in 1945, killed.
323. Đuro RAŠULA, (m), Serb, 38 years old. He was found dead on August 29, 1995.
324. Mićo RAŠULA, (m), Serb, around 45 years old. He was found dead on August 29, 1995.
325. Mile RAŠULA, (m), Serb, born in 1914, killed.
326. Miloš RAŠULA, (m), Serb, born around 1940, killed.
- Others from Rašule, were found dead in the bush on August 6, 1995.

33 *Zvonimir Lasan*, a Croatian soldier killed her. On February 28, 1996, he was illegally convicted to six years of imprisonment.

34 Two men, only wearing sleepers were lying dead near the bus station, first turn to the main road from Žagrovići. One of them was *Miloš Tode* while another was unknown. Some of them had cut of three fingers on their right hand.

327. Nikola ZELEMBABA, called "Nine", (m), Serb, born in 1921. He was killed on entrance to his house on August 6, 1995. First, he was wounded from fire gun and then stabbed with a knife. His son *Glišo* buried him near the house. Today there is the rubbish heap in that place.³⁵
328. Manda ZELIĆ, (f), Serb, around 70 years old. The shrapnel killed her.

VII. Korenica

Arapov Dol

329. Nikola BABIĆ, called "Nikan", born in 1928. A wood plank near the house killed him. He was not buried for 15 days.

Frkašić

330. Đuro ĆUPURDIJA, (m), Serb, around 80 years old. He lived in Belgrade. During the military operation "Storm" he was in the village where he was born. He was killed and then burnt in the house. He had "Parkinson's disease". Allegedly he was taken to Otočac and buried there.

Jošani

331. Mile RADAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, called "Rus", around 65 years old. He was killed two months later by a metal bar.

Kapela Korenička

332. Mara KRGA, (f), Serb, born in 1920, killed. Witnesses say she died from starvation.

Komić

333. Marija BRKLJAČ — UGARKOVIĆ, called "Mara", (f), Serb, born in 1921. She was burnt alive in the house on August 12, 1995, between 12.00 and 13.00.
334. Staka ĆURČIĆ, (f), Serb, 45 years old. She was killed on August 12, 1995.
335. Sava LAVRNIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1903. She was killed on August 12, 1995, a mother and
336. Petar (Savo) LAVRNIĆ, (m), Serb, 65 years old, a son were killed also on August 12, 1995. (Their house was burnt).³⁶
337. Mara MIRKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, a wife and
338. Rade MIRKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, a husband. They were killed on August 12, 1995.
339. Mika PAVLICA, (f), Serb, born in 1904, a blind person. She was burnt alive in the house on August 12, 1995.

35 Unknown persons physically maltreated his son *Glišo*. They were probably robbers, but armed. Soon after he died from injuries.

36 The CHC buried mother *Sava* and her son *Petar Lavrnić*, at the local cemetery in 1996.

340. **Mika SUNAJKO**, (f), Serb, born in 1915. She was killed on August 12, 1995, near Klapavica.
341. **Rade SUNAJKO**, (m), Serb, born in 1909. (Husband of *Mika Sunajko*) He was killed on August 12, 1995. at 13.00, near neighbor's house (*Gojko Mirković*) in Poljice. He was buried in the orchard.

*Korenica*³⁷

342. **Miroslava** (Ljubica and Ilija) **PETROVIĆ**, called "Mira" and "Mirjana", (f), Serb, born on July 4, 1947. She was killed around August 10, 1995. The place of her burial is unknown.³⁸
343. **Marta PRICA**, (f), Serb, around 80 years old. She was killed.
344. **Zdravko SOVILJ**, (m), Serb. He was shot on August 10, 1995, in Korenica. The place of her burial is unknown.³⁹
345. **Milivoj VRČEK**, (m), Croat, around 30 years old. He was shot on August 10, 1995, in Korenica. The place of his burial is unknown.

Ličko Petrovo Selo

346. **Petar BOBIĆ**, called "Pepa", (m), Serb, born in 1913/14. He was killed in front of the house. The place of his burial is unknown.
347. **Rade BOBIĆ**, (m), Serb, killed at the gas station.
348. **Zdravko CARIĆ**, (m), Serb, around 30 to 35 years old, killed. He was a refugee from Bosnia and Herzegovina. He was buried in front of one house.
349. **Nikola ORLIĆ**, (m), Serb. He was killed and buried in front of the house
350. **Oleg PAVLOVIĆ**, (m), Russian, born in 1951, a doctor. He was killed near the army base in Željva.
351. **Željko POTKONJAK**, (m), Serb, a refugee from Vrsta (Bosnia and Herzegovina). He was killed in Izačić.
352. **Marija VESELICA**, (f), Serb, an old woman. She was buried in the ditch made for whitewash, near the house.

Mutilić

353. **Nikola KOSOVAC**, (m), Serb, born in 1909. He hung himself from fear during the military operation "Storm". He was buried in Gračac.

Novo Selo

354. **Nedjeljko LEKA**, (m), Serb. He was killed near the church Saint Petar. The place of his burial is unknown.

37 At two locations in Korenica there were shootings of civilians and soldiers (in the town and in the village) registered. Soldiers from the UNCRO camp registered near their camp 21 civilians that were runing. After that a cross in Korenica showed up with 21 "NN" marks.

38 *Dužanka Keča* claims that soldiers took *Miroslava Petrović* from her house, pushed her into the car and took away her. Others claim she was taken to the cemetary and killed what means she was buried there as well and her grave is there under some cross without marks.

39 He registered at the UNCRO camp on August 6, 1995. He was handed over to the Croatian army just for a talk. He didn't return to the camp.

Pećani

355. Dane KASTIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1951. He was seen alive on August 10, 1995. The corpse was found on August 24, 1995, in the sitting position. His head was intact at first but later on it was crashed.

*Udbina*⁴⁰

356. Mićo RADMANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on July 8, 1932, killed. He was buried at the cemetery in Gračac.

Visuč

357. Rade (Božo) STOJKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1926. He disappeared. He was found dead at the end of 1995.

358. Momčilo ORLIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1934. He came back from the refugee line from D. Lapac to village to release the cattle. He was killed between Udbina and D. Lapac.

Vrelo

359. Anđelija PETRIČIĆ, called "Anđa", (f), Serb, born in 1908. She was killed eight days after the military operation "Storm".

*VIII. Obrovac**Krupa*

360. Stevo TRAVICA, (m), Serb, born in 1921. He was killed in the mountain Gostuša while he was guarding the cattle.

Golubić

361. Nikola DRAGIČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1930. He was killed in the woods of Gostuša.⁴¹

Nadvoda

362. Janja GROZDANIĆ, (f), Serb, around 80 years old. She was killed.

363. ?GROZDANIĆ, (f), (mother of Vaso Grozdanić), killed. Only her head was found. She was buried in the vineyard.

364. Jovan KRNJAJA, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. He stayed at home where he was killed.

365. Ilija ŠVONJA, (m), Serb, around 65 years old, killed.

40 A male person with cut veins was registered. It was probably a murder.

41 His sons were killed with him: Vlado and Čedo. Witnesses claim they hid from the Croatian army because they did not want to leave Croatia, while others say that his sons were in uniforms of Republika Srpska army and that is the reason why three of them were killed.

Zelengrad

366. Vujadin ČEPRNJA, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. He was found dead in front of the house on November 3, 1995.
- 367.-368. Mijat GAGIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1914, a husband and Miljka GAGIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1914, his wife. They were slaughtered a day after the military operation "Storm" at the entrance to their house. They were buried anonymously, under the numbers, in Gračac.⁴²

*Žega:*⁴³

369. Ratko KOVAČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 40 years old. He was killed on the mountain Gostuša.
370. Petar KOMAZEC, (m), Serb, around 60 years old, killed.
371. Zoran KOMAZEC, (m), Serb, around 50 years old, killed.
372. Dušan MILIĆ, (m), Serb, 56 or 57 years old and
373. Jovan MILIĆ, (m), Serb, around 62 years old (brothers). They stayed at home and got killed.
374. Petar MILIĆ, (m), Serb, 57 or 58 years old. He stayed at home and got killed
375. Todor MILIĆ, (m), Serb, around 64 years old. He stayed at home during the military operation "Storm" and got killed.
376. Zoran MILIĆ, (m), Serb, 58 or 59 years old. During the military operation "Storm" he stayed at home and got killed.
377. Marko PERIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1921. He was killed while he was guarding the cattle on the mountain Gostuša.
378. Stojan UŠLJEBRKA, (m), Serb, around 30 years old. He was wounded near Kruševo, arrested and then killed.

*IX. Otočac**Dabar*

379. Mićo ČUTURILO, (m), Serb, 83 years old He was killed by an axe in the village.
380. Anica (Lazo) VLAISAVLJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, 74 years old. She was shot at the entrance to her house.
381. Milan VLAISAVLJEVIĆ, called "Mikan", (m), Serb, 61 years old. He resisted the Croatian army. He was wounded and then shot in the mouth.

Doljani

382. Milka (Soka and Jovo) ČURČIĆ, (f), Serb, 83 years old. She was shot in front of her house.

42 Son Đuro, who lives in Ljubljana, for a year didn't manage to find out what happened to them and where they were buried.

43 In 1997, field activists of CHC 1997 registered remains of human skeleton nearby the keeper house at the entrance to the factory "TRIO".

383. Ranko GRBIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1953. He was killed on August 6, 1995, near the family house.
384. Danica (Dane) HRKALOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1912. She was burnt with the house.
385. Petar HRKALOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 56 years old. He was shot in front of his house.
386. Zorka HRKALOVIĆ, (f), Serb, 76 years old. She was killed in her house and buried in the garden, near the house.
387. Marija (Budo) JOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1941. She was found dead in her house.⁴⁴
388. Staka (Bačo) JOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1910. She was killed in her house and buried in front of it.
389. Jela MANDIĆ, (f), Serb, 83 years old. She burnt in her house.
390. Milan (Milica and Vlado) NARANČIĆ, (m), Serb, 43 years old. He was burnt in his house.
391. Stojan (Marija and Vlado) NARANČIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1953. He was shot near the cattle on the slopes of Mala Kapela.
392. Dušan (Milan) RUŽIĆ, (m), Serb, 64 years old. He was shot in front of his house.
393. Stojan (Mika and Vajo) VUKMANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1929. He was killed near sheep on the slopes of Mala Kapela.

Škare

394. Nikola STOJANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 65 years old. He was killed, his head was cut off with an axe in Doljani.

Zalužnica

395. Marinko (Savka and Milan) HINIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1946. A Croatian soldier shot him on August 6, 1995, while he was in a refugee line between T. Korenica and Debelo Brdo, in front of his mother *Savka*, born in 1915.
396. Milan HINIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1910. He stayed at home and got killed. The place of his burial is unknown.⁴⁵
397. Vukašin HINIĆ, called "Vujo", (m), Serb, born in 1911. A Croatian soldier shot him in front of his house on August 6, 1995. He was buried at the graveyard Vodoteč, eight kilometers from Brinje.
- 398.-399. Žarko POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 75 years old, a husband and Marica POPOVIĆ, called "Maca", (f), Serb, around 70 years old, half blind, his wife. They stayed at home. Žarko was taken out from the house and killed. The place of his burial is unknown. His wife Marica was killed in the cellar of the house and then burnt together with the house.

44 The manner in which she died was not discovered.

45 Wife *Savka*, b. 1915, with her adopted son *Srdan*, returned from the refugee line to her house but she didn't find a husband. She was watching Croatian army burning her house. Before that she was watching how Croat soldiers were taking away her property. One soldier wanted to kill her, the but other one saved her..

400. Branko VUKOVOJAC, called "Braco", (m), Serb, born in 1947. He was shot several times in his house on August 6, 1996, and died three days later.⁴⁶
401. Željko UZELAC, (m), Serb., born in 1960. He was killed on August 6, 1995, at Brakusov brijeg, near Vrhovina. He was buried in Vodoteč.

X. Sinj

Koljani

402. Jovo MILJKOVIĆ, (m), Serb. He was killed during the military operation "Storm". The place of his burial is unknown.
403. Mirko MILJKOVIĆ, (m), Serb. He was killed during the military operation "Storm". The place of his burial is unknown.

XI. Šibenik

Čista Mala

404. Anica DOBRIĆ, (f), Serb, killed on August 4, 1995.
405. Božica LALIĆ, (f), Serb, born on January 13, 1933. She was killed on August 4, 1995.
406. Draginja LALIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1920. She was killed and buried in Šibenik.
407. Darinka POPOVIĆ, (f), Serb, Born on January 31, 1935. She was killed on August 4, 1995.

Jabuka

408. Nikola JOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on October 1, 1941. He was killed on August 5, 1995.

Ladevci

409. Nikola POTKONJAK, (m), Serb, killed on August 6/7, 1995.
410. Dmtar VUJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, killed on August 6/7, 1995. The place of his burial is unknown.

⁴⁶ First group of Croatian army soldiers didn't kill *Branko Vukovojac*, some of them even drank coffee with him because they probably knew him. When second group of Croatian army soldiers came, one of them fired three bullets at him without prior warning. Branko died three days after.

* * *

Civilians killed since 1996 to 1999 (I. part — former UN sector South)

1996.

Benkovac

Parčić

1. **Stevan (Ignjatije) VOJVODIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1934. He stayed at home with his mother who died in April 1996 in hospital in Knin. After she died, their house was set on fire and all traces of him got lost.

Gospić

Mogorić

2. **Cuka (Lazo) NOVKOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in 1906. She died in October 1996, under strange circumstances. Dogs dragged her dead body around.

Pavlovac Vrebački

3. **Milorad MIŠČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 75 years old. He was killed on August 14, 1996, around 14.00 by a surprise mine that was put under the broken doors of his house.

Knin

Golubić

4. **Simo ĐEPINA**, (m), Serb, died from asthma attack on May 24, 1996, while he was trying to save his son's house from robbers. They also maltreated him.

Korenica

Jezerce

- 5.-6. On February 26/27, 1996, **Milka**, (f), born in 1915, and **Dane KALEMBER**, (m), born in 1913, Serbs were killed and burnt with the house. They were buried without knowledge of their daughter *Nedjeljka Brozović*, who lives in Duga Resa.⁴⁷

47 *Zoran Špoljarić*, 20 years old, killed them and then surrendered to the police. The result of the court proceedings is not known.

7. **Mičo RADAKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, called "Žujić", born around 1941. He was found dead in the spring 1997, in front of his house. Officially he frozed to death in front of his house, unofficially he was killed.

Pišać

8. **Dušan CVIJANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb. He died from a surprise mine on June 24, 1996, while he was digging the potatoes.⁴⁸
9. **Đuro MASNIKOSA**, (m), Serb, born in 1930. He was wounded badly and died from wounds on July 20, 1996, in hospital in Rijeka.

Obrovac

Bilišani

10. **Milica OLUJIĆ**, (f), Serb. She was killed near her house around January 20, 1996. The police did not find the perpetrator.

Otočac

Zalužnica

11. **Mirko NOVAKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 53 or 54 years old, a disabled person. He was found dead in August 1996, in his house. People from the village claim he was killed while the police didn't declare this death case.

1997.

Gospić

Gospić

12. **Milan BRAKUS**, (m), Serb, born on June 5, 1953, from Zalužnica. He was imprisoned in Gospić and suspected of a war crime. On April 29, 1997, he committed a suicide, officially. The CHC's unofficial information is that M. Brakus was seriously maltreated and finally murdered.⁴⁹

Mogorić

13. **Stana (Stoja) ČANKOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in 1914. She was burnt with the house on January 6, 1997. She was burnt in the village.

48 Two more persons were wounded by the same surprise mine. A horse that was dragging the cloak was killed too.

49 Judicial discussions about alleged crimes of *Milan Brakus*, which the CHC has registered did not provide the true basis for the charges.

*Korenica**Korana*

- 14.-15. **Marijan — Vinko (Ivan) FERDERBAR**, (m), Croat, 38 years old, (Smoljanac, Rakovica) and **Mile — Milan VALENTIĆ**, (m), Croat, 32 years old, from Zagreb. They were killed on September 13, 1997, between 21, 30 and 22.00, in the yard of brothers *Milan* and *Rade* (Agata and Božo) *Hajduković*, (m), Serb and unknown nationality, in the village Korana. (They were prosecuted and the invalid decision was brought according to which they were sentenced to 10 years of prison, in fact 20 years.)

Srednja Gora

16. **Jovan ČANKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1939. He was killed on August 8, 1997, around 10, 30 by a surprise mine that was put in the hay.

*Otočac**Ponori*

17. **Vaso GROZDANIĆ**, called "Vajo", (m), Serb, 57 years old. He was killed in his house on May 27, 1997.

1998.

*Gospić**Ostrvica*

18. **Mileva (Lazo) VIDOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born on July 15, 1938. She was badly injured by a surprise mine that was on the little road that leads to her garden. She died from injuries in hospital in Rijeka on October 12, 1998 at 15,45.

*Knin**Knin*

19. On the December 6, 1998: around 16.00 **Dužanka (Petar) RADONIĆ**, (f), Serb, born on 1948, in the village Orlić, was killed in her garden. Civilians and persons in masked uniforms: *Ivan Krolo* and *Jure Čuk* from Gornji Muć, killed her, allegedly they are hunters. They also killed her dog. They claim they killed her because her dog attacked their dog. When Jure Čuk killed her dog, D. Radonić reacted. Ivan Krolo shot her in the back. After she fell down J. Čuk hit her with a rifle in her head. They left her lying there.

*Korenica**Ćuić Krčevina*

- 20.-22. Mara, (f), 58 years old, Žarko, (m), 30 years old and Siniša BRAJKOVIĆ, (m), 4 years old, Roma, from Petrinja. They died from a surprise mine on May 9, 1997, in an empty, burnt house of the owner *Nikica Ćuić* (he started working on reconstruction). They were looking for an old iron.⁵⁰

*Otočac**Brlog*

23. Anka OGRIZOVIĆ, (f), Serb, 79 years old. A surprise mine killed her on September 11, 1998, while she was digging the potatoes. The mine was hidden in the porcelain container that was placed in the line of potatoes⁵¹

1999.

*Otočac**Brlog*

24. Nikola KARLEUŠA, (m), Serb, born in 1921. He was killed on February 2, 1999, by a surprise mine that was placed in the hay. He activated the mine when he wanted to take the hay to his cattle.⁵²

50 *Petar Brajković*, (m), Rom, 53 years old was seriously wounded on that occasion.

51 Her husband, *Mile Ogrizović*, (m), Serb, 81 years old, was also seriously wounded.

52 The following day, on February 3, 1999, at the same spot Zvonko Delač (m), Croat, 35 year old, a police officer from the Ličko Senjska police station was wounded by a second surprise mine.

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Cases of terrorism and violence after the military operation "Storm" (selection)

I. part: UN sector South

Notes

The CHC has registered 2163 incidents since the military operation "*Storm*" until the end of the year 1998 on the territory of the former UN Sector South. These cases were: violence, maltreatment, terrorism, looting, and killings. It is only hundred cases less in comparison with other kinds of violations which the CHC, registered in that same territory which could be ranked in 16 various groups.

1. In this kind of document, it is impossible to state all registered and reported cases of violence and terrorism collected in other important reports by the CHC.
2. The CHC has not been able to register all incidents and all human rights violations in this or in other territories. The matter concerns only the incidents reported by the victims and witnesses themselves or some other NGOs. These results were also a consequence of the direct observations of the field activists.

Benkovac

Biljane Donje

March 26, 1998: two bombs were thrown into the courtyard of Svetozar ŠKORIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1942, who started working on reconstruction of the house a week ago.

July 8, 1998., at 7,20 am: Slavko MARIČIĆ, (M), Serb, activated the surprise by passing over it with the tractor in his courtyard. Besides him, Svetozar ŠKORIĆ, (m), Serb, was also hurt, while waiting in the tractor-trailer. The tractor was seriously damaged. When the workmen, which were helping reconstruct Maričić's house, went to seek help with their car "stojadin" they activated another booby trap, which almost destroyed a car. The mines were planted the previous night because the owner and other men had been working on the house for 20 days and each day they were passing over the path where the mines exploded.

Ceranje Gornje

August 4, 1996: the house that belonged to Aćim KARAN, (m), Serb, born in 1932, who spent the whole war in Monte Negro, was mined. House was previously set on fire three times.

Dobropoljci

September 1995: almost a kilometre of the low voltage power grid was destroyed by a chain saw. The attempts of Luka IVKOVIĆ, (m), Croat, from the village, to prevent demolishing of the power grid (a few Croatian families also live in that village), only made thieves more furious. They on the other hand accused him of remaining at his home during the war, and living with Chetniks, warning him also they are armed.¹

Jagodnja Gornja

September 9, 1997: the thieves physically abused Kosa RADIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1927, and broke her arms. She wore a cast for two months. On June, 22, 1997. (Public holiday, Day of Anti-Fascism) unknown thieves stole six chicken from her and poisoned her dog. Before that, all the things that were of some value were stolen from her.

Karin

September 1995: the house which belonged to Ljubica, (f), Croat, and Semić ŠUŠA, (m), Serb, born in 1938, was plundered and then burned. On August 5–25, someone broke into her house and took some stuff away. The house was completely destroyed, on September 9.

August 23, 1996: the Orthodox Church was mined and demolished

March 17, 1997: unknown persons attacked Ivan (Franc) RANČIGAJ, (m), Slovene, born on January 3, 1927. He was beaten at his weekend house. The following day, same persons beat him again in front of the store in Karin.

March 18, 1997: Krunoslav (Vid) KRALJ, (m), Croat, born on June, 20, 1960 in Zagreb, who received the house in Karin to live in temporarily, has been attacked and beaten by unknown persons. *Ivan Zelenika* was one of them. He suffered from serious bodily injuries. After that, the attackers moved into his house.

Lišane:

Between October 9, and November 1, 1997: the following gravestones were damaged on the Orthodox cemetery belonging to *Nikola Uzelac* (1900–1953.), *Danica Subotić* (1908–1995.), *family Jokić*, *Sava Lacmanović*, *Đuka Vojvodić*, *Luka Cuijetić*, *Milivoj Medić*, *Marko Mijović* and *Cvetko Uzelac*.²

*Donji Lapac**Kunovac*

Between April 5, and May 5, 1997: the farm-buildings that belonged to Dr. Gojko TORBICA, (m), Serb, who lives in Zagreb, were burned on his family farm.³

1 In many villages of that area power grids were demolished, for example from Brgud, the part of Plavno, and lots of other villages power posts and power conducters were taken away. There are no information on the authorities reacting in any kind of way. But, they are also using this fact while refusing requests that villages without electricity should get it.

2 The cemeteries in other towns were also devastated: Udbina, Jošani, Počitelj.

3 The family house of *Gojko Torbica* was burned after the Operation Storm.

Kupirevo

September 4, 1995: the village of Šijani was burned, after the police, under the coercion, took away eight people who stayed in the village, "for their safety". While the police took them to the Collective Centre in Zadar, their property and the cattle were gone.

Lopačka Korita

August 7, or 8, 1995: the house that belonged to Dragica BLANUŠA, (f), Croat, and Milan Blanuša who died on 1993, was burned.

Nebljusi

April, 1996: 400 bullets were fired at the house of Slavko POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, and his wife, Croat, from Zagreb.

Srb

October 7, 1995: the cow-house, garage and hay-loft that belonged to missing Petar DAMJANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 80 years old, were burned. His house and houses and farm building of his relatives were burned before. A son Petar from Zagreb from time to time visited the house.

*Drniš**Drniš*

August 1997: the group of people attacked verbally and physically (with rocks) one Orthodox priest, who intends to hold a liturgy in the Orthodox Church. The police only watched the incident without doing anything.

Kadina Glavica

November 1996: two houses that belonged to sons of Lazo MANOJLOVIĆ, (m), Serb, were mined.

March 22, 1997: the house of Špiro (81) and Milica (75) LAĐEVIĆ was burned. Presumably because the rumours were spread about the alleged return of his son to the village.⁴

4 "After the "Operation Storm" house of my parents was devastated, but not destroyed. It was not suitable for living. My parents, Špiro and Milica Lađević left for my sister's house in Pula after the "Storm". They came back on October, 20, 1995. In that period, I and my husband, a Croat from village of Čavoglave, returned from Germany. We repaired our house and lived in it together. With the help of my husband, my father also repaired his house, and stayed in it during the day, but at night he was sleeping in our house. On the March, 22, 1997, in the evening hours his house was burned. We still do not know who and why burned the house, but we heard that my brother requested permission and documents to return to Croatia. We are positive that our neighbours didn't do it. I have three sisters, and two of them are also married to Catholics." (Slavka Jukica, b. 1962., April, 19, 1997., interviewed by the activists of CHC)

Kričke

August 15, 1995: the house of Pero POPAC, (m), Serb, who did not leave Croatia during the war, was burned.

April 20, 1996: around 01,00 am the house that belonged to Milka, (f), and Petar ČAKIĆ, (m), both Serbs, was mined. The house was new and uninhabited. Their son, who lives and works in Split, helped building the house.

May 6, 1996: the house of Milan POPAC, (m), Serb, (75), was burned while he was temporarily residing in Ogulin.

May 6, 1996: in the village Popci (Kričke) the house of Stoja POPAC, (f), Serb, (80), was burned. The elderly woman was in the house, very ill and disabled. The police and firemen from Drniš rescued her.

May 6, 1996: temporarily uninhabited family house in the village Popci was burned.

May 30, 1996: the house of Nedjeljko VUKASIN, (m), Serb, was mined.

May 30, 1996.: the family house of Lazo VUKASIN, (m), Serb, was mined.

May 30, 1996: the family house of Stevo VUKASIN, (m), Serb, was mined.

May 30, 1996: the family houses of Drago PERIŠIĆ, (m), Serb, was mined.

May 30, 1996.: temporarily

Uninhabited family house was mined (the owner of the house is unknown to the CHC activists).⁵

Miočić

Beginning of the April 1997: two old
Gravestones were mined at the local cemetery.

Otavice

April 19, 1997: in the afternoon one
Uninhabited family house was burned.

Siverić

May 6, 1997: the summer kitchen of Špiro

IVAZA, (m), Serb, b. 1993. was burned and his vineyard and orchard were destroyed. Prior to the incident his family house was completely looted.

*Gospić**Gospić*

May 15, 1997: Nikola DIMIĆ, (m), Serb, was wounded with the surprise mine.

Medak

September 1996: the house of Dmtar MAODUŠ, (m), Serb — a returnee, was burned.

⁵ After the Operation "Storm" in the village Kričke (Drniš) more than 25 family houses were mined or burned.

May 11, 1997: around 12,30 p. m. Dragan ČUPIĆ, (f), Serb, (35), from Zadar, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine planted in her pillow.

Mogorić:

August 1998: Mile RADAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine and his leg was cut of. The mine was planted at the bottom of his bed.

During the October 1998: the part of the fence and the panel marked with the sign of the private property "*Esmeralda's fence*" whose owners are citizens of the Switzerland, were destroyed. The owners did not allowed hunters to use their "fence", and hunters did not respect the integrity of the private property.⁶

November 5, 1998: around 13,30 p. m. Miroslav (Petar) ZAKLAN, (m), Serb, b. 1947, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine. The mine was planted at the doorstep at the entrance to the garden.

November 9, 1998: at 9,40 a. m. Radomir (Slobodan) ĐAKOVIĆ, called "Rade", (m), Serb, b. January, 20, 1961, and Gojko (Jovan) KORICA, (m), Serb, b. 1940, were wounded with the surprise mines. The mine was placed in the pile of the stable-dung thrown out a few days before on the field.

January 29, 1999: at 11,10 a. m. Đuro ĐAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, activated the surprise mine at the farm that belongs to *Zorka Zaklan* (mother of Miroslav Zaklan). The mine was placed in the pile of firewood cut last summer. Except for the shock, he did not suffer from other injuries.⁷

Ostrvica

In the middle of May, 1997: the returnee Nikola DIMIĆ, (m), Serb, was wounded with the surprise mine.

May 31, 1997: Ljubica, (f), Serb, old around 55, and her husband Tomo ČORAK, (m), Croat, old around 60, were seriously wounded with the surprise mine.

Gračac

Glogovo

January 26, 1996.: unknown armed persons took 1000 DEM from Mileva JAKŠIĆ, called "Smilja", (f). They threatened her and devastated her house.⁸

6 Mogorić and surrounded villages were turned into the hunting district. The hunting panels were placed on the family houses, electro-posts, around and into the village. The hunters very often went around the village, shot and "just for a joke" pointed the rifles at the inhabitants. Lots of other villages were also proclaimed as hunting districts, such as Kakanj, near to Knin (hunters also put their panel on the house of Radoslav Ognjenović, who was too afraid to protest).

7 The mine was placed around 50 m from the place at which *M. Zaklan* activated the same gadget. On that occasion he was seriously injured.

8 There were various cases of that kind on the territory of Gračac. Ksenija Ribić, "veterinarian", visited the houses prior to these incidents. She used to come to villages, allegedly examined the cattle and asked for

Gračac

May 4, 1997: at 23,35 p. m. not far from the house of Mirko CVJETKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, the explosive was activated.

May 4, 1997: at 23,45 p. m. explosive device was activated in the front yard of the house that belongs to Jovo JAZIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1935. The facade of the house was damaged.

May 4, 1997: at 23,40 p. m. near to the house of Jovo ŠIRIĆ, (m), Serb, the explosive device was activated.

Gubačevo Polje

May 1, 1997: unknown persons beat up Gojko SOVILJ, (m), and Dušan SOVILJ, (m), both Serbs. One of them was attacked and wounded with the knife.

Kik

August 8/9, 1995: the house of Branko ŽEGARAC, b. 1912, was burned while he was in the house. The other houses in the village were also burned, and elderly woman Soka Petković was killed.

Ljubović

The beginning of June, 1996: seven family houses, various stables, sheds and garages were burned and damaged.⁹

Polanka

August 10, 1995: the family houses of Branko ŠKORIĆ, (m), Bogdan BRKIĆ, (m), b. 1926, Branko MRDALJ, (m), and Milan VOJNOVIĆ, (m), all Serbs, were burned.

Ploča

August 10, 1995: the house of B. J., (m), Serb, b. 1929, who stayed in the village, was robbed and then burned.¹⁰

The end of August, 1995: the house and all other objects that belonged to Mara, (f), Croat, and Nikola BANJEGLAV, (m), Serb, were burned. There has not been anyone living in the house for the past 10 past years.

Prljevo

The middle of 1998: the electricity posts were pulled down. Mićo Novaković, who lives there, does not have electricity any more.

May 14, 1997: at 9,15 am Danica RADOČAJ, (f), Serb, born in 1922, was wounded with the surprise mine. The mine was put on the path that she uses when she takes her cow out to the meadow.

the money. If a person did not have money, she asked that some sheep be given to her. After that, the thieves came, took the money, or other things.

9 When the CHC made a protest concerning these incidents, the police replied that (*Svemir Vrsaljko*) the houses were damaged during the fights. That fact is not true because in this village there had not been any conflicts.

10 B. J. was hiding in the wood near the village, from the fear, because he saw people getting killed and houses burned. The activists of the CHC found him on October, 15, 1995. and "connected" him with the police in Gračac.

Zrmanja Vrelo

August 15, 1995: the house and the stable with the cattle, the property of Dušan BOGDANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, were destroyed by the hand-grenade.

August 15, 1995: the soldiers burned the house and all farm-buildings, stole 10 cows, five lambs and horses belonging to Marko LUKIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1904.

August 17, 1995: three armed soldiers burned the house, the stable, the forge and the corn-field with 2 horses, one foal, 2 calves, 17 sheep and 6 lambs, with grenades shot at from a close distance. All this property belonged to Dušan (Petar), ČUK, (m), Serb, b. March, 23, 1932. The soldiers told him and his wife "You were lucky. In other parts people were killed!"

April 24 and June 19, 1996: stole first 36 and then 3 lambs. The thieves were driving red "golf", without registration plates. They threaten the owner that they would kill him.

*Knin**Biovičino Selo*¹¹

Around June 20, 1996: unknown persons stole 15 sheep and lambs from Dara, (f), and Todo ĐURIĆ, (m), Serbs. They were loaded on the tractor and driven away. T. Đurić saw the thieves but he was ordered to stay in the house, otherwise he would be killed.¹²

June 27, 1996: around 21,00 p. m. the group of unknown person arrived in the hamlet of Masnikose. They forced and threatened the inhabitants Mara, (f), Savo MASNIKOSA, (m), and Todor MALBAŠ, (m), all Serbs, to sit on timbers in front of the burned house, and then ordered them to turn to the wall. They made them to enter the shed (the only intact object in the village), and forbade them to go out. In case they left the shed they would be killed. The attackers threw out 59 sheep, 46 of them belonged to Savo Masnikosa, and 13 were the property of Todor Malbaša.

June 27, 1996: the same group, as in the previous case, stole 50 sheep belonging to Koja MASNIKOSA, called "Stevica", (m), Serb. They intercepted him not far from the house, forced him to raise his hands in the air, made him enter the house and abused him. They asked him to give them vine and money.

June 27, 1996: Vukosava ŠEŠO, (f), Serb, came across the thieves when returning from the field. When they saw her, one of them started to shout at her, and put the barrel of the gun against her left cheek. He threatened her with the murder in case she reports to anybody what she saw. He forced her to enter the house (not her house) and beat her

11 Since the end of the military operation "Storm", in this there have been stolen 2000 sheep and lambs. All the cases were reported to the Police in Knin or Kistanje, which is near to the village, but in none of the cases the perpetrators have been discovered. The CHC also informed Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Government and other authorities about the case.

12 Prior to this incident, unknown persons stole a cow and a calf from him.

back and ribs. The owner of the house, Stevanija MASNİKOSA, (f), Serb, was inside the house, and she was also maltreated.¹³

Čučevo

May 12/13, 1997: during the night, unknown persons stole five lambs from the old women Manda BEZBRADICA, (f), Serb, (83). They threatened to kill her in case she says anything about what happened.

Ervenik

June 20, 1996: the Croatian army used to have military exercises in the village. The army crushed down a vineyard down with the military vehicle destroyed the school and a monument, memory of the Second World War, which was placed in front of the school building.

Golubić

March 3, 1996: three armed soldiers took a car type "Fićo" from Anđa PLAVŠA, (f), Serb, b. 1936. They arrived in the car with the registration number ST 336-DP. Five days later, the soldiers stole her three lambs, and on the March, 18, 1996, while she was sleeping at the neighbours house because she was afraid, unknown persons destroyed everything in the house, and took eight smoked hams, two radios, two sewing-machines, electric-heater from the bathroom, wall clock etc.

October 8, 1996: around 15,00 p. m. 27 soldiers red barrettes, arrived to the train station building in Golubić in which there were also a few apartments. Smilja CVJETKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1929, lives in one of these apartments. She is the widow of the railway man, who died before the war. One of the soldiers broke the doors of the apartment with the gun, and then entered all the apartments saying that the building should be burned. The woman somehow managed to escape. When she came back a day after, she realised that her apartment is destroyed, and that the soldier took away her refrigerator, radio, dishes, water-heater from the kitchen, and broke all other things from the apartment.

November 2/3, 1996. a house was burned.

August 8/9, 1998: the explosive device was thrown into the front yards of the family houses that belonged to Milica JERKOVIĆ, (f), (88), Anđa JERKOVIĆ, (f), (72), and Đuka JERKOVIĆ, (f), (70). Before the incident there were shots coming from the house of Mato Milovanović, immigrant from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Grubori

August 25, 1995: 20 larger and smaller objects were demolished, and seven people were killed.

Ivoševci

October, 1995: 14 lambs were stolen from Jovan KAROLIJA, (m), Serb. A year later another 13 lambs were stolen from him, and a theft was repeated again on January, 30, 1997.

¹³ Day after, the police patrol went to search for the attackers together with the inhabitants. They followed the sheep tracks. When they arrived near to the Medveda, someone fired the bullet in the direction of the police. They immediately gave up the search, saying that it was "too dangerous".

October 1996: the thieves stole first 50, and then after a few days another 10 sheep from Jovo KAROLIJA, (m), Serb. They threatened him with a gun, and forced him to load the sheep on the truck by himself.

October, 1996: 25 sheep were stolen from Đuro KAROLIJA, (m), Serb. (During the summer 1996, five sheep were also stolen from Dara KAROLIJA, (f), Serb).¹⁴

January 24, 1999: around 1,00 a. m. the unknown person fired from the automatic weapon in the direction of the house which belongs to Ljubica KAROLIJA, (f), Serb.

Kakanj

August 18, 1995: Mirko OGNJENović, called "Vasiljević", (m), b. 1921. and Radoslav OGNJENović, (m), called "Rade", b. 1908, both Serbs, were beaten up and wounded in the evening hours. The farm of M. Ognjenović was burned down.

Kistanje

May 19, 1997: around 1,30 am the house that belongs to *Ljubiša Janković*, (m), Serb, who lives in France, was stoned. For more then 40 years Dragica ŠTRBAC, (f), Serb, b. 1938, has been living in the house. Although she is very ill, and almost disable (she broke her hipbone) immigrants from Janjevo (Kosovo) have been abusing her all the time. They attacked her, broke the windows, and threatened her and asked her to leave the house and "go to Serbia".

May 25, 1997: the house of *Ljubiša Janković*, in which Dragica ŠTRBAC lives (see the previous case), was stoned again. A few windows of the room where she was sleeping in were broken.¹⁵

May 25, 1997: at 4,20 a. m. the monument dedicated to Partizans in the Second World War was mined in the hamlet of Kozjaci, by the road Knin-Zadar. It was the last undamaged monument from the II World War in this area.

Knin

February 11, 1996: the house of Branko ĐURICA, (m), Serb, b. 1932, was burned just before his return. When he returned, he repaired the house in order to live in it, but one night it was completely demolished and devastated.¹⁶

September 17, 1996: the central monument with the tombstone of the fallen soldiers in the Second World War, dedicated to the people killed during the liberation of Knin in the II World War, was mined. The monument was on the hill above the Knin, and when it was mined pieces of stones, concrete and bones of the dead were falling all over the town. One person was hurt.

14 The CHC found out that this village and other villages have been terrorized in this manner by Maksim Barać, called "Maks", Croat. Maks was aided by some Serbs living in the village. These were Dušan Karolija and Jadranko Grčić, who knew who had any property in the village and the whereabouts of all things. All the information about these incidents, and about the weapons they owned, were given to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other authorities.

15 Three policemen visited Dragica Štrbac on May, 27, 1997. They interwied her, searched the house, advised her not to call them any more concerning "these things" because it was very expensive — "it cost 150 DEM". When one of the police inspectors found out that the CHC activists visited her she was told: "They can pay the damages." He also advised her to "go to Serbia".

16 In Knin, he had the state owned apartement, but the inhabitant from Knin lives in it.

April 4, 1997: around 21,30 p. m., the house of Radomir RADULOVIĆ, (m), Serb, was stoned.

April 4, 1997: around 22,00 p. m., in front of the house that belongs to Milojka KOTURAŠ, (f), Serb, b. 1926, the explosive device was thrown.

April 4, 1997: around 21,00 p. m., in front of the family house that belongs to Milica, (f), b. 1924, and Branko N.¹⁷, (M), b. 1919, both Serbs, the explosive device was thrown.

May 5, 1997: the house of Radomir RADULOVIĆ, (m), Serb, was stoned s during the evening hours. It was a second incident of that kind.

May 10, 1997: the unknown persons attacked and maltreated Dušanka ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1923 and than stoned her house.

The end of the April, 1997: the immigrant from Bosnia and Herzegovina Branko Galić, Croat, plucked off and destroyed all vegetables that Kata KUKOLJ, (f), Croat, planted. Her family house was destroyed so now she lives in the house of her son-in-law, Branko Galić. He lives in his son-in-law's house and intends to take over Kata Kukulj's house. The threats and destruction of her property continues all the time.

May 25/26, 1997: someone broke into the house of Branko (Nikola) BISERKO, (m), Serb, over night for the second time. Some parts of the furniture were demolished, and the axe was left on his bed!¹⁸

Kovačić

February 11, 1996: the house that belongs to Branko ĐURICA, (m), Serb, b. 1932, was burned just before his return to the village.

January 1, 1997: the family house that belongs to Draginja, (f), b. 1938. and Ilija RADULOVIĆ, (m), b. 1931., Serbs, was mined. The house was demolished just a few days before their return.

March, 1997 in the front yard of the house that belongs to Đuro JEJINA, (m), Serb, b. 1932, a big panel was placed with the sign "Serbs, Chetniks, move out!", and above the sign there was a hand grenade hanging.¹⁹

April 3, 1997: the house that belongs to Čedomir KUKOLJ, (m), Serb, b. 1942, was burned on the day of his return from the exile.

April 27/28, 1997: the house that belongs to Nikola KUKOLJ, (m), Serb, father-in-law of Dragica KUKOLJ, (f), Croat, b. 1944, and who died, was burned.

May 7, 1997: during the afternoon from the house of Branko Ćuruvija, in which the settlers lives, someone was shooting at Draginja, (f), b. 1938 and Ilija RADULOVIĆ, (m), b. 1931, both Serbs (and two other persons who were with them) while they were coming back from the vineyard.

May, 1997: the house that belongs to Nada, (f), Croat, b. 1943. and Luka KUKOLJ, (m), The monument in Mokro Polje, June, 26, 1996.

17 They did not want their names to be published.

18 On May 20, 1997, too younger females broke into the house of Branko Biserko and tried to take the house from him, even though they did not have any valid documents for such an action. The police expelled them. But, B. Biserko is too afraid to stay in the house during the night, because some immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croats, are threatening to kill him and advising him to leave Croatia.

19 When police arrived on the call of the owner, the policemen said: "It doesn't matter, let it hung!"

Serb, was burned on the day of their return to the East Slavonija.

June 14, 1997: around 22,30 p. m. unknown man knocked with the iron stick on the door of the house of Jelica DURBABA, (f), Serb, b. 1943. Yelling, he asked her to open the door immediately, presenting himself as "Ustasha" who was going to kill her.

August 31, 1997: the house of Desanka ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, was burned. She returned from exile on the August 29 and moved into her empty house. But, she hurt her leg and her relatives brought her into their house temporarily. After she left that same evening, the house was burned down.

November 28/29, 1997: during the night, unknown persons stabbed three pigs in the cattle-pound that belongs to Marija ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, (74). The pigs were stabbed and left there.

February 25, 1998: two houses that belonged to Dara (Rada) RNJAK, (f), Serb, b. 1923, and Jeka, (f), and Simo ĐUJIĆ, (m), both Serbs, who died, were burned.²⁰

*Mokro Polje*²¹

September 22, 1995: the thieves with masks on came with the vehicle, registration number HV 033-IK, to the front yard of Obrad and Jovan POPOVIĆ. One woman was with them. They pointed a gun at Jovan, who is a well-known honey-seller, and stole 2, 5 ton of a honey. At the end of the "operation" they gave him 10 DEM and said: "We, Croats, are honest people, and we won't take anything without paying." All the agricultural tools, 50 sheep and lot of other valuable things were already stolen from these people, and Jovan's brother and mother were killed with the fire weapon in the kitchen.

October 26, 1996: two women and a boy, around 15-16 years old, came to the village of Vrpolje, with the car, registration table of the town Imotski. When they started to take all things from the house, the owner, Ilija BABIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1931, reacted, but women threatened him saying that the next time they would come with the "entire unit of soldiers" with them. The boy had a knife in his hand. Three days later, on October 29, 1996, three soldiers and a boy arrived to the village by car. When they approached the house of Ilija Babić, they immediately started shooting, demanding that he come out of the house. When they were told that he was not in the house (I. Babić hid in the underbrush), they started to shoot at the toilet which is placed in the field, threatened him with cutting off his head, and waving a big knife.

May 14, 1998.: the house of Lazo KOSTIĆ, (m), Serb, was burned.

May 27, 1998: the house of Milija KOSTIĆ, (f), Serb, was burned.

The end of May, 1998: the house of Đuro BUKARICA, (m), Serb, was burned. He made a request for the return.

The end of May, 1998: the house of Slobodan BUKARICA, (m), Serb, was burned.

The end of May, 1998: the house of Milan JOKIĆ, (m), Serb, was burned. He visited the house for the last time in January 1998. He was supposed to return for good.

The end of May, 1998: the house of Jovan MATIJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, was burned.

The end of May 1998: the house of Mile ČUJO, (m), Serb, was burned. He just received the papers for return.

20 In this village a house was burned in the September, 1997.

21 There are 384 households in Mokro polje, and 86 of them have been burned till the end of 1997.

The end of May 1998: the house of Jelena KABIĆ, (f), Serb, was burned down. The owner returned to the village, however because of the very bad living conditions in the village, she temporarily stayed at her daughter's house in Bjelovar.²²

The end of May, 1998: the house of Miloš KABIĆ, (m), Serb, was burned.

Očestovo

January 22, 1996: in the afternoon, two soldiers took a firewood from a blind old man Dušan KNEŽEVIĆ, (m), Serb. The same day, in the morning, UNHCR prepared the firewood for a feeble Knežević.

July 1, 1996: the soldiers burned down two, unoccupied houses.

July 4, 1996: the Croatian army started with the army exercises in the village. During the presence of the army, three family houses were mined, the school was burned, and a monument dedicated to the victims of fascism in the centre of the village was demolished.

Orlić

October 17, 1996: two men — a soldier and a civilian, came in the house of Jovan BJELAN, (m), Serb, b. 1922, and tried to take away his entrance door. While they were trying to take down the doors, a neighbour Nikola Rnjak started to shout and threaten them with that if they do not leave that he would damage their car with a fork (which he held in a hand at the time). After that, the thieves left without the doors.

February 10, 1997: around 17,00 p. m., a house that belongs to Borka, (f), and Gorko MOMČILO, (m), both Serbs, was burned. They just received papers for the return in Croatia.

On the same day: the house of Čedo URUKALA, (m), Serb, was burned down.

Plavno

August 1995: on the three-border point between Bosnia, Lika and Dalmatia, two monuments from the II World War were devastated. Both monuments were erected on July 4, 1978. One of them was dedicated to anti-fascist fight of Lika, Bosnia and Dalmatia, and a second one on the day when Partisans of the IV. Krajina brigade started a mutual fight with Dalmatia and Lika against Italian fascists and their allies Ustahas and Chetniks.

Strmica

The end of 1996. the houses that belonged to Jovan MIZDRAK, called "Sišć", (m), and Jovan MIZDRAK, called "Joco", (m), both Serbs, were first robbed and then burned down.

Žagrović

March 1-5, 1997: three houses that belonged to people who just got the papers for return were burned down.

March, 1996: the immigrant from Vojvodinak, Irena Cindrić, (f), usurped the land around the house which she received for a "temporary usage", in a way that she cut

22 The family houses of Jelena and Miloš Kabić wasn't burned down, because the fire was set in the basement, so it wasn't expand on the whole building.

down all the trees (around 40 different fruit-trees). The team of UNHCR and Dalmatian Committee of Solidarity (DOS) sawed those trees in order that the owners use them as a fuel. Irena Cindrić started to insult them, threatened to kill them, and then she physically abused the old woman Manda RAŠKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, (75), and threw the firewood into the stream of Radljevac.

June 15, 1997: in the vineyard that belongs to Milka DMITROVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1948, all the new fruits were plucked off. Already cultivated vineyard is incapacitated for the current year.²³

Korenica

Bunić:

October 14, 1998: Budmir (Drago) EROR, (m), Serb, old around 40, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine. He activated the mine with the tractor while working on the field. The tractor was completely demolished.

Ćuić Krčevina

Since the August 14, till the September 1, 1995: the village Ćuić Krčevina, with 35 households, was burned down. The houses that were not burned were mined. The owners were mostly living in other parts of Croatia, or working abroad in South Europe.

June 19, 1996: the estates of Zorka ĆUIĆ, (f), Serb, and Milka ĆUIĆ, (f), Serb, were burned down. After the return, they have adjusted the property so they can live on it.

May 9, 1998: Petar BRAJKOVIĆ, (m), Roma, old around 53, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine, while three members of his family died. The mine was planted in the ruined house that belonged to Nikica Ćuić, who started reconstructing the house.

Jošani

January 15, 1997: Mirko SURLA, (m), Serb, from Zagreb, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine (52 shell fragments were found in his legs). The mine was placed under the asbestos board, which was left in front of the garage.

April 15, 1997: Đuro RADAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 60 years old, was seriously wounded (he lost his hand) as a consequence of the surprise mine which was put in the bottle in front of his house.

June 15, 1998: at 1,00 a. m., unknown persons fired from a gun at the house of Pera, (f), and Rade MAŠIĆ, (m), both Serbs. No one was hurt by the accident because when that happened they were in the other room.

Korenica

The end of February 1997: there was a shooting from the automatic weapon at the house of Dane RADEKA, (m), Serb, b. 1928. He was threatened with a murder if he does not leave the house.

23 In this village, during the June, 1997, unknown perpetrators burned lots of fields and vineyards.

April 20, 1997: the house that belonged to the MIRIĆ family was mined.

April 22, 1997: the house of Slavko ĐUKIĆ, (m), Serb, was burnt. The last time he visited the house he was on his way back from the exile on April 17. He reported the incident to the Police station Korenica, where policemen told him: "*The cow was smoking in the stable, so it got burnt.*"

Krbava

March 15, 1996: N. N., (m), was seriously wounded. The surprise mine was planted at the doorstep of his house.

Ličko Petrovo Selo

July 25, 1997: the family house that belongs to Radojka VEJNOVIĆ, (f), Serb, who lives in Zagreb, was burnt.

April 10, 1998: the family house that belongs to Slobodan STUDEN, (m), Serb, who lives in Slovenia, was burnt.

On the same day: the family house of Draga KUGA, (f), Serb, was burnt.

September 26, 1998: during the night, the explosive was dropped on the garage that belongs to Mara, (f), b. May, 14, 1937, and Branko GRBIĆ, (m), around 60 years old, both Serbs.

Pišać

March 9, 1996: Manda CVIJANOVIĆ, (f), Ranko CVIJANOVIĆ, (m), and their friend N. N., (m), Serbs, found a brick on the road. When they lifted it, the surprise mine that was planted inside exploded. The bomb wounded them and damaged the car.

June 24, 1996: while they were cultivating the potatoes, the following persons have been wounded with the surprise mine planted in the field: Đuro MASNIKOSA, (m), b. 1932., Nikola CVIJANOVIĆ, (m), b. 1919. and Nikola (Dušan) CVIJANOVIĆ, (m), b. 1953, all Serbs. The horse, which pulled the tiller, died instantly from the mine.²⁴

Plitvički Ljeskovac

June 9, 1996: the property (the house, the stable, the hayloft, and all farm-buildings) of Đuro KONČAR, (m), Serb, were burnt, while he and his wife worked in the field.

Svračkovo Selo

March 9, 1996: Rade LJUBOJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, was wounded with the surprise mine. The explosion demolished the tractor-trail.

Udbina

May 14, 1997: at 9,45 a. m., Danica RADOČAJ, (f), Serb, b. 1922. was seriously wounded with the surprise mine. The mine was planted on the road where she usually takes her cow out from the stable.

24 On the same occasion, the owner of the field, *Dušan Cvijanović*, b. 1926, died. *Đuro Masnikosa*, who was seriously wounded, died after a while in the hospital in Rijeka.

Obrovac

Zelengrad

The end of August 1995: the memorial tablet, which was hanging on the school building, was smashed.²⁵

Otočac

Brlog²⁶

October 11, 1998: while hoeing the potatoes, Mile OGRIZOVIĆ, (m), Serb, around 81 years old, was wounded with the surprise mine, which was planted in the porcelain cup, placed between potatoes. (His wife *Anka*, (f), 79 years old, died immediately).

February 3, 1999: while doing the coroner's inquest of the death of *Nikola Karleuša*, who died the day before, Zvonko DELAČ, (m), Croat, the policeman of the Ličko-Senjska police station, was seriously wounded with the surprise mine, placed in the hay stack.

Otočac

April 29, 1996: the house that belonged to Spaso LJUŠTINA, (m), Serb, was shelled with the rocket-launcher. This was the fourth attempt to destroy his house. Before, his house was attacked in the similar way on the following dates: June 22, 1992, October 28, 1993, and October 7, 1995.

Škare

August 22, 1995: the unknown persons first robbed and then burned houses of Dušan (Milan) SVILAR, (m), Serb, b. January 25, 1931, Sofija, (f), and Milan SVILAR, (m), Serb, Anka (Milan) PAVIČIĆ, (f), Serbs and people of other ethnicity.

25 On the territory of the former UN sector South there are no more monuments or memorial tablets dedicated to the victims of the II World War, partisans or fighters against fascism, so there is not point of enumerating all of them. All of these symbols were demolished: mined, smashed, devastated. Among the first destroyed symbols were the ones with more than 1000 names of the victims of the fascist terror in Kistanje. The large monument in the place called Srb was demolished, as well as the symbols in Donji Lapac, Gračac, Obrovac, Mokro Polje, Mazin, Korenica, everywhere. Mostly, they were replaced, at least temporarily, with Ustasha symbols, swastikas, name of Ante Pavelić.

26 Brlog is a village in which, according to a census from the year 1991, 411 inhabitants lived: 94 Croats and 303 Serbs. The village was not a part of the so-called RSK (the Republic of Serbia), but on 1991. "Martićevci" (people led by the man called Martić) killed and abused many Croats. On October, 26, 1991, the Croatian army and Police expelled "Martićevci", and during that period they almost destroyed — burned the village, in which only few people lived. During the war, while the Croatian army stayed in the village, they did not have any problems, but the situation changed after the war.

*Sinj**Vrlika*

July 8, 1996: the family house that belonged to Dušan MIŠINA, (m), Serb, has been mined. The house had the space for the shop, "bar", and the "diary", and was mined a short time before the owner's return.

Cases of Abuse (selection)

(I part — Former UN Sector South)

Notes

In this selection (105 cases) only a few examples of physical abuse were chosen. Verbal abuses and threats, which caused fear and feelings of insecurity among victims, were a common appearance, not only among people from the "street", but among the majority of state and local office employees, as well as church, police and judicial officials. In the past time the CHC had registered hundreds of these incidents. The official authority representatives did not declare those appearances as unacceptable. On the contrary, the most responsible state representatives promoted those attitudes in their public appearances evidently burdened with nationalistic, religious and racist intolerance. Ordinary people who were in favour of this kind of thinking furthermore applied intolerance in their daily practice in the manner of physical abuse and even terrorist acts. Most of them were not convicted nor symbolically condemned for the murders committed.

Benkovac

Biljane Donje

1. July 1997: Šime Vrseljak from Nadin, attacked Jovanka, (f), born in 1932, and Slavko MARIČIĆ, (m), born in 1936, (Serbs) in the bus. He insulted them and threw them out from the bus in presence of the bus driver and other passengers. He called them "Chetniks", and threatened them on each occasion he met them by repeating those words even though they did not harm him in any way.

Buković

2. December 27/28, 1996: two unknown men raped Stana JOKIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1936. She and her husband returned to the village two months before the incident. She was badly injured (then locked in the closet). She received medical treatment and stayed in the hospital until November 8, 1996.

Ceranje Donje

3. September 18, 1995: Milo ČUBRILO, (m), Serb, born in 1923. His teeth were knocked out and he was seriously beaten over his head and body.

4. **September 19, 1995:** armed thief dressed in the military clothes abused Sofija ČUBRILO, (f), born in 1920. He beat her with a rifle all over her right arm. The front door on her house was smashed and she was not allowed to get out from the house into the backyard.

Karin

5. **March 17, 1997** unknown persons broke into the house of Ivan FRANČIĆ, (m), Slovenian, born in 1927. They threatened, beat and verbally abused him.

Donji Lapac

Neteka

6. **June 13, 14 and 15, 1996:** Milan BUJIĆ, (m), Serb, was abused by four men in green army uniforms, who came into the village with a four-wheel drive vehicle "Land Rover". On their departure from the village they took two horses and a foal from him.
7. **On the same occasion** Vojislav BURSAC, (m), Serb, was physically abused — he was beat up badly and his six teeth were knocked out. They beat him with arms and shoes. They even tried to cut off his arm with an axe.
8. **At the same time** the same group of soldiers was also physically abusing Mićo TRIBULIN, (m), Serb. They forced him to dig up the grave where he will be buried after they kill him. After that they put wood in his arms until he fell down from too much weight. Then four of them urinated in his mouth.¹

Drniš

Biočić

9. **Around August 10, 1995** six soldiers abused Nada CRNČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1945. They tried to push her into the well; they overturned everything in her house and cut the pillows with knives.²

1 On the CHC's protests Ministry of Internal Affairs, MUP (*Ivan Jarnjak*) and Ministry of Defence, MORH (*Gojko Šušak*) replied. In both cases generally they confirmed the incidents, but they stated "there have not been established facts which in this moment that may point to the fact that the attackers are members of the Croatian army..." (The letter of Minister of defense, Gojko Šušak, from June 19, 1996)

2 On their departure they told her she can be happy *Stipe Škara* is not with them, because "if there is no people to kill he kills the cattle."

Gračac

Glogovo

10. February 1, 1996, around 11 a. m.: The police took Milan (Draginja and Savo) CVJETKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in February 23, 1947 into the police station and kept him there for 24 hours without giving an appropriate explanation for doing that. He was forced to sign a paper or, on contrary, he will not get out from there alive. Then they took him back home where he came upon many persons in his backyard. They threw upside down everything in his house, took away the cattle, food and everything else. The police joined those persons.³
11. February 2, 1996: on occasion of robbing the property from M. Cvjetković (and Mara Jakšić), one of the robbers, in front of the police presence, was chasing Cvjetković's mentally retarded sister Dara CVJETKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, in the backyard. She was crying and begging them to leave her at least one cow. Unknown men caught her up and put the pistol barrel into her mouth and called her "Chetnik woman" and offended her in many other ways...

Gračac

12. April 21, 1996: a group of five men and three women attacked Đuro DUKIĆ, (m), Serb. They came from the neighbour's house (the owner of the house is "Brčina"), where they have been taking off tiles. First they offended him, then slapped him and after he fell down on the floor they beat him up with legs and hay forks. After the police in Gračac refused to investigate the case saying it is a "trivial" one, he and his wife went to Zagreb, where he had to seek medical help because of the inflicted injuries. He had to stay in Trauma hospital for a few days.

Kijani

13. August 13, 1997: Boško POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in January 8, 1931, was taken into the police station in Gračac. The inspector interrogated him and asked questions about everything. Then he abused him physically and pushed him around, he even tore his shirt open. The inspector forced him to stay still for two hours. On the CHC's protest the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Croatia (MUP RH), on September 16, 1997 replied that the police inspector treated Boško POPOVIĆ "correctly and in official manner".

Mazin

14. June 6, 1996: three persons in uniforms had beat up badly one man, stabbed him with a knife and then fired over his head. (UNHCR)

Palanka

15. September 28, 1995, Bogdan BRKIĆ, called "Boško", (m), Serb, born in 1926 was bitten up badly in his house. They broke him two ribs and then threw him in the

3 They humiliated him and said: "Čedo, chetnik, you are preparing everything for chetnik's return. You are bigger chetnik than those who ran away from Croatia..."

brook. A few days after the military operation "Storm" he was tied up, they put the knife under his throat and burnt his legs. In both cases, the attackers wore Croatian army uniforms.

Knin

Biovičino Selo

16. Around August 15, 1995. A group of Croatian soldiers broke into the house of Srđan (Petar) SLADAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1948. He stayed in the village with his father, 85 years old man: He was not a Serb soldier. After they broke into the house they threatened him with armed weapons and asked for German marks. Since he did not have any money, they tied his hands on his back with a strap, wrapped up his legs with a glass wool, burnt them and left the house. When his father managed to get the burning clothes off him, the meat was already burnt. He took him to the hospital in Zadar. Upon arrival to the hospital he was arrested and taken to the prison in Split without any reason at all. He was kept in the prison without any charges pressed against him until first pardon by the government of the Republic of Croatia.

Biskupija

17. April 1, 1997: at 23, 15, three or four unknown men attacked Jeka, (f), born in 1925 and Ilija RUSIĆ, (m), born in 1919, Serbs, in their family house. A man with a gun entered the house by force and asked for money. He beat J. Rusić's shoulder with his rifle. Since they did not have any money they took away their TV.⁴
18. April 18, 1997: in the middle of a day Jovanka KATIĆ, (f), Serb, was attacked. A lamb was taken away from her.
19. April 19, 1997: in the middle of a day, a younger man who lives in her house beat Đurđija MILIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1929. He threatened her and forbade her to approach her house again.
20. February 27, 1998: Radon (Steve) PRIG, (m), Serb, born on July 28, 1929, drove friends to Biskupija where they met with temporary owners of their houses. On the return Jozo?, a settler from Konjic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), who lives in the house of Mirko Lako, physically attacked Radovan Prljic. He was pushing and slapping him and broke off the steering wheel in his car and finally he tried to push Radovan's car into the ditch. An unknown man who was passing by accidentally prevented the incident.

Golubić

21. December 31, 1995, Bosiljka KESIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1929, was beat up. On that day she was at her brother's house when two men in civilian clothes broke in. They introduced themselves as police officers and rushed at inmates. Her brother's wife

4 Earlier, somebody threw stones at their house.

fell down on the floor and broke an arm, while B. Kesić jumped through the balcony. Unfortunately one of the attackers caught her and beat her up and she had to ask for a medical help.⁵

22. **Middle of the January 1996:** Three strong men broke into the house of Marija, (f) and Marko PLAVŠA, (m), Serbs. One of them was in the Croatian army uniform. Firstly they threatened to kill them if they mention their visit to anybody. Then the attackers asked Anica, (f) and Nikola PLAVŠA, (m), Serbs, to give them cattle but the cattle had been taken away from them earlier.
23. **March 18, 1996:** during the day two soldiers came into the house of old people Mara, (f) and Ilija GLOGINJA, (m), Serbs. They searched the storeroom and found five smoked hams. Since the old people cried for help they did not take the smoked hams away. However, on March 21, 1996 three men with armed weapons came again around 10.00 p. m. Because they did not find smoked hams (Mara and Ilija put hid them) they broke front doors of the house and came inside. They forced them to lie down on the bed and then they put pillows over their heads and threatened them with guns. Then they broke all furniture in pieces.⁶
24. **March 18, 1996,** around 11.00, three Croatian soldiers broke into house of Ilija RONČEVIĆ, (m), Serb. They abused and threatened him and asked him for foreign currency, which he didn't have.
25. **May 24, 1996,** a group of robbers broke into the house of Simo ĐEPINA's son (he is in exile) which he was keeping up and maintaining. The old man resisted them, however since he had asthma attack he died.
26. **May 15, 1996,** a soldier physically abused a completely naked man. (DOS)
27. **July 13, 1996:** unknown persons stole all chicken from Marija, (f) and Mirko ARULA, (m), Serbs. They were also threatened with murder and insulted often.
28. **July 15, 1996,** around 11.00 two younger men rushed at the door house of Ilinka, (f) and Đuro KESIĆ, (m), Serbs. When Đuro opened the door a little, two men blinded him with an unknown spray and they tried to do the same to his wife Ilinka. They were crying for help and Croatian soldiers — guards in a nearby army base — heard them and help them.
29. **July 15/16, 1996,** three unknown men came to loot the house of Milka DŽEPINA, (f), Serb. They locked her up, threatened to kill her and then stole 30 kilos of fat, two bacons, a vacuum cleaner, clothes and supplies that she got from the Red Cross. M. Džepina jumped through the window and dislocated her leg, but finally managed to escape.
30. **At the end of March 1997,** Stojanka, (f), born in 1929 and Mirko DŽEPINA, (m), born in 1928 and Stojanka's sister Milica DASNIČIĆ, (f), born in 1928, Serbs, came back to Croatia. Upon their return they found their family house abandoned, and immediately started reconstructing it and enabling it for normal life. *Marijan*

5 *Bosiljka Kesić* didn't leave Croatia. Her husband died on August 14, 1995. Her house was robbed on August 20 1995, after what she left to Zagreb temporary. On her return to Golubic, on September 19, 1995, she found her house totally robbed and devastated.

6 An army base in Golubić is located near the house, only a few hundred meters away.

Pavlović physically attacked them and threw them out of the house, saying the house was reserved for the Bosnian refugees. The police protected these persons.

31. May 20, 1997: unknown robber with a car registration number KI 355 —?, attacked Jovanka VUKOVIĆ, (f), Serb. He tried to beat her up while yelling at her "F...Tudman!" but she managed to run away from him. When she went to report the incident to the Croatian police they asked her: "Why don't you complain to Milan Martić!?"
32. May 1997: Nikola Matić, a settler from Kiseljak lives in a house of Ružica JERKOVIĆ, (f), Croat. When she was passing by and saw him cultivating the garden she greeted him he hit her leg with a hoe.
33. September 24, 1998: around 11.00 two younger settlers from Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Ivica?* — lives in a house of *Ilija Vujasinović* and *Željko?* — lives in a nearby house) interested Zoran (Jovo) BJELOBRK, (m), Serb, born on June 25, 1961 in Radučići. They insulted him by calling him a "Chetnik", then *Željko?* attacked Zoran with a knife. He chased him and physically abused his wife.

Kistanje

34. August 6, 1995: soldiers in "masked hats" found Milan BJELANOVIĆ, called "Miško", (m), Serb, in his house since he did not leave with a refugee column. About 30 soldiers slapped him around and insulted him called him by a name of "Chetnik" and threatened to slaughter him. They were beating him with guns and legs and wanted to cut his throat. Then, soldiers stopped another passer by and after abusing him they killed him. Bjelanović took this opportunity to escape by jumping through the window and ran away. He was hiding there until the army left the village. They burnt his house.
35. March 22, 1997: during the day, family of Dušan KARANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, was physically thrown out from their house. Settlers from Janjevo organised the action with the permission of Minister *Jure Radić*. The police was just observing the incident without doing anything.⁷
36. May 13, 1997: during the day, the returnees Darinka (f), born in 1938 and Stevan LALIĆ, (m), born in 1929, Serbs were thrown out from their house even though police was guarding them. 50 persons — settlers from Janjevo did it.
37. May 16, 1997: a group of settlers from Janjevo attacked Danica BEZBRADICA, (f), Serb and physically abused her. They threatened her because she gave shelter to the returnees *Milica* and *Milan Bezbradica* at her house. Their houses were taken into possession of settlers. They told her "there is nothing for you in Croatian Janjevo".
38. May 16, 1997: during the day Vukosava, (f), born in 1939 and Savo ŠTRBAC, (m), born in 1933 were thrown out from their house. After their return to Croatia, the police allowed them to live in their house, but a month and a half later, the

⁷ Family *Karanović* returned from the exile. Their family house was burnt but rebuilt later on. When they returned they moved into their house. Soon after they were kicked out from their house because it was given to the family from Janjevo. Since then, family *Karanović* lived on different addresses (paying the rent all the time) and still not in their house.

commissioner of the Croatian government, *Nikola Matić*, together with the group of settlers from Janjevo threw them out from the house because the house was “re-served for settlers from Janjevo”.

39. May 16, 1997: during the day, *Nikola Matić*, with the group of people threw out Stevan PERIĆ, (m), Serb and his wife from the house. He “sealed” a house because it was “assigned to people from Janjevo for good”.
40. May 16, 1997: during the day Vesna, (f), born in 1930 and Vasilj LALIĆ, (m), born in 1931, Serbs, were thrown from their house. The house was sealed as well as everything else in the house.
41. May 27, 1997: around 4.00, Boško TRAJŽIVUK, (m), Serb, was allowed to cultivate his garden and rebuild his burnt house. The reason was the same. The house and land is “in the property of people from Janjevo”.
42. June 11, 1997: Boško MAŽIBRADA, (m), Serb, around 45 years old was attacked and slapped. While Boško was sitting in his neighbour’s garden a policeman in the uniform asked him to show his identity card and then he searched him. Finally, policeman slapped Boško and forbade him to come to his neighbour house anymore.
43. April 8, 1998: Petar (Petar) MANDIĆ, (m), Serb, born on October 21, 1920, was attacked. On that day he went to visit his house and he was returning to the house of *Ivica Katalenić*, where he was temporarily settled down. A settler from Janjevo in a red caravan, without registration plates, was following him. The man was short with dark skin. He was already known for this kind of threats. He insulted Petar and threatened him with murder if he sees him again. On the August 18, 1998 he was similarly attacked and physically abused again, by a settler who was driving a car with registration numbers ZG 359 — SS and was threatening to “cut his head off”.⁸

Knin

44. On August 22, 1995: Dušan (Miloš) DRPA, (m), Serb, born on February 21, 1938. He stayed in Knin and sheltered at the UNCRO-camp. After he received the pass from general *Čermak*, because he did not want to leave Knin, he settled in his house from August 16, till August 23, 1998. But on August 22 three soldiers took away from him his vehicle, stereo and sleeping bag. He reported the case to the police. Half an hour later soldiers came back again, took away his passport, beat him up and threatened him with murder. Under the protection of UN soldiers he returned to the UNCRO-camp and on September 16, 1995, departed for Serbia in the convoy.
45. Dalibor Lovrinović, physically attacked and slapped Stevan (Obrad) VUK-MIRICA, (m), Serb, b. on December 8, 1942, on April 7, 1997 in Knin. It happened on “the crossroads *Dešića*”. Dalibor Lovrinovic lived in Stevan’s house.
46. On April 10, 1996: Branka ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb was beat up in the hall way in the Court. She pressed charges against *Paško Perić* and TVIK, for assigning him her apartment. The accused came to the trial accompanied by 20 persons. His son hit

⁸ The same person physically abused *Drago Ljubović*, 78 years old and *Drago Novaković*, 90 years old.

- prosecutor 4 to 5 times with legs while insulting her all the time. That was registered in the Court minutes, but the trial was not held in the end. Among the group of 20 people, which accompanied P. Perić, there was a Knin parson, father *Luka Delić*, who did not oppose the attack and even after the incident joined the attacker and his father for a drink
47. On May 15/16, 1996: Savo MIJAKOVAC, (m), Serb, b. 1922, was beat up. He ended in Knin hospital in a coma.⁹
 48. The end of 1996: certain "*Sebastijan from Imotski*" physically abused Aleksandar MIRKOVIĆ, (m), Croat, born in 1967, a mentally unstable person, every time he met him in the town. A. Mirković returned from the refuge exile on October 18, 1996. Certain "*Sebastijan*" physically maltreated him four times because "*he left with Chetniks*". During the Serb occupation he was abused because he was "*Ustasha*".
 49. On April 8, 1997: five persons in Croatian army uniforms broke into house of Jovan JOKIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1933, by smashing front doors of the house with a beam. They abused him and his brother verbally and even tried to get them out from their house by force because "*it was no longer their house*". Military and civil police protected them.
 50. On April 10, 1997: an old woman, a Serb returnee was passing by the pizzeria *Šimić* in Knin. One of the guests from pizzeria tripped her and then tried to strangle her. Other guests from pizzeria saved the old woman while she was almost unconscious. The attacker took her plastic bag with food and threw it across the street.
 51. On April 25, 1997: a group of people from Janjevo attacked Luka (Boško) BJELANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on January 2, 1934. They threatened him and his wife with a murder or eviction. They declared themselves as "*Ustashas*". Unknown persons took away from Luka's parent's house almost everything. They were about to return to Croatia.
 52. On June 13, 1997, in the evening: Boris ČUPKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1955, was physically maltreated. The colonel of Croatian army, *Ivica Franić*, from Split, beat his head up with fists and his body with legs. He dragged by his beard and threatened to "*slaughter him and his kids*".¹⁰
 53. The end of June 1997: Certain? *Rajačić* (publican) first verbally then physically attacked Todor MAGLOV, (m), Serb, born in 1928, while he was making checking up on his vineyard. Three friends were with him.

9 Because his house was given to others to live in he stayed at his relative's house. While the attackers were abusing *S. Mijakovac*, they also put over her head a blanket and sat on it. They threatened to kill her if she begged for help or if she tried to move. *S. Mijakovac* survived heavy physical abuse only thanks to his brilliant physical and health condition. It all leads to a conclusion that attackers intended to murder him, but didn't manage to find reasons to do it.

10 *Boris Čupković* didn't leave Croatia. Nevertheless, the business place, where he used to have a restaurant, was given to the colonel of Croatian army, *Ivica Franić*. He rented the place to *Ivica Marijanović*. *Franić* was probably angry after he heard that the owners of the restaurant demanded the return of their rightful property at the Court. The police registered the incident, but *B. Čupković* was advised in a friendly manner to keep away from *Franić* and the restaurant, because *Franić* "was an angry man".

Kovačić

54. August 27/28, 1996: the robbers broke into yard of Marija ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, born on January 16, 1924. (Her husband's sister *Ika*, (f), Serb, b. 1914, lives with her). They slaughtered two sheep and two pigs in the yard and took them away. Prior to that incident they threatened to kill them if they try to report this event.¹¹
55. March 10, 1997: certain young woman *Nevenka Dadić*, with the help of *Marijo Barišić*, physically maltreated Marija ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1951. Nevenka Dadić first dragged her by her hair and when Barišić took hold of Ms Đujić, she beat her up with hands all over her head and then with legs all over her body. Marija Đujic started to bleed immediately. *Nevenka Dadić* was shouting at her screaming that she would drink her blood at the same time cursing her Chetnik's mother. She warned Marija: "If you report this to the police you will bite the bullet!". Her former neighbour *Joso Zorko* saved her. Marija had to seek medical help and after that she left the Republic of Croatia.
56. Around June 10, 1997: a neighbour's dog Alsatian bit Olga ĐUJIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1951, in her leg. Her neighbour — a settler from Bosnia and Herzegovina, was deliberately keeping his dangerous dog near the road where Olga has to pass on her way to the yard and vineyard.¹²
- 57.-58. August 5, 1997: before noon, *Ratka MEDAKOVIĆ*, (f), Serb (she lives and works in Germany for 30 years), visited temporary users of her house. They threw her out from the house and forbade her to come near it. In the evening hours, around 21, 30 two policemen came into her sister house where Ratka was staying. They were very arrogant and asked her to show her identity card and then warned her not to approach her house because she would disturb temporary users that live in it. Very soon after they left her sister's house, a huge part of concrete block was thrown at the doors of the house, and windows broke down. At 3,45 after midnight, a stone was thrown into house through broken window.

Ljupče

59. August 8/9, 1996: around 1,30 in the morning, a car "rotten cherry colour" stopped in front of the house of *Nikolina*, (f) and *Dušan ORLOVIĆ*, (m), born in 1930, Serbs. Three military police officers left the car and started off towards stable. The owner saw them and asked them what they wanted: "You, gypsy motherfucker!" Immediately after, one of them took out the pistol, fired two bullets in the ear, and then they beat D. Orlović, hitting him with legs and hands. The MCK took care of him afterwards. When his wife reported the case to the police, they answered her not to bother about "that kind of stuff" and not to come to them after she had already reported the case to MCK. When the wife asked for protection, she got the following reply: "We will not move you out, move out by yourselves."¹³

11 They took away the pigs from that old women in Christmas 1995, in April 1996 they took away a cow and around May 1, 1996 three sheep, in May second cow.

12 Police patrol warned the dog's owner that his treatment was not good, but they also advised Olga Dujic that if she didn't like it in Croatia she could go to Serbia.

13 *Dušan Orlović*, was beaten by Croatian soldiers, who entered first in the village during the "Storm". He waited for them in front of the house.

60. August 8/9, 1996: around 1.00 after midnight, in the house of DRAGINJA, (f), 70 years old and Ilija CVIJANOVIC (m) 80 years old, Serbs, three military police officers broke in by smashing the door down. They searched the ground floor of the house, but they did not go up to the attic, where the owners hid.

Mokro Polje

61. At the end of August 1995: two robbers in the hamlet of Japundžići attacked Desanka JAPUNDŽIĆ, called "Desa", (f), Serb, looking for German marks and chain saw. When she said that she did not have any DEM and that she did not know where the chain saw was, they attacked her and put her head on the stump threatening to cut her off with the axe that they found. She showed them the spot where she kept the axe and gave them the last 100 DEM.
62. On the same day they attacked Jandro KOSTIĆ, called "Jandrija", (m), Serb, 80 years old, looking for German marks which he did not have. They pushed and slapped him around.
63. After that near the church, in the centre of the village, they met Maša SUČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, and forced her to take off her clothes, looking for DEM.
64. They visited Manda KANAZIR, (f), Serb, too. They put the pistol in her mouth asking for DEM and yelled: "You Serb bitch, give us the money!". She didn't have any money, so they left her alone.
65. They attacked Svetko POPOVIC, (m), Serb in Popovići. He did not have any DEM, so they knocked him down on the ground and beat him with legs inflicting serious bodily injuries.¹⁴
- 66.-67. The end of August and the beginning of September 1995: Croatian soldiers (4. Brigade) raped Mileva ALAVANJA twice, (f), Serb born in 1950 from Atlagić Kula, who hid in Mokro polje during the military operation "Storm". First time, two Croatian soldiers took her to the storehouse under the pretence to give her flour, but instead they raped her. The second time, three Croatian soldiers raped her in front of her brother.
68. February 11, 1997: by night, unknown thieves maltreated and beat Ruža KANAZIR, (f), Serb. They stole her sheep, hens, radio, a flour, oil, etc.
69. February 12, 1997: unknown persons took away the cow from Đuka (Stevan) KANAZIR, (f), Serb, born in 1931. They beat her up and raped her.

Nunić

70. August 6, 1995: Croatian soldiers found STANA ŠUŠA in the village, (f), Serb. She lived alone. Stana suffered from childlike paralysis, so she had difficulties moving and was not married. Her brothers have lived and worked in Germany for 26 years. Soldiers maltreated and beat her, and looked for the money (they took 20 DEM from her, the only sum she had), and blinded her with "some spray". The looting started and she was afraid to stay at home. She stayed for two months with a woman in another village. In the meantime her farm was completely looted and

14 On the return from Popovići they broke the memorial tablet for dead fighters from NOR, which was placed on the well, called "Bara".

burned. Finally she abandoned Croatia and went to Socialistic Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ).

Orlić

71. **May 15, 1996:** a group of armed men came to the house of **Krstan JASNIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in 1932. They threatened to kill him and then they stole his tractor with the caravan and drove away.

Plavno

72. **End of the August 1995:** two men in Croatian army uniforms came into yard of **Sava SAVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born on January 18, 1917. They inquired whether she had any arms and weapons and about the whereabouts of her sons with the intention to provoke her. They made her sit down on some object in front of her house and put a rifle on her shoulder trying to scare her. They used the rifle to shoot at the windowpane in order to make her confess. When she tried to get up one of them pushed her back and said that he would kill her if she did not listen to him. After that they searched the house looking for the weapon, but that was only an excuse to steal valuable things from her house. S. Savić was afraid to sleep in her house alone for a month.¹⁵
73. **Beginning of the October 1995:** two thieves broke into the house of **Savo SAVIĆ**, (m), Serb, around 70 years old. One of them put the knife under his neck, and another put the pistol behind his neck. They threatened to kill him if he tries to prevent them from stealing and if he says anything about that to anyone. They stole his electric planer, two ordinary planers, radio, tractor, 150 kilo of the cement, vacuum cleaner, some tools, and finally they offered him a cigarette.
74. **The half of the August 1996:** the robbers visited again the old women **Ika**, (f), and **Stana DRAGISIC**, (f), Serb, around 80 years old, although they lived at the inaccessible place. Each time they visited him they took 10 sheep from him. When they loaded last 10 sheep, Stana asked them to leave at least 5 sheep. The demand angered one of them, and he slapped her hard receiving minor bodily injuries.¹⁶
75. **November 23, 1996:** Three men maltreated (without inflicting serious injuries) one older woman. (OESS).

Strmica

76. **January, 1996:** Three men, one in the Croatian army uniform and two civilians broke into house of **Dušanka Bijelić**,¹⁷ called "Duška" in the hamlet of Barovnice. Her mother **Stevanija BAROVNICA**, (f), Serb, born in 1929, was at the time in the house. They abused Stevanija and one of them dressed in the military clothes

15 Unidentified Croatian soldiers killed her husband, *Todor Savić*, called "Dušan", born on August 6, 1908, with a knife. The incident occurred in the evening at the entrance of the hen house. When she heard shoots coming across the village she ran away to the surrounding woods with a group of elderly people.

16 These days numerous cars came into Plavno in order to steal. The following cars with the registration plates: KI 286 — IA, KI 741 — AB and KI 355 — IK (Kiseljak, Bosnia and Herzegovina) came these days.

17 She works with her husband *Rajko* in Switzerland. Her parents did not manage to preserve her house, which was totally robbed and partially burnt.

pointed a knife at her and asked her to pay attention to it. Then he fired several shots in the direction of the window where Stevanija was standing by.

77. **January, 1996:** a man in the uniform abused Ilija BAROVNICA, (m), Serb, born in 1928. He cussed at him, put a rifle under his neck and demanded what was he doing here.
78. **The end of February 1996:** a group of soldiers broke into the yard of Vaso (m), and Nikola RADOŠ, (m), Serbs. They stole eight sheep and eight hams from them. They came again on the March 10, 1996, and one of soldiers pushed Vaso into one room and threatened him with a gun. Meantime others took away the rest of his sheep.
79. **On the March 4, 1997:** policeman in the uniform broke into house of Stevanija BAROVNICA, (f), Serb, born in 1929, while her husband was in the hospital. He put a rifle against her forehead and threatened to kill her. Then he hit her backbone hard with a leg. When Borovnica went to report the incident to the police station in Strmica she saw a policeman there who abused her.

Uzdolje

80. **July 17, 1996:** a group of unknown men abused an elderly woman and man (around 90 years old). They stole their humanitarian aid.
81. **On the August 18, 1998:** a returnee Nikola (David) PETROVIĆ, (m), Serb, born on May 7, 1934, walked from his village to the town of Knin to pick up his identity card. Around 4.00, an unidentified car stopped near him close to the South army base. A middle-aged man and a woman were in the car. A man got out from the car and forced N. Petrović into the car. He beat Nikola with legs and fists, and insulted him because of his ethnicity. He took him to the Knin fortress and kept beating him all the time. He tied a rope around his neck and threatened that he would tie him to the car and drag him around. Woman stopped this whole affair and after that a man took 200 DEM and 200 Croatian kuna from Nikola. He also tore apart his citizenship certificate, broke his battery and crushed his glasses. They left Nikola half-conscious, beaten up and all blooded.

Varivode

82. **On the September 23, 1995:** unknown thieves abused Bojanka MILOŠEVIĆ, (f), born Berić, 42 years old, from Varivode. They beat her up and wounded her with a knife.

Vrbnik

83. **On the August 6, 1995:** around 11. 30 Anica VUKADIN, (f), Slovenian, born on July 24, 1928, injured a leg while she was taken away to the UNCRO camp. As a consequence of the injury her leg was cut off on the December 12, 1995.

Zečevo

84. **On the March 8, 1997:** around 19. 30, an unknown man in the masked uniform abused, beat and slapped Vujo MANDIĆ, (m), born in 1921, and Slobodan MANDIĆ, (m), born in 1930, Serbs. They told him they were Serbs after he inquired about their ethnicity. There were 20 more people with the attacker; some

of them wore civilian clothes and some wore uniforms. They came into the village as hunters. They came by cars whose registration plates were ŠI 123-J; ZD 533-B; ŠI 562 — C; ŠI 882 G and ŠI 595 — AE.

Žagrović — Raškovići

85. On the August 6, 1995: Croatian army soldiers caught Milica KARANOVIĆ, (f), Serb, around 70 years old, near Pađen, where she wanted to hide during the attack on Knin. Men in black uniforms abused her and intended to kill her, but Croatian policeman Šime Vukas saved her and brought her home.
86. In the middle of August 1995: unknown persons — armed robbers, physically maltreated Glišo (Mara and Nikola) ZELEMBABA, (m), Serb, 52 years old. They knocked out his tooth, beat him up all over his body and crashed his head with a rifle. (He died from these injuries shortly after)¹⁸
87. On the January 6, 1996: civilian and military police came across to the village of Žagrovići. Milan ZELEMBABA wore an overall with the inscription “*Electrical transport Knin*” written in Cyrillic letters (this overall belonged to his nephew). Military police officer wanted to shoot him immediately, but a civilian saved his life. They ordered him to take the overall off and to burn it. He did that.
88. On the May 10, 1996: around 18.00 a group of unknown men broke into house of Teodora, called “Toja”, (f), born in 1945, and Jovo RAŠKOVIĆ, (m), Serbs. They tried to evict Teodora and Jovo from the house. They pushed Teodora down the stairs and she broke her hip. She had to undergo medical treatment at the hospital.
89. On the March 7, 1997: around 16.00 four unknown persons broke into the house of Milka RAŠKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born in 1931, (she didn’t leave Knin). They threatened to kill her and take away her house from her. They pushed and slapped her around until she fell to the ground.
90. On the March 8, 1997: around 18.00 three unknown persons broke into house of Teodora and Jovo RAŠKOVIĆ. They came by the personal car with registration plates from Tomislavgrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina, TG 451 HA. They broke door panes and said they received the Court decision according to which the house belonged to them. They demanded that Teodora and Jovo leave the house. They beat up Jovo with hands over his face and head, and when he fell down on the floor they started to beat him with legs. They also hit Teodora and she fell down and bumped her head against the fridge. The police took Jovo and Teodora to seek medical help.
91. On the July 4, 1997: around 22.00, unknown man in military clothes drove away a few elderly women that were sitting under mulberry tree and talked. On that occasion he hit Manda RAŠKOVIĆ on her head, (f), Serb, born in 1935, with a hard thing. She fell down on the ground and left half-conscious and blooded. Somebody called police and police took Manda to the hospital, but the attacker was not revealed.¹⁹

18 Two Croatian army soldiers killed his father *Nikola Zelembaba*, on his house entrance on August 6, 1995.

19 “She was hit in the head, on the area of forehead, left eye and chest...” (from the diagnoses of doctor *Lovričević*)

92. On the February 10, 1998: *Irena Cindrić*, a settler from Vojvodina, verbally and physically attacked a returnee *Nikola (Božidar) RAŠKOVIĆ*, (m), Serb, born on June 12, 1933. Her husband took part in that incident, too.
93. February 1998: a settler from Slavonski Brod *Marko Krstanović* beat up *Kojo RAŠKOVIĆ*, (m), Serb, on his field.
- 94.-95. On the April 26, 1998: around 18.00, a settler from Slavonski Brod *Marko Krstanović*, provoked people that lived in hamlet of Raškovići, and he attacked *Đuro RAŠKOVIĆ*, (m), and his father *Jovo*, (m), Serbs. He physically attacked and beat them with legs. He threatened others as well, and that was not the first time he did it. During that incident, a CHC activist, *Olga ŠIMIĆ*, called "Olja", (f), Croat, was caught in the field. She tried to solve the situation but *M. Križanović* attacked her as well. He hit her under the eye and she asked for a medical help. Son *Tadija* threatened to break her legs adding that he would slaughter everybody from the village of Raškovići.

Korenica

Jošani

96. September, 1995: around 2.00 in the morning, 6-7 persons broke into house of *Anica*, (f), born in 1933, and *Ljubomir (Anica) RADAKOVIĆ*, (m), born in 1958. They beat them up with hands, legs and rifles. They stole a cow from them.²⁰
97. On the January 28, 1997: at 17.30 *Anica*, (f), born in 1933, a mother and *Ljubomir (Anica) RADAKOVIĆ*, (m), born in 1958, a son were attacked and physically maltreated. The attackers stole 1700 DEM and 500\$ from them. Police took *Lj. Radaković* to doctor in Udbina, because of physical injuries.
98. On the January 28, 1997: around 18.00, two armed and masked men in Croatian military uniforms attacked *Milan*, (m), and *Janko DRAŽIĆ*, (m), Serbs, in their house. They stole 2000 DEM from them.

Ličko Petrovo Selo

99. July, 1998: a returnee, *Marija NAKARADA*, (f), Serb, around 55 years old was raped. Before the incident happened she received numerous blackmailing letters. The police did not do anything to protect her.

20 Three 30 years old men in the Croatian military uniforms stole two calves from mother *Anica* and her son *Ljubomir Radaković*, in the March, 1996, around 9.00 in the morning. In the May of same year, two armed men stole a lamb from her and killed her dog.

Obrovac

Obrovac

100. On the August 10, 1995: a Croatian soldier called "Čovo" from Medvjeđa, raped and threatened with weapon Jovanka GAVRANOVIĆ, (f), Serb.²¹

Žegar

101. On September 10/11, 1998 nine persons broke into the yard of family Zelić. They broke the windows on the truck, tractor and house, throwing out other things and then physically maltreated Božica ZELIĆ, (f), born in 1927. They also threatened Veljko, (m), born in 1955, and Vladimir, (m), born in 1959, and Slobodan, (m), born in 1966, Serbs.

Otočac

Glavace

102. On the August 8, 1995: Milka ŽEGARAC, (f), her son Milan, (m), 49 years old, and daughters Anka, (f), 58 years old (mentally ill person) and Jelena, (f), 46 years old (half blind), were imprisoned. They were transported to Otočac, and the following day to the Investigation prison in Gospić, where they stayed for 11 days. Her son Milan was kept in prison charged for rebellion and convicted to two and a half years in prison (he was later pardoned). When Milka Žegarac returned to her house she found out that 2 cows, 3 pigs, and 40 sheep, a tractor with a trailer other attachments and a lot of other things were missing.

Vrhovine

103. Around September 15, 1995: at 5.00 in the morning, two Croatian army soldiers came into the yard of Mićo SRDIĆ, (m), Serb, born in 1947. He stayed in the village after the military operation "Storm". They abused him and asked him why he did not go with others. Afterwards they ordered him to jump in the well, but he refused to do it. Then they beat him up with legs and arms and left him lying unconscious in the yard.

104. June, 1996: Slavko IVANČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, slept in the nearby woods for eight days. He was allowed to remain in his house because robbers threatened and abused him. They tried to kill him as well.

105. On October 16/17, 1996: during the night, Mirjana GALO, a head of the organisation HOMO from Pula, was beaten up. Siniša Glušac from Vrhovina beat her up.

21 Her husband Ante Gavranović, (m), Croat, born in 1952, submitted a request for purchasing apartment in which they lived, after the military operation "Storm". Their house in Obrovac was burnt, and the family house in Žegar devastated. They replied that the apartment belonged to the police, and then they evicted them on August 1996.

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PART TWO

Former UN Sector North

06101820

Introduction

Presumptions for Facing the Past

Clear awareness about ones' past is an essential condition for the normal everyday political (but also cultural, educational, scientific, etc.) life of a community. A clear and well-defined picture of one's own past is not only important for establishing the nation's collective identity, but above all, for paving the way for public communication. When lies are not in the very foundation of the nation, at least in principle, a truthful approach to current events is attainable. Hiding the truth about the past (particularly the recent past whose participants are still publicly active), often puts a strain on many *milieux* with unfavorable consequences—in the long run—for their lives.*

In local application, this problem has been urgent in the last few years. This is especially so as the last century is marked by aspirations for a radical reinterpretation of the relatively recent past. This is all in order to finally discover and eventually reflect upon many of the aspects of history that were ideologically hidden for centuries. But this important and justified aspiration, in most cases, has itself ended in a new ideological sweeping under the carpet of the public communication of "unpleasant" national past components. In the Croatian case, Jasenovac (the biggest concentration camp organized by the Ustasha's Croatian puppet regime during World War II) was replaced by Bleiburg (the location in Austria where in 1945 victorious partisan units took revenge for the Ustasha war crimes against soldiers and civilians, mostly of Croat origin) as symbols chased out of the public consciousness. However, the method remained almost identical. The old cynical proverb that says, 'what we can learn from the past is that we can learn nothing from it,' was again given empirical confirmation. Along with the military, political, economic and other reasons that led to the post-Yugoslav wars, and especially the war started by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) attack on Croatia, ideological invoking of World War II principles has played an undeniable role.

The beginning of the war in the summer of 1991 led to a real catastrophe for a great number of citizens of Croatia. The power of the JNA provoked, as a last expression of

* Taking into account the complexity of social processes, however it is indicative in this context that the political share of the radical right (expressed in the percentage of votes in last years' elections) in western parts of contemporary Germany is much smaller than in the eastern parts, or in the parts of Austria and Switzerland inhabited predominantly by German people. This is due to the fact that only the then West Germany has gone through the process of overcoming the past (*Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung*) — to a large extent, thanks to the strivings of the so-called 1968 generation. On the other hand, this process has been completely absent in Austria (which for decades convinced both itself and others that it was just the first victim of Hitler's aggression). This process was also absent in East Germany (where the predominant ideology interpreted history as if its subjects/citizens had always been on the anti-fascist side). In Switzerland, the country's controversial concessions to the Third Reich aimed at preserving the country's neutrality until recently have not been a topic of discussion. The strengthening of the radical right provokes politically logical reaction on the other side, resulting in a continuous swinging of important actors in the political scene between non-democratic extremes.

despair, the commonly accepted call for outside help in the slogan: "*Stop the war in Croatia.*" There was not much sympathy for this call, however, as the situation at the front lines started to reverse and finally reversed completely in 1995—due to a gradual strengthening of the Croatian military forces along with the disintegration of the JNA, ensuing from the wars in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina (B&H), and the obsolete structure of the army of Srpska Krajina, the Serb side embraced the same slogan. But those who had repeated it incessantly in 1991, showed no sign of hearing it four years later when it came from the other side. Even the formal justifications for military action were identical. Just as the Yugoslav leadership in 1991 tried to persuade the whole world that there was only a limited, internal conflict within the internationally recognized territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) at stake, so did the Croatian leaders in 1995. The Croatian leaders responded to critics with much the same phrase (except that this time, the territory of the Republic of Croatia had been internationally recognized). With all of these differences, the refusal to face the past (both on Croatian and Serbian side) led to similarities which neither sides was prepared to accept.

For the last century, facing the past has been almost exclusively entrusted to the civil society which itself was at the initial stage of formation. Governments and parties, journalists (with some exceptions) and intellectuals, prevalently remained silent when they were not busy overtly promoting ideology that the war, that had initially been defensive, had changed into a civil one. For years, many NGOs and a few individuals, with significant help from abroad, have been an alien body in the Croatian public scene. The results of their actions in the defense of victims of human rights violations were thus necessarily limited, but there were no other actors willing to help.

Since its foundation in 1993, the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (CHC)—aside from its primary role of helping and protecting victims—has worked to gather data on human rights violations in the territory of Croatia. The results have often been published, mostly in the form of statements issued regularly by the Committee, and also in more extensive analyses. Events linked with the military–police operation named "Storm," which was carried out in August 1995, required particularly extensive and careful work, and we now publish the results of these investigations—albeit partially. As these reports contain descriptions of events, which were unknown to many and almost taboo until recently, we wish to point out the crucial factor which is the starting point of this analysis: The representation of the human rights of *all* human beings, regardless of their racial, national, religious, gender, social or other traits.

From the human rights point of view, the August 1995 activity of the Croatian military forces should be evaluated as positive (under the arguable assumption, that the action indeed, could not have been avoided) because it has:

- a) enabled the realization of the right to a safe life for numerous residents of the parts of Croatia, which were under attack from the Krajina area until that time;
- b) permitted the realization of the rights of hundreds of refugees to retain residence in their place of choice (from which they had been expelled);
- c) enabled the realization of freedom of movement for almost all citizens of Croatia as well as for numerous foreigners;

- d) toppled the regime of the so-called Republic of Srpska Krajina, which, by its formation, represented the negation of all human rights of the inhabitants over which it ruled.

At the same time, this action should be evaluated negatively because it caused, as the analysis will show, numerous serious human rights violations, especially:

- a) ethnic cleansing of 1/5 of the Croatian territory (military activity which results in an ethnically clean territory must be named: ethnic cleansing);
- b) numerous murders of civilians in already liberated towns or villages, the death of 3 members of the UNCRO and one foreign journalist;
- c) heavy physical attacks on refugees performed by masses of civilians or uniformed persons;
- d) burning of numerous Serb villages and parts of bigger places;
- e) the government's decision to institute organized occupation of the flats and houses of expelled inhabitants, by which the expellees were deprived *de facto* of the right to use the property they had left;
- f) official acceptance of the nationalistically motivated restrictions on the validity of the international rules of war. This is seen in the fact that punishment of those who committed crimes or criminal acts was never delivered, and the public avoided accepting responsibility, based on the assertion that the crimes (when after a few years it finally was confessed that they indeed occurred) were committed by "uniformed civilians." The army's obvious responsibility for the occupied territory directly after the operation—as well as its responsibility for soldiers and uniforms—did not concern anybody for years; not to mention the responsibility of the state over the army itself. Only when intervention from abroad—after four years of unsuccessful attempts by NGOs and a small number of journalists—had become too present in everyday life did the situation begin to change (though too slowly and not radically enough). The "demon" of The Hague emerged.

Data compiled in this report lead clearly to the conclusion that there was a well-defined intent to carry out "*the final solution of the Serbian question*" in Croatia, in order to create a state with no statistical or politically relevant ethnic minorities. Such an "*elegant*" solution, achieved in cooperation with the other side (the leadership of Krajina, Republika Srpska, and FRY), does not substantially change the fundamental human rights violations of citizens who did not willingly abandon this area.

For the representatives of human rights, it is irrelevant—although politically not unimportant—who did the expelling. Relying on the notion that this was all about "relations between Serbs" is equivalent to attributing—although *post festum*—some sort of legitimacy to "the Republic of Srpska Krajina." Whereas it was, in fact, a group of terrorists with support from the Croatian government, who expelled a great number of Croatian citizens—prevalently of the Serb nationality—from their homes and country. After all, anyone who knew something about the numerous human rights violations of the Serb minority in Croatia over the last 10 years (unpunished mining of thousands of houses which belonged to Serbs, promotions and decorating of those who took part in murders of Serb civilians or prisoners — the cases of the Zec family, Pakračka poljana, etc.) may

conclude that the ritual promises that all rights would be respected were received by those who stayed behind after the military actions had already been launched.

Furthermore, several days after the operation ended, the highest authorities stated that almost everybody was satisfied with the result, while at the same time, they put long-term administrative obstacles in the way of those wishing to return. Such a situation not only potentially harmed numerous Croatian citizens, but also for a longer period led to militarization instead of the rule of law, thus significantly diminishing any prospect of achieving the necessary improvements in Croatia's human rights situation. Silence about all that has been happening could make such a situation terminal; and this is the main reason for publishing this report.

Military–Police Operation “Storm”

The Military — Police Operation “Storm,” which officially lasted from August 4–7, 1995, liberated the former UN Sectors North and South. The area encompassed 10,500 m² and included 28 pre-war municipalities. UN Sector West encompassed 700 m², and UN Sector East covered 2,500 m².¹

After the 1990 multiparty elections in the Republic of Croatia, Croatian politicians and citizens requested the independence of the Republic of Croatia from SFRY. Croatian Serbs strongly opposed this request, and brought up their claim to redesign the internal border of the Republic of Croatia. In that way, they planned to secede from the Republic of Croatia and unite parts where the Serb population was a majority (as well as some other parts) with Serbia. Serbian leaders in Belgrade supported this request and proclaimed this area as a “Serbian Autonomous Territory.” To a great extent, this was the beginning of the conflict. The Yugoslav National Army (JNA) had the task of dividing the warring parties. But, its actions did not bring about positive results. The Croatian government rightfully questioned its impartiality, accusing the JNA of supporting Croatian Serbs in their quest to conquer the territory. Real fights began in the summer of 1991, a few weeks after the proclamation of Croatian independence on June 25, 1991. When the first effective cease-fire was implemented, almost one third of the territory of the Republic of Croatia was under the control of the Croatian Serbs, who were aided first by JNA and then by various forces from FRY. Rebel Serb leaders in Croatia also proclaimed this territory as the Serbian Autonomous Region (SAO) Srpska Krajina.

In the occupied territory, the rebel Serbs committed serious violations of international rights, targeting the local Croatian population. At the beginning of the conflict, members of the rebel Serbs murdered a great number of Croats in the territory. In some villages, mass murders were committed, and civilians and prisoners were tortured and raped. Aside from those serious violations of human rights, the property of the Croats was also destroyed. During the war, the majority of Croatian citizens were expelled or fled from the occupied territories and settled in refugee camps in the free parts of the Republic of Croatia.

At the same time, it is estimated that some 120,000 Serbs moved to the territory under Serbian control or left for other countries. This migration wave began at the outset of war. Of the total number, some of them moved because they were dismissed from their work places or exposed to murder and harrasment, while others left the free parts of Croatia because of their political viewpoint.

1 The occupied territory encompassed almost a third of the territory of the Republic of Croatia, and rebel Serbs proclaimed this artificial state as the Republic of Srpska Krajina.

In 1992, the UN established in Croatia three areas under the protection of the UN (UNPA—United Nations Protected Areas) — in Eastern Slavonia, Western Slavonia and the so-called Krajina area. These areas were divided into four sectors. Sector East consisted of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srijem, including the municipalities of Beli Manastir, Vukovar, the eastern suburbs of the Osijek Municipality, and the most eastern part of the Vinkovci Municipality.

Sector North consisted of the north part of UNPA Krajina, and the southern part was designated Sector South. Sectors East, South and North, and the southern part of Sector West were under the control of the so-called Krajina government, while the northern part of Sector West was under the control of the Croatian government. UNPROFOR took control of Sector East on May 15, 1992 and of the other sectors at the end of June and beginning of July of the same year.² Western Slavonia or Sector West was liberated on May 1, 1995 and Sectors South and North were liberated on August 5, 1995. Sector East, according to the Erdut agreement October 12, 1995, was placed under the control of the UN (UNTAES) until January 15, 1998, when it was reintegrated peacefully into the legal framework of the Republic of Croatia.

Former UN Sector North consisted of 11 municipalities before the war, of which 6 were partly occupied and five were occupied entirely.³ As a result of military-police operation Storm, the occupied territories were repatriated into the Republic of Croatia.

The operation lead by the Croatian army and police has been evaluated as "positive" in the sense that it toppled the Krajina regime, which, as an artificial state, symbolised the violation of all human rights in the occupied territory. Yet, at the same time, operation Storm also resulted in serious human rights violations: murders, executions and disappearances of civilians in villages or on roads, in refugee columns. The greatest number of murdered or missing civilians has been reported in the municipalities of: Glina (46), Gvozd (45), Dvor (43), Vojnić (28), Slunj (25)⁴ and, somewhat less in Karlovac (24), Petrinja (18), Duga Resa (13), Hrvatska Kostajnica (8), Plaški (5) and Sunja (5). Of these, the Municipalities of Gvozd, Slunj, Vojnić and Karlovac are special cases as the number of people killed in the refugee columns and in the villages is almost identical. In other municipalities, however, the greatest number of those killed was in villages—Dvor and Glina, followed by Petrinja, Karlovac, then Duga Resa, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Plaški and Sunja. In Dvor Municipality, 43 killed or missing persons were reported, of whom 40 were missing from their homes. In Glina Municipality, of the 46 registered missing, 36 were killed in or missing from their villages.

As opposed to Sector South, where arson occurred during and immediately after military-police operation Storm, in Sector North, only sporadic destruction of houses was reported during military-police operation Storm. The most frequent method of de-

2 Part of the Human Rights Watch Report — Helsinki (August 1996).

3 Duga Resa (in part), Dvor, Glina, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Karlovac (in part), Ogulin (the Plaški area), Petrinja (in part), Sisak (the Sunja area), Slunj (in part), Vojnić, Gvozd (and Topusko was within this municipality) — based on the 1991 census.

4 CHC received information that a larger number of people were killed in the municipality of Slunj, but this report does not cover a third of the area due to the technical impossibility of confirming certain facts. Also, disputable names were not included in this report. It is possible that 8 other people were killed or are missing in this municipality.

struction, the burning down of houses, was more widespread later, and has continued sporadically until the present day.

*"But, it is obvious that the Croatian authorities have committed heavy violations of international human rights during and after the reintegration of Krajina." Events that occurred during the 5 weeks after operation Storm lead to the conclusion that Croatia's first aim was to reestablish its territorial integrity, as well as to rebuild roads and communications between continental Croatia and Dalmatia. The second goal was the disappearance of the numerous, unwanted minority."*⁵

5 Report of the EU Monitoring Mission, dating from the end of September 1995 forwarded to the public by CHC on October 5, 1995, and published in its entirety by "Novi list."

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Departure of Inhabitants

Some 200,000 individuals abandoned the occupied territories under the pressure of Serb rebel forces and local Serb authorities, due to propaganda and fear. Of this number, part fled due to their participation in the rebellion against the Republic of Croatia. Many did not want to leave the area, but were forced to do so under the pressure of the Serb paramilitary forces and rebel leadership, who did not respect anybody's rights. Only 8,500 individuals, mostly elderly, did not leave the area of the Sectors North and South, but remained in their houses to await the Croatian Army. In Sector North, according to the records, some 4,363 individuals remained in their houses.¹

"According to what has happened and how it happened, I think that this exodus of the Serb population from these territories was prepared by their side and unfolded under the pressure of their army. I believe that in the last minute they estimated that our success was inevitable and the step they took, that suicidal step for this people, according to my opinion, is an indicator of the failure of not only this policy, but in general, the failure of the vision of some kind of greater Serbia and its existence in these territories. I repeat, my opinion is that this scenario was prepared, some time earlier, before the beginning of the operation, as some kind of reserve, fallback option. It unfolded under the pressure of the paramilitary forces and their commanders. Everyone said — We were ordered to do this."²

Although on the territory of Sector North, a smaller number of victims (261) has been recorded than in Sector South (410), this does not diminish or justify the unnecessary human rights violations that occurred during the liberation of the occupied territories. Furthermore, this number cannot be considered final:³ In some places it was not possible to check information received earlier, because no one had yet returned to some of the villages. Also, due to their significant fear, many returnees were reluctant to give testimony.

In the Sector North municipalities, victims included those who did not leave their houses, as well as refugee columns which were exposed to various attacks from airplane grenades, mortar shells, shooting and stoning. In many cases, men were separated from

1 Based on the report of Human Rights Watch — Helsinki.

2 Major-General Petar Stipetić, "Oluja," published by Biblioteka Domovinski rat, number 2, November 1995.

3 At the press conference of May 26, 1999, organized in reaction to CHC's Report on "Military-Police Operation Storm and Its Aftermath— First Part" by the former Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Šeparović and Mr. Penić, it was stated that 911 people were killed in military-police operations "Flash" and "Storm." This number somewhat differs from the figure of 960 given by Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Grujić. CHC is still collecting data about the missing persons during the above operations, and does not have a final number at this point.

the refugee columns in which they were travelling with their families, and later all trace of them was lost. In addition, the refugee columns were often caught in the cross-fire between the two warring parties, which resulted in the largest number of injured and missing persons, but these names are not recorded in this report. In this report, only civilian victims are recorded. Therefore, many names of victims, whose civilian or military identity could not be checked, are not listed here. Part of the guilt for the suffering of those victims can surely be attributed to the Fifth Corps of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian (B&H) Army, as well as to the Serb generals whose tanks the refugee column had to let pass.

It has been recorded that Serb soldiers kept their positions in some parts of Sector North longer than in other areas, and put up stronger resistance. This situation was due to the fact that The Sector was cut off from the higher commands, which were located in Sector South. Thus, the Serb forces in Sector North did not know that the majority of the Serb army had already pulled out towards B&H.

Directions of Refugee Column Movements

There were three main routes that the refugee columns took to leave Sector North. Their direction partially changed as a result of frequent air and tank attacks, during which the refugees hid in the woods and then later returned to their main paths. Most of the time, the columns moved in two directions. Refugees from Vojnić and Gvozd travelled in the direction of Topusko–Glina–Žirovac–Dvor, from where the column entered B&H. This column suffered the greatest hardship in the Topusko–Dvor route, especially in the towns of Glina, Maja, Žirovac and Trgovi. On that part of the road, between August 6 and 9, 1995, a large number of refugees were hurt, of which the majority were from Gvozd, Slunj, Vojnić and Karlovac. Due to fighting carried out between the two warring parties, the column, which was cut off several times, was caught in cross-fire and became the target of attacks from airplanes. From the evening of August 6 until August 9, the column was shelled several times. On August 9 and 10, some of the refugees who had been hiding in the woods returned to the Žirovac–Dvor road and continued to move in the same direction.

Another refugee column also took the Topusko–Glina–Petrinja–Sisak route and followed the Lipovac highway, continuing into Serbia. This column was stoned in Sisak, at which time a great number of refugees sustained serious injuries.

The third route taken was Slunj–Centingrad–Banja Luka. The refugees moving in this direction, mostly from Plaško and Slunj, were also the target of airplane attacks. Civilian victims were recorded, although fewer than at Žirovac.

Treatment of Refugee Columns

Along with the Croatian military forces, the Croatian Defense Council (HVO), the Croatian Army in B&H, and the B&H army also participated in military–police operation Storm. During the action, numerous refugees tried to escape from the columns and re-

turn to their homes, but, in most cases, they were not allowed to do so. Serb leaders prevented them, as did the Croatian army, police and civilians who sporadically intervened. In the territory of Topusko and Sisak, some were allowed to leave, and on these occasions, the Croatian Army and police behaved correctly. On the territory of Lipovac, some 2,000 refugees who left the column were accepted correctly by the Croatian authorities and were secured in collection camps, centers for refugees, from where they soon returned to their homes.

"In the territory of Kutina and Županja, numerous examples were recorded of members of the Croatian police and some civilians helping refugees leave the column and taking care of them in their houses or quickly organizing collection camps. However, in the territory of Glina and Sisak, incidents of stonings were reported, during which some refugees sustained serious injuries. In some villages, feces were thrown at the refugees, and they were physical ill-treated. Yet, overall, between Sisak and Vinkovci, approximately 2,000 individuals were able to leave the refugee columns and receive help from the Croatian authorities in Sisak, Ilova, Dugo Selo, and Ivanić grad. We also recorded some cases of elderly people who, after they left the refugee column, hid in corn fields or in bushes. When attempting to find food, they came across some Croatian soldiers, who fed them and allowed them to return to their homes. In some villages around Slunj, people returned after some 15 days of walking through roadless regions and hidden areas."⁴

A great number of victims were recorded in the refugee column in the region of Banija, which was repeatedly cut off by shelling. Victims were also recorded in villages, where some of the inhabitants, mostly elderly people stayed, in a belief that nothing would happen to them. But, when the Croatian Army passed through the villages in the region of Banija, 187 persons were killed or were considered missing. In some villages, of the total number of persons who did not leave their houses, almost 80% were killed. In the villages bordering the woods near Dvor, members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army murdered the remaining inhabitants. Of those who managed to hide and survive, some were taken to collection centers. When they returned to their homes, they found total destruction. Their property was plundered, and their houses were devastated, burned or mined. One of the inhabitants of Vojnić, who managed to leave the column and returned home on August 7, 1995, found in her furnace a whole charge of bullets which were activated once she lit the furnace. In the territory of Dvor, several elderly civilians were murdered by paramilitary Serb formation members, better known among local inhabitants as the "Black Legion" during their withdrawal.⁵

In contrast with former Sector South, inhabitants from former UN Sector North left for exile much later. From some parts of Kordun, inhabitants started to leave between August 6 and 8. Thus, in this territory, the greatest number of persons injured in a refugee column was recorded. Between August 6 and 9, 1995, the column was the target of attacks from airplanes and tanks, as well as attacks from some individuals of the Croatian Army and the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army. These attacks killed and wounded a great

4 CHC — Report on the treatment of refugees by the Croatian authorities during military-police operation Storm and the possibilities of their return to the Republic of Croatia — January 15, 1996.

5 Based on data collected by witnesses of the withdrawal, this paramilitary group was led by the war criminal, Željko Ražnjatović Arkan.

number of persons, and individual executions of civilians moving in the columns were also carried out.⁶

Testimony on Sufferings in the Refugee Columns

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Karlovac municipality

From the occupied parts of the Karlovac Municipality, departures for exile started on August 6, 1995. On that day, the majority of inhabitants left from the following places: Donji Budački, Krnjak, Gornji Sjeničak, Donji Sjeničak, Lasinjski Sjeničak. In all three Sjeničak villages, 15 inhabitants did not leave their houses. The refugees in the column were witnesses to the hardship of their fellow citizens.

"I went across the bridge over the river Una for Bosanski Novi on Tuesday, August 8, 1995. We were all moving somehow o. k. in the column until Glina. We were moving in two columns, one after the other. When we reached Žirovac, we were shelled. People were killed; there was crying; people were trying to run. Many were leaving their tractors, throwing their bundles away, and running. Women were dragging children. I saw, in Dvor, a dead man in one red "Yugo" car. We were actually cut off by the Croatian Army. I ran into bushes and continued on my own. I walked all the way from Dvor to Novi. There was heavy shelling. I crawled almost all the way. I crossed the bridge crawling on my stomach..."⁷

"When this Storm' started... everybody was leaving. and. so I went. it was awful. There, behind Topusko, Desa BOŽIĆ was killed."⁸

"It was Saturday, as far as I remember. Only the running of people could be heard. Car after car was leaving: first, personal vehicles, then, trucks and tractors were heading out. Two or three days before, we had been told to run. We headed for Gvozd, Topusko, Glina, Petrinja, Sisak, Okučani. True, a stone was thrown on our car, but fortunately it did not hit anyone. American Ambassador Peter Galbraith joined our column and he drove with us all the way to Okučani. We were well received there. They gave us things to eat and drink. We heard that our column was hit with stones, that the car of Mile Čabraja was hit and that the stone injured his head. We also heard that "our people" had been

6 Based on data from the Office for Humanitarian Law in Serbia on August 8, 1995, in front of Žirovac located between three brick houses and a small log-cabin, "on the field next to a stream, between 70 and 100 people were expelled, among whom were women and children. Five or six members of the Fifth Corps (author's note: witnesses state that "Thunder" was written on their insignias) took their guns and started shooting into the crowd." Since witnesses of this event are at present in Serbia, this information could not be verified, and is therefore not included in the description of this report.

7 Witness A. A, Krnjak, County of Karlovac (November 30, 1996).

8 Witness A. B., Barilović, County of Karlovac (December 1, 1996).

caught near Glina, and those who were caught never returned to the column, they were taken to collection centers."⁹

"We left on August 5, 1995, around 5:00 a. m., in our tractor, travelling towards Glina. There, we waited for the UNPROFOR to accompany us. I had never taken this road before. I did not know the way. We were going through Sisak. When we came onto the highway, we were all in one column. When we passed under the overpass, we were stoned from above by a mass of Croatian citizens. We were lucky not to get hit, because where the UNPROFOR was, everything went in order. They only broke my glass."¹⁰

*Plaški municipality*¹¹

Although a great number of inhabitants fled from Plaški and its surroundings during military-police operation Storm, 110 persons¹² remained in the village. Among the first to leave for exile were the residents of Ličke Jesenice, who left their village on August 4, 1995. After they left, residents of the neighboring villages also started to leave. Some of the inhabitants found themselves in the column, which on August 7, 1995 was cut off in the territory of Žirovac.

"I was in the column, which was stopped near Žirovac, on the way to Dvor. Soldiers and tanks started to fire at the column. People started to run away, and those who did not succeed in fleeing were killed. Tanks were driven over the dead bodies scattered on the road. There was a great number of deaths, of those many were elderly men over 80. Boško Klipa and Jovo Grković were also shot in the chests there; both were civilians. One other man was forced to climb the steep slope towards the tank. When he started to climb, a soldier riddled him with bullets from his rifle. On the hill, there was Muslim army, and on the road, Croatian army. The soldiers' insignias had "Thunder" written on them. They separated men in two groups: those born before 1935 were separated from those born after 1935."¹³

Slunj municipality

The inhabitants of the Slunj area started to leave between August 5 and 6, 1995. Residents began leaving from Slunj on August 5, from Točak on August 6, and from other areas on August 7. Part of the column went in the direction of Topusko-Žirovac-Dvor, and the rest of the refugees moved in the direction Slunj-Cetingrad-Banja Luka.

"Around ten thousand refugees, who set off on Saturday from the area of Slunj for the area of B&H under the control of the Bosnian Serbs, came to Topusko. Personnel of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had spoken to the local authorities in order to secure accommodations and assistance, as due to the ongoing mili-

9 Witness A. C. Pruginić, Serb, Karlovac Municipality.

10 Witness A. D. Karlovac, Karlovac county

11 Plaški was within Ogulin Municipality based on the 1991 Census.

12 Based on SDF Plaški data.

13 Witness A. E., Lapad, County of Plaški.

tary operations, they were not to continue their journey." said the spokesman of UNHCR, Alemka Lisinski in Zagreb.¹⁴

"From here in Slunj, the column set forth on August 5, 1995. They headed in the direction of Cetingrad-Banja Luka. Towards Cetingrad, there was shelling. The column was shelled near RIZ-a by the Croatian Army. Some people were injured there. One woman was killed and the mother of my husband was wounded."¹⁵

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Dvor municipality

From Dvor Municipality and its surroundings, residents started to move to exile between August 5 and 7, 1995. They started to leave from Dobretin, Zrinska Draga, Lotina, Šegestin and Draškovac on August 5, 1995.

"Talking about the surrender of the 21st Corps of the Serbian paramilitary forces, General Červenko said that the area of Vojnić-Topusko-Gvozd would definitely be resolved tomorrow evening. He mentioned that the only problem was how to remove the civilians from the battle. The Croatian Army did not as yet totally control the communication lines of Glina-Dvor and Kostajnica-Dvor. The Serbs had obstructed the road from Žirovac to Dvor with small cars, tractors and civilians. We believe this was done on purpose and they did not let those people go over the bridge to Bosanski Novi. They were driving their war machinery, along one road of which we were not aware— 3 to 4 km to the south, through the woods.

The deal was that the army would be disarmed — officers and subofficers of the army and the police would be allowed to keep their guns— and they would withdraw together with the civilians towards Dvor na Uni. No one would stop them or separate men and women from their families."¹⁶

The biggest problem resulted from members of the Serbian army mingling in the column in which civilians were moving. That column was shelled between Glina and Dvor on several occasions, and parts of the column in which only civilians were moving were hit. Maja and Žirovac were shelled the most and in this area, a large number of civilians were killed.¹⁷

"It has been established, yesterday and today, that when the 21st Corps surrendered in the former Sector North, in their vicinity and along with them were some 25,000 persons. Of these, some 8,000 had already crossed the border to Yugoslavia by the highway to Lipovac. Croatia had, surprisingly, let the whole army, which had surrendered all heavy weaponry and civilians, go according to the army's wishes. It was difficult to or-

14 "Večernji list," August 7, 1995.

15 Witness A. F. Slunj, County of Karlovac

16 Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Army, General Zvonimir Červenko in the "Slikom na sliku" show, published in "Večernji list" on August 10, 1995.

17 CHC obtained information from several sources that a larger number of people, who were killed in the refugee column, were buried in the area of Rujevac and Žirovac (near the road, in fields and in the nearby forest). There are, allegedly, a larger number of other similar mass graves in that area, but their precise location could not be established.

ganize, but the process had gone smoothly and with no incidents, underlined Dr. Kostović, the vice president of the government. He stressed that the Croatian government had assured the dignified departure of all who wanted it. It is likely, continued Dr. Kostović, that thousands of other people would also leave, according to their wishes, by taking the same road. In the meantime, the Croatian Red Cross offered the possibility of accomodation to the civilians who gradually emerged from the nearby woods. Dr. Kostović explained that there was no free access to the road from Žirovac to Dvor na Uni, which the Serbian paramilitary forces had purposefully blocked with civilians, and this direction of evacuation was not safe. He added that another 30,000 people previously had gone across Dvor na Uni and several hundreds of people from each area had agreed to return to their homes...¹⁸

Glina municipality

From Glina municipality, people took to the road in intervals of almost a week, i. e. from August 2 to 8, 1995. The first to go in a refugee column were the residents of the village of Veliki Gradac, and on the night of August 4 or 5, the inhabitants of Majske Poljane took the road. From Vlahovići and Veliki Obljaj, they started to leave on August 5, from Biješe Vode, Buzet, Brestik and Hajtić on August 6, and from Mali Obljaj, they started to leave on August 8.

"On August 7, 1995, reports from several sources about shelling of refugees on the road between Glina and Dvor were received. The civilian police of the UN managed to establish radio communication with one Serb man and also with the refugee column between Glina and Dvor. That source reported of that there was a shelling of six grenades within a three minute interval at 5: 20 p. m. From the place where he was, this witness could see four deaths and 10 wounded. The source had to stop the investigation, as the grenades kept falling..."¹⁹

Gvozd municipality (former municipality of Vrginmost)

The refugee column was moving in different intervals over the course of 3 days. They left this area between August 5 and 7. From Crevarska, they took to road on August 5, whereas from Čemernica, Pješčanica, Šljivovac, Čremušnica, Donji Bovića and other places, they left on August 6 and 7. This column sustained the greatest hardship on their refugee journey in the area between Topusko and Žirovac.

"We crouched near a house, above the hospital in Glina. Zora (author's note: Zorka Maslić) was standing near the column, when a Croatian soldier riddled her with bullets. They all wore uniforms. There were 8 to 10 soldiers. It was Sunday (on August 6, 1995) at sunset. When Zora was shot, I dared not even look at her. Women and children were

18 Deputy Prime Minister of the Croatian government, Dr. Ivica Kostović, in an interview for Hrvatski Radio, August 10, 1995.

19 From the report of the Humanitarian Crisis Service (compilation of reports on human rights).

also there, some 50 people. We were enough people for 6 buses. They had taken us to a building near the hospital in Glina and we stayed there all day and night."²⁰

"We took to the road on August 6, around 1:30 p. m. We were going in the direction of Gvozd–Glina–Maja–Dvoborn. On the same day, at sunset, the column had been cut off at Maja. Airplanes were making circles; people were falling and running to the woods. A grenade fell in front of us. We laid down, some 20 of us, and then we were hit by a grenade. This is when Miljka Radanović was hit. When I rose to my feet, a fragment shell hit me in the throat and in hand. They had waited for night to come, then they washed the road. I guess Miljka was buried somewhere with the others."²¹

(The Security Council of the UN passed Resolution 1009 on the situation in Croatia, which requested respect for the human and humanitarian rights of those who fled after military–police operation Storm, accused the parties of shelling civilian targets and expressed concern over the difficult conditions of the refugees. The resolution demanded that the government of Croatia abstain from any assault on UN personnel and bring to justice those responsible for every such act. The resolution also noted that Croatia had to fulfil its obligations in connection with refugee protection and freedom of movement.)²²

"Behind Glina, after the crossroad for Petrinja, a road leads to Maja. There the column was cut off. The army walked in, the 21st Zagreb regiment. They did not fire anymore, only the airplanes did. People were hit by grenades. That night, they collected the dead and loaded them onto the wagons."²³

"We had taken to the road on August 5, around 1:00 p. m., over Glina towards Dvor. We travelled 2–3 days, and were stopped somewhere between Žirovac and Dvor. We arrived in Žirovac on August 7. On August 8, 1995, while we were going toward Dvor, we found the dead lying in the road. There was firing from all sides. People were leaving their cars behind and running. We were attacked by airplanes; there was firing. Shells were falling all around and onto us. I saw soldiers in camouflaged uniforms."²⁴

In his statement of August 10, 1995, President of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Laszlo Kovacs, appealed to Croatia to secure free and safe passage to those wishing to leave. The Chairman called upon Croatia to secure safe passage to the Serb people who decide to depart, in compliance with the Croatian Constitution and accepted international norms. He added that he found it necessary that the Croatian government guarantee freedom of movement and security to the international organizations dealing with humanitarian issues.

"We left from there on August 6, 1995 around 5:00 p. m. We went in the direction of Topusko–Glina–Dragotina–Žirovac–Dvoborn. The column moved slowly. In the evening, we were at the bottom of Žirovac, in the morning on the top. We stopped in Vanići. There was chaos... so we all hid in woods. Airplanes were striking; there was shooting and

20 Witness A. G. Gvozd, Sisak and Karlovac county

21 Witness, A. H. Gvozd, Sisak and Karlovac county. The fate of Miljka Radanović has not been completely clarified. Other witnesses state that Miljka Radanović asked for help after being wounded. Allegedly, an ambulance came from Sisak and took her away. However, every trace of her was lost after that.

22 Three members of UNCRO and one British journalist died during military–operation Storm.

23 Witness, A. I. Gvozd, County of Sisak and Karlovac

24 Witness, A. J. Gvozd, County of Sisak and Karlovac

that was heard from Dvor. We could not have taken the main road towards Dvor, so we took an alternate path.... I saw many dead; there were civilians but also Croatian and Serbian soldiers. Serbian tanks were coming after us, so we had to stop and let them pass ahead. In Dvor, tanks lined the side of the road, and we passed among them."²⁵

"We left here on August 6, 1995 around 5:00 p. m., in the direction of Gvozd-Topusko. For 3 days, we were surrounded by troops near Glina. The column moved slowly. Near the bridge in Glina, in the place named Šatornja, the firing started. There was chaos. People had left their tractors. In Brioni, we were waiting for the whole night; tyres were repaired. We headed back for Topusko; there we stayed for 2 nights, surrounded by troops; from there, we returned to the road. From Topusko, we started to move again on August 9, 1995. We were mistreated from the time we left Glina until we crossed the border. We were hit with stones. We mostly saw dead bodies in Glina."²⁶

"There were people with nothing left aside from the clothes they had on them. These people had gone through Žirovica, where their column had been cut off or they had left their cars in Glina, fleeing from the Croatian Army attack. Finally, we took to the road (from Topusko) on Wednesday around 11:00 a. m. The army tried to order us, so that at least one side of the road would be free. Personal cars and buses moved first, then trucks and tractors followed. They repeatedly warned us not to carry any weapons so that the columns' security would not be in question. I saw men in uniforms trying to find civilian clothing. We were moving very slowly and before entering Glina, the Croatian soldiers were standing at the side of the road. They had passed near us and did not annoy us. We then entered Sisak. There was a mass there, and even though police were standing in front of them, they threw whatever came to their hands: stones, bricks, pieces of concrete, and so on. We were in shock. The police pretended not to see anything. Only in one place did I notice a policeman chasing a guy who threw stones. Stoning lasted an eternity for us, not stopping for some 50 km. I saw a woman with two kids near a broken car, frantically waving for someone to stop, but no one did, everybody was scared. I noticed the road was full of glass. After a while, the police stopped us and redirected us to a resting place, where the Croatian Red Cross was distributing food (milk and bread) and gasoline.... In the whole column, no cars had undamaged glass except our car and that of one other man, but the outside of his car was full of holes. The column consisted of the poor people who were the last to leave their homes. This was obvious from their cars. Those with expensive cars had already crossed the border safely."²⁷

Hrvatska Kostajnica municipality

During military-police operation Storm, some 100 persons remained in Hrvatska Kostajnica. The residents from the territory of Croatian Kostajnica went into exile on August 5, 1995, around 3 p. m. The army of the so-called Srpska Krajina had forced the majority of men to withdraw, and mainly elderly women remained in the villages. One group

25 Witness A. K. Gvozd, County of Sisak and Karlovac

26 Witness A. L. Gvozd, County of Sisak and Karlovac

27 Testimony of Ljiljana Korkut, Croatian from Gvozd about the refugee column in the period from August 4-10, 1995 (Recently deceased associate of the CHC). The Operational Team for Human Rights (HRAT) also warned about attacks on the refugee column on August 9, 1995 in the area of Sisak.

of women had stayed in the village of Komogovina, with the intention of waiting for the Croatian Army. Then, a man appeared with a little truck and forced those women to climb in and go with him. The truck was covered with a canopy and it could not be seen who was inside.

*"There were some 15 women and children in the truck. Near the medical center in Kostajnica, the Croatian Army received them. They shouted to the driver to stop the car. He did so, but soldiers started to fire on the truck. Mara Gojsavić was killed at this time, and two women were injured."*²⁸

*Sunja municipality*²⁹

In this area, a large number of residents went into exile. In the occupied part of Sunja, a few, mainly elderly, people remained, most of whom were killed in their houses. The greatest number of the victims were from the village of Četvrtkovac. The residents started their journey into exile on August 5, 1995. The column went in the direction of Kostajnica-Dvor and Sisak-Popovača. There is no data as to whether any people were killed in this column. The column was stoned on this road, and a few refugees sustained minor injuries.

Vojnić municipality

During military-police operation Storm, 463 persons remained in Vojnić and its surroundings. Residents from Vojnić began their journey into exile during the afternoon and evening of August 6, 1995. Residents from Svinice, Ivošević Selo, Knežević Kose, Radmanovac and other hamlets also left this area.

*"We took to the road on August 6, 1995 at 2:00 p. m. We arrived in Topusko and then continued to Glina. We then reached Žirovac, where we stayed for 24 hours. There, we could not go forward or move back. In front of us, the column was assaulted from the right side. This was a Muslim area; they were firing at us. There was panic; people dispersed and hid. Dead bodies were strewn all over the road and on the sides. I saw about 20 dead people."*³⁰

28 Based on statements of witnesses, the driver said that after being stopped and asked who was in the truck, he answered that the "army" is in there. Croatian soldiers then reacted by shooting into the truck and killing Mara Gojsavić. Several other women were heavily and lightly wounded.

29 Sunja was within the municipality of Sisak according to the 1991 census, but has been indicated here separately for the sake of clarity.

30 Witness A. N., Vojnić, Karlovac county

4. List of Killed and Missing Persons from the Refugee Columns

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Duga Resa municipality

1. Milić (Nikole) BOGDANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born around 1916 in Donja Perjasici, Donja Perjasica 15, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile on August 5, 1995. After he separated from his son and wife near the hamlet of Čatrnja, every trace of him was lost. It is still not known what happened to him.
2. Todor (Spasoja) GRUBIŠIĆ, (m), Serb, born around 1920 in Ponorac, Ponorac 9, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County, Glina-Dvor. He went into exile and disappeared in the area of Žirovac.

Karlovac municipality

3. Sava (Đurđa) BIŽIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1910 in Dugi Dol, Dugi Dol 45, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile and was last seen in Topusko.
4. Desanka (Miloša) BOŽIĆ, (f), Serb, born around 1923, Budačka Rijeka, Budačka Rijeka 108, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. She went into exile on August 6, 1995, and was killed in the territory of Žirovac, where she was hit by a grenade thrown from an airplane.
5. Dragica GOJKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, born around 1923, Donji Budački, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. She was in the column that was on the road from Sisak to Serbia. She was stoned while travelling in the column. As she received no medical assistance, she lost blood on the road and subsequently died. Her daughter buried her in Serbia.
6. (?) KOSIJER, called Čane, (m), Serb, born around 1910 in Kosijer, Kosijer, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile with the other local residents. He disappeared in the area of Topusko.
7. Dragica (Mile) KRANJČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1937 in Ivošević Selo, Utinja, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County.
8. Đurđa KRANJČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, around 35 years old, Utinja, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County, (daughter-in-law of Dragica Kranjčević). They both were killed on August 6, 1995, near the place of Maja, on the road between Glina and Dvor, on which the column was travelling. Members of the Croatian Army, who cut off the column and opened fire, killed them.
9. Božica (Todora) MAČEŠIĆ, (f), Serb, born around 1922 in Dugi Dol, Dugi Dol 18, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. She was in the refugee column that was heading towards Dvor. A grenade hit her somewhere near Žirovac. The location where her body was buried is unknown.

10. **Danica (Milutina) MIHAJLOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1909, Krnjački Grabovac 32, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. During military-police operation Storm, she went into exile with the other residents. She was killed in an attack on the column on August 7, 1995 in Žirovac.³¹ The location where she was buried is unknown.
11. **Kata PAVKOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born around 1908 in Zimići, Pavković Selo 3, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. She went into exile with the column. She disappeared in the area of Žirovac. It is not known what happened to her.
12. **Milić (Ranka) PETROVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1931 in Dunjak, Zagorje bb, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. During military-police operation Storm, he went into exile together with 12 elderly people. When they had arrived in Gornji Klasnić, the column was attacked, and people dispersed. When firing stopped his co-travellers found him lying dead under a tree. The location where he was buried is unknown.
13. **Simo (Milovana) ŽIVKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1927 in Krnjak, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He went with the column toward Dvor on August 7 or 8, 1995, when he was hit by a grenade and died.

Slunj municipality

14. **Milka BUĆAN**, (f), Serb, b. 1920 in Gejkovac, Gejkovac bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. She went into exile. She set out to exile on August 5, 1995, and disappeared during the attack on the column in front of Dvor. Since then, there has been no trace of her.
15. **Miloš (Ninka) DEJANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1928 in Ruševica, Ruševica bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile on August 6, and disappeared on August 7, 1995, near Žirovca. No one knows what has become of him.
16. **Đuro (Nikole) GRBA**, (m), Serb, b. 1938 in Slušnjica, Slušnjica bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. At the entry to Dvor, he was hit by an aircraft grenade, causing his death.
17. **Nikola (Jose) JANČIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1945 in Slušnjica, Slušnjica bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. An aircraft grenade hit him just before Dvor. He died as a result.
18. **Ljuba (Mile) MIHAJLOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1915 in Veljun, Veljun 107, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. She went into exile with the column, and was last seen on August 7, on the road to Dvor.
19. **Pero (Mile) MILOŠEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1936 in Broćanac, Broćanac 38, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. On August 5, 1995, he went into exile on his tractor. Upon arriving in front of Dvor, airplanes opened fire upon the column. One grenade hit the tractor, and he died on the spot.

31 The witness saw Danica Mihajlović shot on the road between Žirovac and Dvor.

20. Dragan (Milana) MILJUŠEVIĆ, (m), Serb, born in Žrnica, Žrnica 39, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile on August 6, and disappeared somewhere in the area of Žirovac on August 8. Nothing is known about him since then.
21. Filip MLAĐAN, (m), Serb, b. 1909 in Crno Vrelo, Veljun 96, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile on August 5, and was last seen on August 8, in Donji Žirovac.
22. Milka MLAĐAN, (f), Serb, b. 1912 in Gvozdić, Veljun 96, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. She left for exile together with her husband Filip, and disappeared on August 8, in Donji Žirovac.
23. Ljuban (Sime) SIKIRICA, (m), Serb, b. 1960 in Veljun, Veljun bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. Near Žirovac, he was hit with a grenade fragment. He died immediately, and his body was left in the road. Where he has been buried is unknown.
24. Mile (Radojice) TEPAVAC, (m), Serb, b. 1945 in Mudrić Selo, Broćanac bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile on August 5, 1995. He died in front of Dvor when planes shelled the column.
25. Nenad (Radiše) TEPAVAC, (m), Serb, b. 1952 in Slušnjica, Slušnjica bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He was killed on the way to Dvor.
26. Miloš (Sime) TOMIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1956 in Ponorac, Ponorac bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile joining the column headed in the direction of Glina-Dvor, and disappeared somewhere in the vicinity of Žirovac. No one knows what has become of him.
27. Vlado (Mile) VUČKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1934 in Lapovac, Lapovac 42, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. On August 6, 1995, somewhere near Rujevac, he died due to injuries sustained from grenade fragments.

*Vojnić municipality*³²

28. Dragica BASARA, (f), Serb, over 80, Štakorovica, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She disappeared between August 6 and 8, somewhere in the territory Glina. According to witnesses, she disappeared when the column was attacked by members of the Croatian army who approached the column. On their uniforms, they wore the Serbian Army insignia. When they approached, they removed the Serbian emblems, revealing Croatian Army patches. It is assumed she died during this attack.
29. Ljubica BASARA, (f), Serb, age about 75 years, Svinica, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She disappeared between August 6 and 8, in the territory Žirovca. She was in the refugee column together with other residents, who had started to leave the village on August 6. Near Žirovac, grenades started to fall on the column. People dispersed, and Ljubica Basara disappeared in that chaos.

32 Mileva Hajdin, about 70 years old, from Vojnić was also in the refugee column. However, she allegedly fell out of the tractor and was run over by cars coming from behind. It is unknown whether she was wounded before she fell from the tractor, and therefore, she is not included in this list.

30. **Mihajlo (Ilije) BRDAR**, (m), Serb, b. 1919 in Loskunja, Loskunja, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was in the column together with his son, and on August 6, they arrived at Topusko. After that, they took to the road to Gvozd-Čemernica. On Tuesday evening, Mihajlo Brdar was lying under the tractor's trailer. On Wednesday, his son did not find him there. There has been no trace of him since.
31. **Anđa (Nikole) ĐURIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1923 in Radonja, Radonja 27a, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She was killed on August 7, 1995, in the territory of Žirovac. She was in the refugee column that was headed in the direction of Glina-Dvor. Near Žirovac, the column came under the crossfire of the Croatian and Serbian Armies. She was hit, and her body remained on the road. The location of her burial is unknown.
32. **Anđelija GODIĆ**, (f), Serb, born around 1911, Živković Kosa, Vojnić, Karlovac County. She was in the refugee column, which had taken to the road from Vojnić on August 6. She was killed in Dvor on August 7, 1995, while she was standing near a car.
33. **Ana HRSTIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in Komadina around 1911, Loskunja 18, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She went into exile on August 6, 1995. When the column arrived near Glina, she was attacked, and on that occasion, she disappeared. Her family reported her disappearance to the International Red Cross and to the police, but even today her whereabouts are unknown. Ana Hrstić wore a big key on her wrist, which might assist in identifying her.
34. **Dragan (Rade) IVANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, around 40, born in Bukovica, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He left the village on August 6, 1995, with the refugee column towards Dvor. He was seen last in the territory of Žirovac, after which he disappeared. What has become of him is unknown.
35. **Darko (Nikole) KRIVOKUĆA**, (m), Serb, b. 1965, Bukovica 25, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was mentally ill and undergoing treatment in the medical center in Petrinja. From August 6 to 8, the hospital was emptied, and the hospital personnel and patients also left for exile. On that journey, Darko Krivokuća disappeared.
36. **Nebojša LONČAR**, (m), Serb, around 74, Podsedlo 20, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He disappeared on August 7, 1995, in the Žirovac-Dvor locality. What has become of him is unknown.
37. **Đuro (Ilije) MARTINOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1953 in Vojnić, Miholjsko 96, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He disappeared on August 7, 1995, when he arrived in the territory of Obljaja as he was fleeing. He was in a truck that was hit by a grenade. He sustained minor injuries, and he hid in the woods. There has been no trace of him since.
38. **Nikola PJEVAC**, named Nino, (m), Serb, around 50 years old, Jagorovac, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He went into exile together with other residents. He was in the part of the column which took the road from Glina to Dvor. He disappeared between August 6 and 8, 1995, somewhere in the territory of Žirovca. His fate is unknown.

39. Mišo (Stevana) RADOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1957, Vojišnica 115, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was in the column together with his wife in a passenger car. They headed in the direction of Dvor from Glina. In the hamlet Maja, at around 6:30 p. m. on August 6, they were stopped by members of the Croatian army, who pulled Mišo out of his car and took him in an unknown direction. His wife waited for him to come back for a while. When she asked one of the soldiers where her husband was, she was told she was not to ask for him ever again. There has been no trace of Mišo Radović since.
40. Ranka (Milića) STUDEN, (f), Serb, b. 1920 in Kuplensko, Radmanovac 19, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She was in the column, which was the target of an assault on August 6, 1995, in the territory of Glina. She traveled with her family. When the attack began, members of her family, together with others, started to run. She remained in the tractor, as she could not move. She survived the attack, and stayed a while by one elderly person in the village of Maja. Allegedly, one night she stepped out of the house where she was staying and the next morning she was found hanged.³³ She was buried in the yard of that house, but later her body was relocated. The current location of her grave is not known.
41. Zagorka (Rade) VUJNOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1937 in Lapovac, Klupica, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She was in the refugee column moving in the direction of Glina-Dvor. She disappeared in the territory of Žirovca.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Dvor municipality

42. Ostoja NOŽINIĆ, called Vojin, (m), Serb, b. 1947 in Šegestin, Šegestin, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was driving a tractor in the refugee column. He was wounded by a shell near the factory ŠIP in Dvor, and afterwards, he was hit in the back by 3 bullets.
43. Dragan (Dmitra) POPOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1945, in Donja Oraovica, Donja Oraovica, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was moving with the refugee column. He was killed at the river Una in Dvor.
44. Slavko (Dragana) ZUBER,³⁴ called Marušić, (m), Serb, b. 1935 in Marušić, Zrinska Draga 4, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. Residents of the village set out for exile on August 5, 1995, and Slavko Zuber was last seen in the village on the morning of August 6. According to witnesses, he planned to depart on that day with intentions of joining the refugee column. He disappeared somewhere in Vrpolje.

33 According to some witnesses, she was caught by the Croatian army and was later hanged.

34 Since this person was mobilized in the Serbian Army, it is possible he escaped in uniform, but it is assumed that S. Zuber escaped as a civilian and went missing as a civilian.

Glina municipality

45. Anka (Milana) BALJAK, (f), Serb, 78 years old, born in Mali Obljaj, Mali Obljaj 41, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She departed to exile on August 6, around 10:00 a. m. She was seen for the last time a few kilometers from Dvor.
46. Mara BAŽDAR, (f), Serb, b. 1927 in Buzeta, Buzeta bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 48.
47. Danica BULAT, (f), Serb, around 65 years old, born in Buzeta, Buzeta bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 48.
48. Miloš MLADIĆ, (m), Serb, around 60 years old, born in Buzeta, Buzeta bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. The three of them departed from Buzeta with the others on August 6, 1995. They were all in one tractor, and were killed somewhere before reaching Dvor, when a grenade hit the tractor.
49. Đuro (Miloša) JELIĆ, (m), Montenegrin, b. 1915 in Maje Bijele Vode 166, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He departed from Bijele Vode together with the column on August 6, 1995. He was killed under the tree near the little bridge in Dvor on August 7, at around 5:00 p. m. The place where he is buried is not known.
50. Pero KRNJAJIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1938 in Veliki Obljaj, Veliki Obljaj bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He set out to exile on August 5, around mid-day. He disappeared somewhere near Rujevac. His fate is unknown.
51. Mile (Rade) LJILJAK, (m), Serb, age about 65 years, born in Veliki Obljaj, Veliki Obljaj bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He set out to exile on August 5, 1995, with Pero Krnjajić. He also disappeared in the territory of Rujevac.
52. Ćiro (Ostoje) MAĐARAC, (m), Serb, b. 1946 in Hajtić, Hajtić 7, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He set out for exile together with the column on August 6, and was killed in front of Dvor at the moment when the column was cut off. Details about his death are unknown.
53. Vukosava MAĐARAC, (f), Serb, b. 1950 in Hajtić, Hajtić 7, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County, (wife of Ćiro Mađarac). She was killed together with her husband in the vicinity of Dvor.
54. Vasilija VUJAKLIJA, (f), Serb, around 75 years old, born in Mali Obljaj, Mali Obljaj 9, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She set out for exile August 6, and was last seen a few kilometers from Dvor. Her fate since then is unknown.

Gvozd municipality

55. Sveto (Damjana) ALAJICA-NOVAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1957, Kirin 57, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was moving together with the column in

the direction of Glina–Dvor. He was killed in the territory of Žirovac. The manner and perpetrators of his murder remain unknown.

56. Miloš BATALO, (m), Serb, b. 1933 in Ponikvari, M. Poštica 30, Topusko, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. During the military operation Storm, he fled from Topusko with his wife. When they reached Dvor, the Croatian army took them away to a building. While he was being moved to that place, Miloš Batalo was killed. The place where he is buried is unknown.
57. Miloš (Stojana) BEKIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1972, G. Čemernica 12, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was advancing together with the refugee column in the direction of Glina–Dvor. He was seen for the last time in front of Dvor. Since then, there has been no trace of him.
58. Simo (Stojana) BOGDANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1933, in Blatuši, Gornja Čemernica, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was in the column which was moving in the direction of Glina–Dvor. He disappeared on August 7, 1995, near the village Žirovac.
59. Mile (Đure) CREVAR, (m), Serb, b. 1943 in Crevarska Strana, Crevarska Strana 20, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He set out for exile together with other residents on August 6, 1995. He was driving the First Aid vehicle. He was seen for the last time on August 6 or 7, 1995, in the territory of Žirovac.
60. Lazo GABRIĆ, (m), Serb, around 30 years old, Donja Čemernica, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was moving together with the refugee column in the direction of Glina–Dvor. He was seen for the last time near Dvor.
61. Ljubica (Stanka) JANJIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1924, Pješčenica 19, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She departed with the column on August 6, 1995, in the direction of Glina–Dvor. The last time she was seen was sometime before reaching Dvor. Her fate remains unknown.
62. Bogdanka KLJAJIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1952, Topusko, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was moving together with the column in the direction of Glina–Dvor. She was killed near the village Žirovac. The way in which she was killed and who her perpetrators were remain unknown.
63. Stevan (Nikole) KOMADINA, (m), Serb, b. 1930, Bović 30, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On August 6, he was in the refugee column which advanced in the direction of Glina–Dvor. In the territory near the village Maja, the column was stopped, and two Croatian army tanks started to fire on the column. A shell fragment hit him and his body remained on the roadside.
64. Ljubica KORKUT, (f), Serb, about 85 years old, Kirin 1, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was in the column which advanced in the direction of Glina–Dvor on August 6, 1995. The last time she was seen was in the village of Maja.
65. Dmtar KROŠNJAR, (m), Serb, b. 1958, Gornja Čemernica 12, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was moving with the refugee column in the direction of Glina–Dvor. He was killed somewhere before Dvor, and buried in Glina.

66. Milenko KUKOLJ, (m), Serb, b. 1938, Blatuša 21, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 69 below.
67. Dragan (Pere) MAĐARAC, (m), Serb, b. 1954 in Blatuša, Blatuša 138, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 69 below.
68. Ljubica MILIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1952, Blatuša 27, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 69 below.
69. Đurđa (Pere) MILIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1971, Blatuša 27, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County, (daughter-in-law of Ljubica Milić). The four of them disappeared on August 8, 1995, on the road between Glina and Dvor. They were in the column moving through Glina to Dvor, but it is still not known what happened to them.
70. Nikola MIRILOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1929, Ostrožin 3, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He departed with the column in the direction of Glina-Dvor, and was seen for the last time in Dvor. His fate remains unknown.
71. Dragica (Marka) MRAOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1930 in Ostrožin, Čremušnica 95, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He disappeared somewhere on the way towards Dvor.
72. (?) (Vuje) MRAOVIĆ, called Maca, (f), Serb, b. 1927, Bović 32, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She was in the column on August 6, moving in the direction of Glina-Dvor. She was wounded when the Croatian army started to fire from tanks on the column. Her body remained on the road.
73. Miljka (Nikole) RADANOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1922 in Čremušnica, Čremušnica 124, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County; see 74 below.
74. Ranka (Mile) RADANOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1953 in Bukovica, Čremušnica 127, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. They were killed on August 6, 1995 in the territory near Maja, where the refugee column had been stopped by the Croatian army. They were hit by shell fragments fired on the column from the Croatian tanks.
75. Kata (Đure) UTVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1913 in Čremušnica, Čremušnica 49, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She was in the refugee column, moving in the direction of Glina-Dvor, and disappeared somewhere before Dvor.
76. Stevo (Marka) VORKAPIĆ, (m), Serb, age about 22 years, Vorkapići 46, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was in the column moving in the direction of Glina-Dvor. He disappeared on August 7, 1995 in the territory of Žirovac.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

Treatment of civilians — victims

“Everyone’s right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.” (Article 2, clause 1, Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.)

Conclusion

“Croatia has kept its dignity when in the worst position. While it was militarily weak, while Vukovar was being murdered, Ilok hunted down, Dubrovnik shelled. It has managed to cope with its tragedy on its feet. Yet it bowed under the victory. It did not manage to carry it out in the same way. To carry off the victory in dignity — this it could not carry out.”¹

Promises

Dr. Franjo Tudjman: “I call on all Croatian citizens of the Serbian nationality, who did not take active part in the rebellion, to remain in their houses, with no fear for life and property, and wait for the Croatian Government, with the guarantee that they will be given all citizens’ rights and elections for the local government according to the Constitution and Constitutional Law with the presence of international monitors.” (President of the Republic of Croatia, August 4, 1995, in his address to the rebel Serbs).

Nikica Valentić: “The Government of the Republic of Croatia guarantees to all citizens of Serbian nationality in the repatriated territories that, in the legal system, their personal and property rights will be protected in their entirety.” (President of the Croatian Government in his message to Serbs, August 5, 1999).

Mr. Ivan Jarnjak: “To all people in the liberated territory, or those who will return there, the Ministry of the Interior, guarantees their personal safety as well as the safety of their property, and legal and public order and peace. All citizens of the Republic of

1 “How to endure the victory,” Jelena Lovrić, “Novi list,” August 27, 1995.

Croatia who have left these territories are allowed to return whenever they wish." (Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, to journalists, August 8, 1995).

Dr. Mate Granić: "The Government of the Republic of Croatia will ensure the fulfillment of all human and minorities rights to those who decide to stay in the Republic of Croatia as their homeland. These rights are guaranteed by the Croatian Constitution..." (Vice President of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and Minister of External Affairs, in his letter to the leadership of the European Union and OSCE, August 9, 1995).

Dr. Jure Radić: "We are not interested in the nationality of those whose houses need to be repaired. All those who lived in now liberated areas are, in our regard, citizens of the Republic of Croatia..."² (Vice President of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Minister of Development and Reconstruction, to journalists, August 9, 1995).

Dr. Adalbert Rebić — "We will repair houses of Serbs that intend to return, although almost 99 percent of the houses have been undamaged on the operation Storm. As regards private property, it is sacred to our country." (Minister of the Republic of Croatia and Head of the Office for Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on August 9, 1995, to journalists).³

A) Warnings

The Security Council (SC) of the UN has called upon the Croatian Government to:

- a) respect fully the rights of the local Serb population including their rights to remain, leave or return in safety...
- c) create conditions conducive to the return of those persons who have left their homes. (SC Resolution No. 1009, August 10, 1995).

The SC requests again that: "the Government of the Republic of Croatia take urgent measures to put an end to *violations* of international humanitarian law and of human rights, and investigate all reports of such violations so that those responsible in respect of such acts be judged and punished; *Reiterates* its demand that the Government of the Republic of Croatia respect fully the rights of the local Serb population including their right to remain or return in safety..." (SC Resolution No. 1019, November 9, 1995).

"There is direct evidence of systematic burning and looting of civilian houses and state property, including companies, committed by the Croatian army, civilian police and members of the special formation of the Police..." (Report of the Committee of the In-

2 The process of repairing demolished and devastated houses in the past and present is described in the Chapter "Return."

3 The following part of the report, in chapter "Devastation of Buildings" and "Colonization" describes the extent to which the Government of the Republic of Croatia kept its promises.

ternational Helsinki Federation to the OSCE, from August 25, 1995, translated from Croatian).

“The official Croatian Government’s statements that tell Serbs they are free to remain or to return are to be considered as totally opposite to reality. Even if these actions did not ensue from the conscious official policy of lack of the efficiency which the Croatian authorities have shown in their controlling and obstructing through the whole one month period, it does put a great deal of responsibility on the government...” (Report of the European Mission, September 1995, translated from Croatian).

“The Committee appeals once more to all institutions of the Republic of Croatia to take vigorous actions in order to prevent this “barbarous” behavior in the liberated territory of Croatia, thus proving that the committed crimes were not an integral part of the plan of the Serb national minority ethnic cleansing in the Republic of Croatia.” (Statement No. 28 of the CHC, October 5, 1995).

“Tudjman and his regime have confirmed our fears that the real goal of the use of military force was not the liberation of the occupied territories, and the establishment of a constitutional and civilian order for all inhabitants of the liberated parts of the territory called Kninska Krajina, Lika, Kordun and Banija, but the goal was the creation of a nationally exclusive government. This government was to treat Serbs in the same way that the usurping power of Martić’s illegitimate state treated Croats. The “Voluntary” exodus of Serbs, frequent killings of elderly people who stayed behind, mass demolition of houses, scorched earth tactics, and delays in providing documents and public services could not have been and can not be the strategy of a democratic society...” (Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, President of the CHC and Ivo Banac, member of the CHC: “The war for the liberation of Croatia has been transformed into a battle against free Croatian thought,” *Novi list*, August 9, 1996, translated from Croatian).

“The Government’s human rights record remained poor. It continued to commit or allow serious abuses, in particular with regard to the treatment of ethnic Serbs from the reclaimed areas (former sectors north, south and west),. Murders, looting and threats continued, although in lesser numbers than last year, and the Government did not make sufficient efforts to seek out, investigate and punish those responsible for such abuses. Many cases of abuse from 1995, the victims of which were almost exclusively ethnic Serbs, also remain unresolved.” (US Department of State, Croatia Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996. Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, January 30, 1997).

“The human rights violations committed during and in the wake of operation Storm have been all but forgotten. Unless action is taken, the vast majority of perpetrators may never have to face the deeds they committed, the victims may never obtain justice for the acts committed, and the facts risk being lost to history. There is a grave risk that the Croatian authorities will be able to teach the lesson that if one sits out the outrage and criticism, eventually the international community will lose interest and move on.” (Impunity for killings after “Storm,” August 1998, Amnesty International Report — Eur 64/04/98).

Request

"I feel a need and the call of conscience, as a legalist and humanist, to publicly speak regarding the virtually uncontested reports, which are louder daily, on the killing of civilians in repatriated areas. My message will be short and clear. It is as follows: State of Croatia! So much wanted and dreamed of! Wake up and return to the innocence of 1990-1992! Do not turn your eyes from the murdered civilians—the elderly and powerless! Take off this feeling of unease, shame and deception!" (Darko Paravić, former President of the Military Court in Rijeka and bearer of the Homeland war Memorial', "Novi list", October 5, 1995, translated from Croatian).

Defense

1. "Under the military command of President Dr. F. Tudjman, who lead us when we created the Croatian State, we achieved also our flashes' and storms' to the pride of the Croatian present and future," said Gotovina. He added, "Tudjman responsibly claims that not a single crime was committed by the Croatian army in these operations. As for the incidents of individuals wearing the Croatian army uniforms, the Croatian Army can not bear any responsibility whatsoever..." (General Ante Gotovina, at II election assembly of the Association of the Croatian Veterans and Disabled of the Patriotic War, "Večernji list," March 28, 1999, translated from Croatian).
2. "By special action of the President himself in the project for protection of the civilians, the Croatian and international humanitarian organizations have moved immediately to the repatriated areas and the Government and some ministries also started with actions for help. The President's action has saved many lives, and considering the scope of the military-police action, they could have encountered hardship. President Tudjman has ensured everything for the protection of civilians." (Ivica Kostović, Head of the Office of the President of the Republic of Croatia, "Jutarnji list," April 1, 1999, translated from Croatian).
3. "In connection with operation Storm, we have all the documentation about the preparation, leading, and the course of the action itself and thus we will be able to tell what has happend with arguments..." (Minister of Defense, Pavao Miljavac, "Jutarnji list," March 22, 1999, translated from Croatian).

1. Individual mistreatment and killing of civilians who did not leave the republic of croatia

In December 1995, Special Rapporteur of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Elisabeth Rehn, in her report, claimed that more than 120 murders of Serbian civilians have been recorded. She cites harrasments committed by Croatian soldiers, police and civilians, and mass burnings property abandoned by Serbs, and occupation of Serbian houses, even when they had not left Croatia. President F. Tudjman claimed that many of these misdeeds had been committed by "Serbian terrorists." In those days, the available data showed that Croatia indicted 750 persons as suspects for the above incidents, and 230 of them were formally charged. There was no available data on the processes and final court decisions regarding these charges.

In January 1998, the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General, from facts obtained by the Croatian authorities, stated that "in total 5580 cases were processed in relation to events in former Sectors North and South, of which 359 were still being investigated, 3785 were in the initial processing stage, and rulings have been reached for 1236 of them." These, however, are only statistics that say nothing. Even organizations like Amnesty International and CHC were not able to obtain, despite repeated requests, anything more than such bleak statistics. There was not any information on the content of indictments, court proceedings or court rulings. Who are the accused, who has been convicted and for what actions? Even the press, closely followed, offers no information about this. Furthermore, when officials of various state bodies must reveal data about this issue in public, each one of them has his own data. The superficial analysis in the aforementioned reports shows the lack of logic employed by the Croatian authorities in their failed attempt to justify their sympathy for these crimes and their perpetrators. These statistics, which are obviously fabricated in some instances, can therefore not be trusted.

Former President of the Supreme Court, Milan Vuković, expressed the stand that Croats could not have committed war crimes in a defense war. This was in fact the firm opinion of the Croatian leadership. Due to this reason, most of the crimes committed were not punished, or were only punished in small numbers. Numerous international organisations and the international community have been pinpointing this.

"During the course of the military offensive, the Croatian armed forces and special police committed numerous violations of international humanitarian law, including but not limited to, shelling of Knin and other cities. During, and in the 100 days following the military offensive, at least 150 Serb civilians were summarily executed, and many hundreds disappeared." warns the New York Times on March 21, 1999. Apparently it is of the opinion that the Croatian Government had done nothing or not enough to clarify these events.

In this section of the report, the CHC lists the names of civilians, executed or missing in the area of the former Sector North, who had decided to stay in the Republic of Croatia and wait for the Croatian authorities in their homes. The data covers persons who were murdered or missing by the end of 1995, among whom are some who died from wounds they sustained or ill-treatment. The next section of the report will indicate data on murders of civilians from the beginning of 1996 through December 1999.

2. List of murdered and missing civilians in the area of the former Sector North with descriptions of executions⁴

2/I.) List of murdered civilians

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Duga Resa municipality

Based on the 1991 census, Duga Resa Municipality had 30,485 inhabitants. Of these, 27,253 were Croat; 1,978 Serb; 6 Czech; 4 Hungarian; 1 Italian; and 1,243 of other nationality.

The Southeast part of the Duga Resa Municipality was within the so-called "Krajinina." Most of the inhabitants fled from this area in 1995. Of the small number of those who remained in the Republic of Croatia, some ten were killed and others are still missing.

1. Jovan (Milovan) GRUBJEŠIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1948, Kestenjak 7, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during operation "Storm." On August 4, 1995 members of the Croatian Army threw a bomb into his house causing his death. He was found dead in front of his house.
2. Danica DMITROVIĆ,⁵ (f), Serb, b. 1930, Donji Skrad 27, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. On August 6, 1995, six members of the Croatian Army caught Danica Dmitrović and took her to the house where five people were slaughtered the previous day, including her husband⁶. They then took her to the orchard by the house and raped her, after which they threw her into a well where she drowned.
3. Kata DMITROVIĆ,⁷ (f), Serb, b. 1914, Donji Skrad 26, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. On August 5, 1995, six members of the Croatian Army entered the house in Donji Skrad 46 on which occasion they slaughtered Kata Dmitrović together with four other people hiding in the house.

4 The data is listed in alphabetical order of the municipalities within Sector North. Municipality names have not been changed according to the new list of municipalities, and the names of local municipal centers are indicated as outlined in 1991 for clarity.

5 Danica Dmitrović managed to escape from the Croatian Army soldiers one day before the slaughter of the people with whom she was hiding occurred. Her husband remained in the house with the others where he was killed. The following day, Danica Dmitrović was killed, presumably by the same perpetrators who killed the five persons in the house at the address, Donji Skrad 46.

6 The body of Danica Dmitrović was found by a neighbor in December 1995. She reported this to the International Red Cross in Vojnić who then contacted the police in Karlovac. Danica Dmitrović was buried in the cemetery in Kosijer next to Dušan Mandić.

7 Stanka Končalović, Zorka Gazibara, Kata Dmitrović, Nikola Dmitrović and Smiljana Končalović were buried on August 14, 1995, in the orchard next to the house in which they were killed.

4. **Nikola DMITROVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1930, Donji Skrad⁸ 27, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. Early in the morning of August 5, 1995, six members of the Croatian Army entered the house in Donji Skrad 46 on which occasion they slaughtered Nikola Dmitrović together with four other people hiding in the house.
5. **Zorka GAZIBARA**, (f), Serb, b. 1910, Donji Skrad 46, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. Early in the morning of August 5, 1995, she was slaughtered in her house together with four other people hiding there.
6. **Ljubomir KONČALOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1933 in Donji Skrad, Donji Skrad 64, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. On August 4, 1995, before his departure into exile with other neighbors he went to his sister's house to check on her. As the Croatian Army was already in his sister's house, he went to hide in the nearby woods. The Croatian Army killed him in the cornfield near his sister's house.
7. **Stanka KONČALOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1905, Donji Skrad 64, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. She remained in the village during the "Storm." On August 5, 1995, six members of the Croatian Army entered the house in Donji Skrad 46 on which occasion they slaughtered Stanka Končalović together with four other people hiding in the house.
8. **Smiljana KONČALOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1942, Donji Skrad 64, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. She remained in the village during the "Storm." On August 5, 1995, six members of the Croatian Army entered the house in Donji Skrad 46 on which occasion they slaughtered Smiljana Končalović together with four other people hiding in the house.
9. **Stevo (Simo) SMOLJANOVIĆ**, (m), b. 1929 in Veliki Kozinac, Smoljanovići 14, Veliki Kozinac, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm." On August 4, 1995, he left his niece's house to go home and let the sheep out of the stable. This is when he was killed. He was found dead behind his house.

Karlovac municipality

Based on the 1991 census, Karlovac Municipality had 81,319 inhabitants. Of these, 51,880 were Croat; 21,732 Serb; 17 Czech; 49 Hungarian; 17 Italian; and 7,624 of other nationalities.

The majority of Karlovac Municipality was in the so-called "Krajina." Most of the inhabitants fled from this area, but of those that stayed, some were killed and others are still missing.

10. **Vladimir (Mehmed) ČOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1955 in Ruma, Budačka Rijeka 69, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the opera-

8 In Donji Skrad, two months after the "Storm," some 200–300 m from the "turn" (curve of the former military road), a body of an elderly female was found. Police investigation has been conducted. Neighbors were not able to identify this person. Some statements indicate she could have been from the village of Smoljani. She was buried at the cemetery in Donji Skrad as "unknown."

tion "Storm." He was killed in the "Storm" by members of the Croatian Army. Where he was buried is still unknown.

11. Vaso BIŽIĆ, (m), Serb, about 60 years old, Lasinjski Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm." Sometime in September 1995, he was visited by a group of armed men dressed in Croatian Army uniforms, allegedly demanding that he give them his cattle. He refused to do this, after which the people in uniforms burned down everything: his house and farm buildings, and then threw him into the fire.
12. Vladimir (Cvijan) BUNĀIĆ, (m) Serb, b. 1907 in Ātrnja, Ātrnja 33, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm." He was found dead, his bones broken, in December 1995. The exact time of his murder is unknown. He was buried in the yard by his son.
13. Đuro (Savo) MANOJLOVIĆ, (m), Serb, born around 1932 in Gornji Sjeniĉak, Gornji Sjeniĉak bb, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm." He was murdered by members of the Croatian Army who entered the village during the "Storm." He was found murdered in the bathroom of his house.
14. Cvijan (Miloš) MATIJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1924, Bijeli Klanac, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. During the "Storm," he was hiding in the woods together with Desanka Matijević. They returned to the village immediately after the "Storm." On August 15 or 16, 1995, they were murdered in their yard, and then burned. Their bones have been found, and were buried by the State Mortuary.
15. Desanka (Đuro) MATIJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1925 in Krnjak, Bijeli Klanac, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. During the "Storm" she was hiding in the woods together with Cvijan Matijević. They returned to the village immediately after the "Storm." On 15 or 1 August 6, 1995 they were murdered in their yard, and then burnt. Their bones have been found, and the authorized authorities buried their remains.
16. NN (*Unknown*), — child, about 10 years old, Bijeli Klanac, Karlovac, Karlovac County. The body was found near the house of Desanka and Cvijan Matijević (who were murdered and burned in this house). It is assumed that the child was killed, but it is impossible to determine how since the body was completely decomposed when found, and showed traces of being partly eaten by dogs or other animals.⁹
17. Branko PALEŠ, (called Gajo), (m), Serb, Gornji Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He left for exile with his wife, but decided to return. On his way home from the direction of Slavsko Polje, he was met by his neighbor who was leaving for exile. By the end of October 1996, his body was found, i. e. his skull and some clothing. It is assumed he was killed by members of the Croatian Army who were liberating that area.

⁹ In the vicinity of the house of Desanka and Cvijo Matijević, two other burned bodies were found. However, their identity has not been established.

18. Nikola VELIMIROVIĆ, (called Lasica), (m), Serb, born around 1933 in Gornji Skrad, Gornji Skrad, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm," when he was killed.
19. Nikola VUČKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1937 in Podgorje, Podgorje, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the "Storm." He was killed during the "Storm" by members of the Croatian Army.

Plaški municipality

During the war, Plaški was within Ogulin Municipality, but the local community of Plaški had 8,000 inhabitants, mostly of Serbian nationality. During the military-police operation storm, some 219 remained. Today there are 2,768 inhabitants in the Plaški area, of whom 950 are settlers from B&H.

(Source: SDF Plaški data and Prof. Milan Damjanović from Plaški, also representative of the SDF Plaški affiliate).

The following people were killed in Plaški Municipality:

20. Mileva (Branko) GRBA, (f), Serb, around 37 years old, Lička Jesenica 169, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. She was mentally ill. She remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." Several days after the Croatian Army entered the village she was found murdered in her house.
21. Đuro (Mano) JOVETIĆ, (m), Serb, around 70 years old, Begovac, Lička Jesenica, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." He was hit by grenade shrapnel on August 4, 1995, when the Croatian Army was shelling the village.
22. Milka (Dušan) VRCELJ, (f), Serb, b. 1934 in Lička Jesenica, Lička Jesenica, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. She remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." There are two versions of her murder. According to one version that a witness heard from the Croatian Police, she was found murdered behind the house near the summer kitchen.¹⁰ According to the other version, which the witness heard from the neighbors, Milka Vrcelj was murdered and found in the well. It is assumed the murder was conducted by members of the Croatian Army who were in the village during the "Storm."
23. Bude VEZMAR, (m), Serb, born around 1910 in Begovac, Begovac village, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the Military and Police Operation "Storm." He was killed by members of the Croatian Army who entered the village during the "Storm." The witness states that the bed he was lying on was riddled with bullets.

10 This version is unlikely to be true as the witness visited the farm of Milka Vrcelj several days before he spoke to this Croatian police officer, and did not see her anywhere on this occasion. He knew she was unable to move so he assumed she had been taken somewhere.

Slunj municipality

Based on the 1991 census, the Slunj Municipality had 18,962 inhabitants. Of these, 12,091 were Croat; 5,540 Serb; 509 Bosnian-Muslim; 9 Montenegrin; 5 Slovene; 4 Macedonian; 4 Hungarian; 3 Albanian; 2 Czech; 2 Greek; 2 Russian; and 1 Bulgarian.

Before military-police operation storm, most of the inhabitants fled this area. Only a few stayed in their villages. During the operation "Storm," some of the inhabitants that stayed behind were murdered and others are still missing.

The following persons were killed in Slunj Municipality:

24. Anka (Mile) DRAGOJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1910 in Lapovac, Lapovac 24, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. She remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." She was found dead near the hay barn in her yard.
25. Vaso (Dragoje) OBRADOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1927 in Crno Vrelo, Crno Vrelo 9, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." He was found dead near Veljunska Glina. It is assumed he was killed on August 5, 1995, by members of the Croatian Army.
26. Dane (Uroš) PAŠIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1921 in Pašić Selo, Broćanac 44, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during the military operation "Storm." Members of the Croatian Army repeatedly mistreated him, both physically and mentally, resulting in his suicide in August 1995.
27. Pero RIBIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1929 in Batnoga, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He was killed on August 6, 1995 by members of the Army of the so-called Srpska Krajina during their withdrawal from the village.
28. Mile SIKIRICA, (m), Serb, 57 years old, Vođević Brdo, Sikirička Valley, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He had stayed in Veljun and was still there when the Croatian Army arrived in the village during military-police operation Storm. When the soldiers arrived, he started running and then he was killed.
29. Milorad (Milića) SIKIRICA, (m), Serb, b. 1939, in Ponorac, Ponorac 10, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He did not want to join the column that was leaving the village, but decided to stay in the village. Members of the Croatian army killed him on August 19, 1995.
30. Mara VUJČIĆ, (f), unknown ethnicity, 55 years old, Veljun, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County.
31. Gordana (Mare) VUJČIĆ, (f), ethnicity unknown, 35 years old, Veljun, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. Mara and Gordana Vujčić, mother and daughter, remained in Veljun during military-police operation Storm. Both were massacred during the operation. Gordana Vujčić also had a small child who fell into a coma, but the child survived.

Vojnić municipality

According to the 1991 census, 8, 236 inhabitants lived in the region of the Vojnić Municipality. 7,366 of these residents were of Serb ethnicity, 116 of Croat ethnicity, 2 persons of Hungarian ethnicity, and 752 of other nationalities.

The territory of Vojnić was situated in the so-called "Krajina." The majority of the residents left the region. A great number of those who remained in the region were killed, and a smaller number was recorded missing.

32. **Milka BASARA**, (f), Serb, 70 years old, Gornja Brusovača, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. Basara remained in the village during military-police operation Storm. Members of the Croatian army killed her during military-police operation Storm in a cornfield near the village. Her body was not found afterwards and it is believed that pigs ate it.
33. **Mile (Đure) BOŽIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1924, Miholjskom, Krstinja bb, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. His body was found on the road, approximately 300 meters away from his damaged van. Presumably, members of the Croatian army who were on their way to village killed him.
34. **Ljuba BOŽIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1926, in Priseka, Krstinja bb, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County, wife of Mile Božić. She was on her way home, when a passing car hit her on purpose and killed her. The car belonged to the military police of the Republic of Croatia.
35. **Dušan BUNČIĆ**, (m), Serb, around 70 years old, Đaperovac, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac Municipality. He remained in the village during military-police operation Storm. Members of the Croatian army killed him by shooting three bullets in his back, while he was on his way home.
36. **Stanka GRUDIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1924, Rajić brdo, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She was killed on October 14, 1995, when she activated a hand bomb placed by an unknown perpetrator.¹¹
37. **Husein (Ante) KOVAČEVIĆ**, (m), Muslim, b. 1945, Široka Rijeka 41, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was killed by weapon fire on October 14, 1995 in front of his house in Široka Rijeka by a member of the Croatian army. The soldier had a black scarf around his head and a black shirt with the insignia of the First Military Brigade of the Croatian army. He was buried behind the house.
38. **Miloš MRKIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1911 Knežević Kosa, Knežević Kosa bb, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. His corpse was found in 1996 in a meadow near the village. Presumably, a member of the Croatian army, who was staying in the village at that time, killed him.
39. **Jeka MRKOBRAĐ**, (f), Serb, b. 1932 in Gačeša selo, Vrelo Utinja 10, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. Members of the Croatian army situated in the village at

11 An on the spot investigation was carried out by the investigative judge of the County Court in Sisak, together with the police officers. The Office of County Attorney in Sisak pressed criminal charges against an unidentified perpetrator.

that time killed her in August 1995. She was found dead in the house of her neighbour in Vrelo Utinja. She was buried very close to the house in which she was found.

40. NN (*Unknown*), (f), between 65 and 70 years old, Živković Kosa, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. At the crossroads on the way to her isolated house, near the restaurant, "Dule," a decomposed woman's corpse was found by the activists of the Karlovac Committee for Human Rights. Later on, they contacted the CHC regional centre in Karlovac. On March 14, 1996, both human rights organisations carried out field investigations and took photographs of the corpse. They then reported the entire case to the police.

Presumably, the woman is either Danica Mađerčić from Živković Kosa 48 or 49, who disappeared during military-police operation Storm, or another identified female from the neighbouring village who hid during military-police operation Storm in the village of Živković Kosa.¹²

41. Stevan (Vase) NOVAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1931 in Vojišnica, Knežević Kosa, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He remained in the village during military-police operation Storm and was killed by members of the Croatian army who passed through the village. The exact manner in which he was killed is not known. When he was found, he had a bullet in his head, and a rope around his neck.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Dvor municipality

According to the census from 1991, 14,044 residents lived in Dvor Municipality. 12,591 were Serbs, 1,395 were Croats, 31 Muslim, 8 Montenegrins, 6 Macedonians, 3 Greeks, 3 Hungarians, 3 Slovenians, 2 Czechs, 1 Polish, 311 Yugoslavs, and 91 persons who were not ethnically defined.

At the beginning of military-police operation Storm, the majority of the population left the region and a few residents went to live in the surrounding villages. Most of them were killed or disappeared during and after military-police operation Storm. Some were killed by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army, while others were killed by members of the Croatian army. Two persons were killed by members of the Serb army.

In Dvor Municipality, the following persons were killed:

42. Miloš ARBUTINA, (m), Serb, professor in Dvor, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He remained in Dvor after military-police operation Storm. Two months later, while he was riding his bicycle, he was run over by members of the Croatian army.

12 The CHC published Statement No. 36, which included the following quote: "... From the degree of rot, it is obvious that the person died or was killed a few months ago. The body was lying on the left side in a cramped manner. The skull was laying about 120m away from the body along the river. One half meter away, there was part of a hand; some 10m further away were shoes, probably belonging to the dead person. The body did not have legs from the knees downwards. Under the body, there was a kitchen knife on which there were traces of blood.."

43. Dragica BENAK, (F), Serb, b. 1931 in Paukovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She and a few other residents remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. In September or October 1995, she was found dead in bed in her house.
44. Pero (Milovan) BERIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1946. in Gvozdansko, Gvozdansko, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was killed in front of his house on August 8, or 9, 1995 by members of the Croatian army who were in the village that day.¹³
45. Ilija (Mile) BOŽIĆ, (m), Serb, 75 years old, Ostojići, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. His throat was cut by the members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army who were the first to enter the village during the military–police operation.
46. Stevo (Petar) BRAJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1924 in Ćorići, Šakanlije, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on August 12, 1995. Presumably, he was killed by Croatian soldiers.
47. Danica ČANAK, (f), Serb, born near 1920, in Ćore, Ćore, Dvor Municipality. She remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. After August 6, the soldiers entered the house and tried to take her cattle away. When she refused to let them steal her cattle, she was killed.¹⁴
48. Stoja (Stane) ČORIĆ, (f), Serb, 70 years old, Šakanlije, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. On August 12, 1995, she was killed and thrown in a fire. Presumably the perpetrators were members of the Croatian army.
49. Ljuban (Stojana) DURMAN, (m), Serb, b. 1924, Paukovac 8, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was burned in his house during military–police operation Storm. Ljuban Durman had remained in the village with a few other residents. He was a disabled person and moved with the help of crutches. The Croatian military units were situated in the village between August 9 and September 6, 1995. Almost the entire village was burned in that period, including the house of Ljube Durman. In the remnants of his house, his bones were found on October 16, 1998 by CHC activists. The CHC contacted the Institute for Judicial Medicine and the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb and asked them to perform an expert evaluation. The Institute was not interested in this affair and the bones were transferred for analysis to the Institute for Anatomy, Histology and Embriology of the Veterinary Institute of the University in Zagreb.¹⁵

13 The witness stated that one group of Croatian soldiers came to the village on August 7, 1995, and they did not touch anybody. The second group arrived at the village on August 8 or 9, 1995. The members of that group killed Pero Berić.

14 Witness could not tell with certainty which army it was.

15 CHC obtained the detailed opinion of experts at the Institute for Anatomy, Histology and Embriology of the Veterinary College, University of Zagreb. After the expert analysis of the 41 bone fragments found in the burned house of Ljuban Durman, it could be stated with a high degree of certainty that they were human bones.

50. **Milan DURMAN**, (m), Serb, b. 1908, Paukovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. Presumably he was burned in his house between August 9 and September 6, 1995, when Croatian army members were located in the village. Milan Durman often visited the house of Ljuban Durman and there is a possibility that he was burned at the house of Ljuban Durman, together with him.
51. **Slavko (Stanka) ĐURASINOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1937 in Čavlovica, Čavlovica bb, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village during military–police operation Storm and was slaughtered by the members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army on August 5, when they entered the village.
52. **Ljuba ĐURASINOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 70 years old, born in Dvor, Čavlovica, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She remained to live in the village during military–police operation Storm. She was slaughtered by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army, when they entered the village on August 5, 1995.
53. **Zorka INGULA**, (f), Serb, born in Lotina 1948, in Pitomača, Matijevići 10, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She suffered from epilepsy and remained in her village during military–police operation Storm. She was burned in her house during the period in which the Croatian army was located in the village. Exact information regarding when and how the incident occurred was not obtained during interviews with the witnesses. Witnesses who know more about this incident are still living abroad.
- 54.–55. **Danica IVELIĆ**, (f), Croat, around 65 years old, Sakcinskog 1, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County and her husband **Nedjeljko IVELIĆ**, (m), Croat, 60 years old, Sakcinskog 1, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County, were killed by members of the Serb paramilitary units while they were withdrawing from Dvor. Nedjeljko's head was crushed, and Danica was raped and later killed. She was found in her house.
56. **Adam (Đuro) KEPČIJA**, (m), Serb, b. 1926, in Kepčije, Kepčije 22, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. On August 7, when the Croatian army entered the village, he became frightened and started to run. He was killed at that time.
57. **Slavka KNEŽEVIĆ**, (f), Serb, around 70 years old, hamlet of Kirišnica, Šakanlije, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on August 12, 1995 in her own backyard. Presumably, perpetrators were members of the Croatian army.
58. **Stevo (Milan) KOPAČ**, (m), Serb, 65 years, Blatuša, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was killed a few days later while he was on his way to Glina (the village of Viduševac) by bicycle on August 8 or 9, 1995. No one knows where he was buried.
59. **Dragan (Miloša) LACKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1947, Crevarska strana 102, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. Members of the Croatian army took him to the collective centre, a detention centre for refugees, in Karlovac. After he was released from the centre,

on his way to his village, he was killed in the village of Biljeg. His grave was not found.

60. **Nikola (Mile) MILIČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 40 years old, Brnjavac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was killed in his own backyard, and the witnesses presume that his body was dismembered by animals.
61. **Milan (Stevo) MILJKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1919 in Miljkovići, Šakanlije, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was a very ill and disabled man. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. Presumably, he was killed in his house on August 12, 1995 by members of the Croatian army who were seen in the village at that time.
62. **Branko OSTOJIĆ**, called Radić, (m), Serb, 60 years old, Ostojići, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
63. **Milan OSTOJIĆ**, called Bojić, (m), Serb, 60 years old, Ostojići, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. Both stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. They were killed by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army, who first entered the village on August 7, 1995.
64. **Vaso (Branka) PAIĆ**, (m), Serb, born around 1960, Pješćanica 62, Dvor, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was burned on August 6, 1995 in his house. Dušan Stanić, who passed away in the spring of 1999, found him.
65. **Milan PAVELOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Gornji Žirovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was slain by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army who were in the village at that time.
66. **Jovo PRERADOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Rujevac bb, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was killed by members of the Croatian army in the village of Pedalj, Dvor Municipality, where he was residing during military–police operation Storm.
67. **Simo (Stevan) RADANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born around 1933, in Cremušnica, Cremušnica, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was killed during military–police operation Storm. His neighbour, Miloš, found him.
68. **Branko (Milan) ROKSANDIĆ**, (m), Serb, 38 years old, Brđani 17, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his house during military–police operation Storm. He suffered from epilepsy and could not leave with the refugee column. The Croatian army found him in his house on August 11 and killed him.
69. **Boja (Ilinka) SIRETA**, (f), Serb, 80 years old, G. Dobretin, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village of Dobretin during military–police operation Storm. The Muslim army first entered the village and took all the cattle. Then the Croatian army entered the village. Witnesses do not know exactly how she was killed. They only know that later on they saw her bones being torn apart by pigs. Presumably, she was killed by members of the Croatian army.

70. **Stojan (Živka) ŠERBULA**, (m), Serb, b. 1914 in Kosna, Kosna 32, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
71. **Kata (Jovana) ŠERBULA**, (f), Serb, b. 1920 in Donje Javornje, Kosna 32, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. The husband and wife stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and were killed at that time. They were reported missing until 1996, when their son found his father’s bones and clothes. The family is convinced that these two people were killed by the Croatian army during military–police operation Storm.
72. **Jovo (Dmitar) ŠERBULA**, (m), Serb, b. 1929, in Ljeskovac, Ljeskovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. The Croatian army arrested him together with Nikola Vukušić and placed them in the kiln for drying meat. A month after military–police operation Storm, they were found dead.
73. **Milorad (Dragan) TRIVANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 42 years old, Zut, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village and was killed during military–police operation Storm. The whereabouts of his grave are not known.
74. **Rade (Ilija) TRIVANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1944, Zut, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. During military–police operation Storm, he stayed in the village and was killed there. According to the statements of witnesses, Milorad and Rade Trivanović were civilians. Their grave has not been found.¹⁶
75. **Branko VASILJEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1931 in Pedalj, Pedalj, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. During a search of the village, a few members of the Croatian army found weapons and ammunition in the neighbouring house. They beat him, damaging his kidneys. He died in the Sisak hospital from the consequences of the beatings.
76. **Milan (Miša) VUJAKLIJA**, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Gornji Žirovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was slain by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army.
77. **Ljuban VUKIČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 60 years old, Čavlovica, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was slain by members of the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army on August 5, 1995, when they entered the village. But the bones that were found two years ago, belonged to an unidentified person.
78. **Jovo ŠUŠNJAR**, (m), Serb, 80 years old, Ljeskovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
79. **Nikola (Stevan) VUKŠIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1928, in Ljeskovac, Ljeskovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. They stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. Members of the Croatian army, according to witnesses’ state-

¹⁶ Witness A. O. on April 29, 1999. According to the witness’s testimony, in between the villages of Rosulje and Javornja in Dvor Municipality, where garbage and old cars are currently dumped, there is a mass grave in which victims of military–police operation Storm are buried.

ments, closed them both in the kiln near the house, where they were found dead in the middle of May 1996.

80. Evica ZORIĆ, (f), Serb, 80 years old, Donji Žirovac, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. She was killed two months after the “Storm,” and her body was found in Donji Žirovac where she had been living. The perpetrators are unknown.
81. Dragan (Ostoja) ŽIVKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1926, Zut, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was killed during the “Storm.” The whereabouts of his grave are unknown.

Glina municipality

According to the 1991 census, in the region of Glina Municipality lived 23,040 residents of Serb ethnicity, 8,041 persons of Croat ethnicity, four persons of Czech nationality, two Hungarians, two Italians, and 1,016 residents of various ethnicities.

The whole region of Glina was under Krajina control. At the beginning of military–police operation Storm in 1995, a great number of the Serb population fled. Many of those who stayed were killed and some are still missing.

82. Rade (Milan) BANJANAC, (m), Serb, b. 1914 in Kozaperovica, Kozaperovica, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. In the autumn of 1995, unidentified persons broke into his house and beat him. He died a few days later from the consequences of the beating.
83. Janja (Dmitar) DUKIĆ, (f), Serb, 65 years old, born in Veliki Obljaj, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She did not abandon the village during military–police operation Storm, and was killed 15 days after the operation. She was buried 15 days later in the local cemetery.
84. Simo JOVANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, F. Žužeka 14, Glina Municipality, Karlovac County. He was killed during military–police operation Storm by unknown perpetrators.
85. Danica (Miljkan) KOVARBAŠIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1927 in Banski Drenovac, Banski Drenovac 109, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She remained in the village during the military operation and was killed on August 9 or 10, by unknown perpetrators—members of the Croatian army who stayed in the village at that time. Her body was found under the table in her house. One month later, the corpse disappeared and nobody knows what happened to it. Presumably, it was torn apart by pigs.
86. Stana (Đuro) LAZIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1908 in G. Selište, Hajtić 11, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in her village during military–police operation Storm. The Croatian army entered the village on August 6, 1995, and took the residents of the village to collective centres. Stana Lazić’s neighbour saw a Croatian soldier entering her house. When the residents returned home on August 10, 1995, they found Stana Lazić killed in her house on the bed in the kitchen.
87. Vujo LONČAR, (m), Serb, 80 years old, Veliki Obljaj, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He did not abandon the village during military–police operation

Storm. His house was burned down a few days after military-police operation Storm and presumably, he was burned in the house.

88. Slavko (Nikola) MIŠČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1996 in Buzeta, Buzeta, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. During military-police operation Storm he did not abandon the village. He was killed 14 days after military-police operation Storm when members of the Croatian army¹⁷ were staying there. His body was not found and buried, but was torn apart by pigs.
89. Nikola (Stevan) NOVAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1928 in Vlahović, Vlahović 17, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in his village. When the Croatian army entered the village on August 7, 1995, he tried to hide in the hills. The residents saw when the Croatian army shot him. They left his body on the railway tracks and it remained there until the night. Since the case could not be presented as an accident they took the body, put it in a black sack and carried it away in an unknown direction. Nobody knows where he was buried.
90. NN (*Unknown*), (f), 55 years old, born in Borovita, married in Vrhovina, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. Found in Mali Obljaj, hanged from an oak tree around August 15, 1995.¹⁸
91. Petar PETKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1912, Kralja Tomislava, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was killed on August 8, 1995. Presumably, the perpetrators were members of the Croatian army.
92. Miloš (Dušan) RAKAS, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Veliki Obljaj, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was the only one left in the village during military-police operation Storm. He was killed between August 6 and 7, 1995. His body was found one month later, dismembered. The torso was found in the house, and the head was found 2 meters away from the house, in the field.
93. Branko (Pavle) RELIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1912 in Glina, Zagrebačka 10, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm and was killed on August 8, 1995. Presumably, the perpetrators were members of the Croatian army.
94. Evica RUDIĆ, (f), Serb, 80 years old, Gornji Klasnić 5, Glina, Sisak-Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm and was killed on August 6 or 7, 1995 by unknown perpetrators — members of the Croatian army who entered the village of Gornji Klasnić that day.
95. Jelena (Janko) SLIJEPČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1935 in Dabrina, Donji Klasnić 168, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County.
96. Desanka (Lazo) SLIJEPČEVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1912 in Dragotina, Donji Klasnić 68, Glina, Sisak-Moslavina County. They both remained in the village during military-police operation Storm. They were ill and disabled. They disappeared at the begin-

17 Members of the "Thunder" (Gromovi) military unit first entered the village on August 6, 1995. But, according to witnesses's statements, they did not kill Slavko Miščević. He was killed by members of the Croatian Army who came to the village 14 days after the operation Storm.

18 Witness A. P. could not remember the name of the killed person. He was found hanged on a walnut-tree, from which he was later brought down.

ning of September 1995 and not long after they were both found dead. Their bodies were taken away by the military police dressed in yellow uniforms. No one knows the whereabouts of their graves.

97. Ljuba SUSTOLIČIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1930 in Vlahović, Vlahović 46, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. She was found dead 10 days after the operation. All her clothes were found in one pile, 15 meters away from the body. Her naked body was found below a tree on which a rope hung. Presumably, she was hanged. The murder is connected to the entrance of the Croatian army into the village on August 7, 1995.
98. Milka (Jovo) TROSKOT, (f), Serb, 25 years old, born Ljubičić, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On September 21, 1995, at around 10:00 p. m., unknown persons shot at the house of Marinko Troškota, Milka's husband. Milka Troškot was killed at that time. She left a two-year-old child behind. Milka Troškot was buried on September 23, 1995, in Glina.¹⁹
99. Kata (Milan) VUČKOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1908, in Trnovac, Trnovac Glinski, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. She was killed and thrown into the well sometime in the period of August 5–7, 1995. Her body was found 6 months later. Presumably, she was killed by members of the Croatian army.
100. Petar (Đuro) VUKIČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1931 in Dragotina, Dragotina 172, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed in August 1995. His death is connected to the entrance of the Croatian army into the village. His body was found in the yard in front of his house.

Gvozd municipality

According to the 1991 census, there were 16,599 residents living in Gvozd Municipality: 11,729 of Serb ethnicity, 4,043 of Croat ethnicity, 123 of Muslim ethnicity, 9 Slovenians, 7 Montenegrins, 6 Albanians, 4 Hungarian, 2 Macedonian, 2 Czechs, 1 Bulgarian, and 1 Greek, and the rest were members of different ethnic communities.

During military–police operation Storm, the majority of the population joined the mass refugee column on August 5, 1995. Only a few persons remained in the villages. Most of them were killed during military–police operation Storm or disappeared afterwards.

The following persons were killed:

101. Vaso (Đure) BIŽIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1918 in Sjeničak Lasinjski, Sjeničak Lasinjski bb, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village. In September 1995, a few unidentified persons dressed in Croatian army uniforms killed him in front of his house. Later on, they threw him in the hay barn where he was burned.

¹⁹ CHC — October 3, 1995.

102. Jovo (Stevo) BIJELIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1935, Gređani, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village after military–police operation Storm and was killed in front of his house. Jovo Bijelić was buried in the cemetery in the village of Gređani.
103. Nikola (Mile) BUNJČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1949, Crevarska strana, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on his way home from the village. Presumably, he was killed by members of the Croatian army who were in the village that same day.
104. Stojan (Dragana) MALOBRADIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1950, Katinovac, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was killed in the village by members of the Croatian army and thrown into the well three houses away from his home. The well was mined and destroyed.
105. Ilija MRKONJIĆ, (m), Serb, 50 years old, Slavsko Polje bb, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was killed at the end of 1996 and his body was found at the dump site near the local school in Slavsko polje. Presumably, he was killed by members of the Croatian army.
106. Pero (Pero) OREŠČANIN, called Peco, (m), Serb, 50 years old, born in Pecka, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed in front of Božo Gluić's house in Suha Perna. He was thrown into the water and his body was torn apart by ravens and pigs.
107. Ljuban (Milan) POŠTIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1936, Gređani, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. The Croatian army took him to Katinovac on August 9 or 10, where he was killed in the schoolyard. The corpse was taken to an unknown location and the whereabouts of his grave are unknown.
108. Danica SAMARDŽIJA, (f), Serb, 65 years old, born in Samardžija, Slavsko Polje, Sisak–Moslavina County.
109. Teodor SAMARDŽIJA, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Samardžija, Slavsko Polje, Sisak–Moslavina County. Both of them were thrown into the fire on August 7, 1995 and burned to death. Presumably, members of the Croatian army perpetrated these killings.
110. Sava (Janko) STANOJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1930, Bović, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village after military–police operation Storm. He was last seen on August 25, 1995. According to witnesses' statements, he was killed by Bosnian newcomers who arrived in the village on August 23, 1995. He refused to let them into his house.
111. Stana ŠIMULIJA, (f), Serb, 75 years old, Slavsko Polje bb, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was found hanged in front of her house during military–police operation Storm. The Croatian army was in the village at that time, and presumably, members of these military units killed her.
112. Mirko (Slavko) VIJUG, (m), Serb, b. 1931, Topusko, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. His body was found under a vine in his backyard. He was buried in the Topusko cemetery.

113. Mihajlo VOJNOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1911, Crni Potok, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on August 10, 1995. The perpetrators of the crime were members of the Croatian army who were staying in the village that day.
114. Milan (Mile) ZDJELAR, (m), Serb, b. 1921, Crni Potok, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was killed on August 8, 1995 by members of the Croatian army, specifically the Tigers unit. He was shot in the head and leg. His body was buried in the meadow where he was shot.
115. Milan ŽUNA, (m), Serb, b. 1954, Katinovac, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on August 9, 1995. His body remained in the yard for over one month. The pigs ate half of his torso. The corpse later disappeared.

Petrinja municipality

According to 1991 census, 35,565 residents lived in the region of the Petrinja Municipality: 15,969 of Serb ethnicity, 15,790 of Croat ethnicity, 23 of Czech nationality, 17 of Hungarian nationality, 13 of Italian nationality and the rest, 3,753 persons, of various ethnicities.

A great part of the Petrinja Municipality belonged to the territory of the so-called “Krajina.” A great number of persons fled this region, and most of those who stayed were killed or proclaimed missing.

116. Božo (Stevan) BAJLOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1933, Luščani,²⁰ Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village during military–police operation Storm, where he was killed when the Croatian army entered the village. His body was found on the bed in his house.
117. Katarina BAJLOVIĆ, (f), Serb, 90 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was elderly and sick and remained in her house during military–police operation Storm. She was killed in her house: her head was cut off, and the body which was seen lying at the doorstep was torn apart by pigs.
118. Dragan (Nikola) DAJIĆ, (m), Serb, born around 1950, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village during military–police operation Storm. He was thrown alive into the well during the afternoon of August 6, 1995, and he drowned there.
119. Draginja DAJIĆ, (f), Serb, 75 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She remained in her village with her daughter, Ljubica. They were shot on their way to find the other inhabitants of the village.

20 During military–police operation Storm, members of the Croatian Army in the village of Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, in one day, killed 10 persons who decided to remain in Croatia. Two more persons who remained in the village were considered missing and information about their disappearance is presented in the second part of this chapter, in the section on “missing persons.”

120. Ljubica (Draginja) DAJIĆ, (f), Serb, born around 1950, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village with her mother, Draginja. On their way to find the other inhabitants of the village, firearms were used to shoot them.
121. Ruža DROBNJAK, (f), Serb, 65 years old, Gornja Mlinoga, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in her house during military–police operation Storm. A few days later, a female friend found her dead and buried her in the local village.
122. Branko LAZIĆ, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on a local road with two other residents from the village.
123. Jovo LAZIĆ, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was found killed in his house, leaning against a table.
124. Mićo (Mihajla) LAZIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1936, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on the road together with two other residents.
125. Mirko LONČAR, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village together with Branko and Mićo Lazić and he was killed on a road in Drakulić.
126. Stana (Mile) MILJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, 78 years old, Jabukovac, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She remained in the village during military–police operation Storm. When the Croatian army entered the village, she was shot and seriously wounded. The following day, she died from the inflicted wounds.
127. Rade OPAČIĆ, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during the “Storm,” and was killed in front of his house on August 6, 1995.
128. Ranko (Branko) SVILOKOS, (m), Serb, b. 1947 in G. Pastuša, Gornja Pastuša 35, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed in the orchard near the store on August 6, 1995, when the Croatian army brigade named Gromovi (Thunder) entered the village. The location of his grave is unknown.

Hrvatska Kostajnica municipality

According to the 1991 census, the territory of the Hrvatska Kostajnica was inhabited by 14,851 residents: 9,343 of Serb ethnicity, 4,295 of Croat ethnicity, two persons of Hungarian nationality, one of Italian nationality and 1,210 of various other nationalities.

At the beginning of military–police operation “Storm” in 1995, a great number of residents fled the region, and those who stayed were mostly killed or missing.

129. Neno (Pero) ADŽIĆ, (m), Serb, 20 years old, Gornji Hrastovac, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On his way out of the region, Croa-

- tian army members killed him with a grenade during the bombardment of the entire region of Hrvatska Kostajnica and its surrounding areas.
130. Miloš BOROJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1947, Borojevići 4, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. While on his way through the village, he was killed by a grenade fired from a tank.
 131. Radojka (Janko) ČIZMIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1925, Lovča, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military operation Storm. While on her way through the village to round up her cattle, members of the Croatian army shot her in the chest and killed her.
 132. Mara GOJSAVIĆ, (f), Serb, 60 years old, Komogovina 47, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She went into exile on a truck. There were 15 other persons on the truck, which was later stopped by the Croatian army in Hrvatska Kostajnica. When the truck stopped, the soldiers started shooting at the people in the truck. Several persons were wounded and Mara Gojsavić was killed.
 133. Miloš KORASIĆ, (m), Serb, 80 years old, Prevršac, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
 134. Janja MATIJAŠEVIĆ, (f), Serb, 75 years old, Donje Velešnje, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
 135. (?) (Stojana) KORASIĆ, (m), Serb, 10 years old, Prevršac, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Sisak–Moslavina County. The three of them were hiding in the house of Miloš Korasić and were found and killed by members of the Croatian army who first entered the village on August 5, 1995.
 136. Bogdan SAMARĐIJA, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Gornji Hrastovac, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed by members of the Croatian army.

Sunja municipality

137. Stevo BOŽIĆ, (m), Serb, 75 years old, Donji Hrastovac, Sunja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and was killed on his own doorstep by members of the Croatian army.
138. Marica (Đuro) DRAGOJLOVIĆ, (f), Serb, b. 1908 in Čapljani, Donji Hrastovac, Sunja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was a disabled person and stayed in her house during military–police operation Storm. She was killed two or three days after the Storm. The perpetrators are not unknown, but presumably, she was killed by members of the Croatian army who were in the village at the time.
139. Julka (Milan) KOSTANJŠEK, (f), of unknown ethnicity, born in Koljanin in 1914 in Petrinjci, Drljače 29, Sunja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She was the only person remaining in the entire village. She was killed but nobody knows where was she buried.

140. Ljuban STOJAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 85 years old, Donji Hrastovac, Sunja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County.
141. Dragan STOJAKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 80 years old, Donji Hrastovac, Sunja Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. They stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. They were killed a few days later by Croatian soldiers. Later on, their bodies were burned in the hay barn next to their house.

2/II. A list of missing civilians, according to witnesses' statements, these civilians were presumably killed

The problem of missing person is still very serious. The Republic of Croatia is persistently using all available means of searching for missing persons of Croat ethnicity, while on the other hand entirely ignoring a search for missing Serb residents. The authorised institutions and human rights organisations²¹ believe that the search for the missing persons on the Serb side is being completely ignored and minimised.

Manfred Novak, who on behalf of the UN, investigated the issue of missing persons in operations Flash and Storm, openly stated that he had given a list of 2,973 missing persons of Serb ethnicity to the government of the Republic of Croatia during 1995 and 1996.²²

Croatia supplied information for only 11 persons from the list of "905 searched for persons," according to a statement on July 8, 1996, by Pavle Todorović, President of the Commission of the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for Humanitarian Issues and Missing Persons.

The CHC activists have, through their investigations and fieldwork, established that at least 100 civilians (this number is not final) disappeared from the territory of the former Sector South.²³ We should keep in mind that the CHC received data that during 1991 and 1992, several hundreds of people, including Serb civilians, also disappeared from the region of the former Sector North, however this report does not deal with this issue. Because there have not been any recent developments regarding these cases, we believe that only a few may still be alive. The family members of the missing persons believe that their relatives and dear ones are still alive and hope that they will return one day or that at least their remains will be found so that they can be buried with dignity.²⁴

21 "For the relatives of the missing and disappeared, dignity means a grave where they can mourn. For the families of victims buried in garden graves, it means a properly marked grave where descendants will also be able to commemorate the dead. For relatives of those whose remains are buried in sardine-like rows of wooden crosses in town cemeteries, it is burial in the family plot with a proper headstone." (Amnesty International, "Croatia: Three Years since operations Flash and Storm—three years of justice and dignity denied. Amn. Int'l — News Release — Eur 64/05/98, August 4, 1998).

22 This list includes all missing persons, civil as well as military; however, this report refers only to missing *civil persons* from the region encompassed by the former "Sector North."

23 With respect to the sensitivity of this subject and to the circumstances under which interviewed witnesses are living (especially their fear due to the mentioned circumstances), it is very likely that questioned persons did not disclose all of their information. In some villages, CHC activists could not find anyone who would speak about the events in these villages. Thus, some areas remain "uncovered."

24 CHC will soon focus on missing persons of all national entities and will ask for the co-operation of other organisations in dealing with this problem.

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Duga Resa municipality

141. Božica KARAC, (f), Serb, b. 1900, Koranska strana 16, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm, at which time she disappeared, and since then there has not been any record of her.
143. Anđelko (Danilo) KONČALOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1966 in Donji Skrad, Donji Skrad 59, Duga Resa Municipality, Karlovac County. When military–police operation Storm started, he left his native village to hide at the local UNPROFOR camp. He disappeared on his way to the camp. No one knows anything about his fate.

Karlovac municipality

144. Milka ĐIPALO, (f), Serb, b. 1924 in Mala Crkvina, Trupinjak 6, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm when she disappeared. No one knows anything about her fate.
145. Slobodan MILJENOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1961 in Čatrnja, Čatrnja 2, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He was last seen on a bus, on his way to exile. He changed his mind at the last moment and asked the driver to let him out, saying that he has not done anything wrong to anyone, and that he wished to stay in his village. He disappeared a month later. There has not been any record of him since then.
146. Pero (Miloš) RUJAN, called Russian, (m), Serb, b. 1950 in Donji Sjeničak, Donji Sjeničak bb, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and then disappeared. His disappearance is connected to the entrance of the Croatian army into the village.²⁵

Plaški municipality

147. Rade (Nikola) RALIĆ, (m), Serb, born around 1933, Blata, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. He did not leave the village during military–police operation Storm. He disappeared immediately after the action. No trace of him has been found since then.

²⁵ According to some sources of information, Mićo Rudan was killed near his home, and his corpse rotted in the meadow. Other sources say that a neighbour buried his headless, rotten body. Yet a third source stated that someone erected a cross on the place where the dead body was found. Due to the fact that it was not possible to identify the corpse of Pero Rudan, he is listed under the section on “missing persons” in this report.

Slunj municipality

148. **Milin SAVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 80 years old, Donje Primišlje, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. There has not been any trace of him since then.
149. **Đuro (Milovan) VUKELIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1912 in Zbijeg Močilski, Broćanac bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed at his house during military-police operation Storm and disappeared on August 12, 1995.
150. **Spase (Pero) ZORAJA**, (m), Serb, b. 1939 in Mudrić selo, Broćanac bb, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in his home during military-police operation Storm. He disappeared on August 8, 1995. It is unknown what happened to him.

Vojnić municipality

151. **Miloš (Dmitrija) BASARA**, (m), Serb, b. 1950 in Malešević selo, Malešević selo 18, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. He was last seen on October 9, 1995 in his village. Since then, all traces of him have vanished.
152. **MILICA (?)**, called **MUTIĆ**, (f), Serb, 70 years old, Knežević Kosa, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She remained in the village during military-police operation Storm and disappeared in the period between August 6 and February 1996. Her fate is entirely unknown to us.
153. **Kata NAPIJALO**, (f), Serb, 80 years old, Kolarić selo, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. She stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. All traces of her have been lost since then.
154. **Dušan RADIČANIN**, (m), Serb, b. 1921 in Selakova Poljana, Selakova Poljana 7, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. He was last seen by a resident of the village on August 10 or 11, 1995.
155. **Petar VERGAŠ**, (m), Serb, 55 years old, Široka Rijeka, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was situated in Široka Rijeka during military-police operation Storm and later on he disappeared.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY*Glina municipality*

156. **Milka (Vasilije) BOGDANOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. Šakić, 1960 in Brnjeuški, Majske Poljane bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. She was last seen on August 23, 1995 and since then all traces of her have been lost.

157. **Nikola (Dušan) DEMONJA**, (m), Serb, 22 years old, Vlahović 82, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. On August 7 or 8, 1995, when the Croatian army entered the village, he was arrested and taken to an unknown location. All traces of him have been lost since then.
158. **Milka (Lazo) DMITROVIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. Dmitrović, born around 1923 in Bojna, Bojna 102a, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in Bojna during military–police operation Storm. The Croatian army entered the village on August 6, 1995 and she disappeared in that period. Her fate is entirely unknown.
159. **Petar JAGROVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1926 in Kordun, Vlahović 125, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and disappeared on August 7 or 8, 1995 when the Croatian army entered the village.
160. **Ljubica (Anenije) JEKIĆ**, (f), Serb, 80 years old, Brnjeuška, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. She disappeared a few days later. Her fate is entirely unknown to us.
161. **Slavko (Mirko) MACAKANJA**, (m), of unknown ethnicity, b. 1951 in Šaševa, Šaševa 14, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. His uncle died a few days before the military operation and he wished to bury him in the local cemetery on August 6, 1995. He was last seen putting his uncle's body on a horse–drawn cart. All traces of him have been lost since then.
162. **Milan (Stevan) MARTIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1917 in Dabrini, Dabrina 113, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He disappeared on September 1, 1995 and his house was burned on that same day. He was a mentally disabled person, and there is a possibility that he was killed in the house.
163. **Petar (Milan) MRAKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born around 1915 in Vlahović, Vlahović 89, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He disappeared on August 7 or 8, 1995, when the Croatian army entered the village.
164. **Dušan (Petar) RADANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 60 years old, Brubno, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village during military–police operation Storm. He disappeared sometime between August 7 and 23, 1995.
165. **Andrija SARAPA**, (m), Serb, b. 1941 in Gornji Klasnić, Gornji Klasnić bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He remained in the village during military–police operation Storm and disappeared when the Croatian soldiers entered the village. According to unconfirmed information, he was killed by members of Croatian army. However, since this information cannot be confirmed, he is considered missing.
166. **Ilija ŠIKANJA**, (m), Serb, b. 1910 in Klasnić, Brnjeuška 225, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm. He was last seen on August 20, 1995.

167. Stana TINTOR, (f), Serb, born in Trnovac, Trnovac Glinski bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. Since then all traces of her have been lost. Her clothes were found near the well in her sister's backyard, where she lived, but her body was not found in it.
168. Darko (Branko) TRIVANOVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1974 in Mali Gradac, Momčilović Kosa 19, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm and when the Croatian army entered the village he took off in the direction of the hills in order to hide. He took a rifle with him. He was last seen on August 7 or 8, 1995.
169. Jovan (Miloš) UGLJEŠA, Serb, b. 1927 in Kozaperovica, Kozaperovica, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. Every trace of him has been lost since then. Some people believe that he was killed and buried beside the road leading to Mali Gradac. He has been reported missing because the place of his alleged burial has never been exhumed.
170. Stanko (Stojana) VINČIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1921, Dragotina bb, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm and disappeared on August 19, 1995 when the Croatian military passed through the village. All traces of him have been lost since then.
171. Stanko (Ilije) VUJASINOVIĆ, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Brubno, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village together with Dušan Radanović. They both disappeared in the period between August 7 and 23, 1995.
172. Vasilija VUJAKLIJA, (f), Serb, 78 years old, M. Obljaj 41, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina. She went into exile together with all other residents of the village but decided to return. She was last seen in the village during the military-police operation Storm.

Dvor municipality

173. Slavko (Emil) BAŠTEK, (m), Croat, b. 1950 in Dvor, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in Dvor during military-police operation Storm. He was last seen then and afterwards all traces of him were lost.
174. Nikola (Ljuban) CVETOJEVIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1942, Donji Javoranj 60, Dvor Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He suffered from heart disease and stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. He was hiding there for a few days and later, he disappeared. His neighbour heard a gun shot from and later saw a bulldozer digging a ditch in the neighbouring plot of land. He presumes that Nikola Cvetojević was killed and buried on the land of Rade Đurić.²⁶

26 The wife of Nikola Cvetojević reported to the police that her husband was buried in a unidentified field. The police marked the place but the excavation still has not been carried out.

175. **Stoja NUŽDA**, (f), Serb, born in 1906 or 1907, Trgovi, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and disappeared at that time.
176. **Dušan MIRKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born around 1920, Donja Stupnica, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and all traces of him have been lost since then.
177. **Julka (Stevan) PEŠIĆ**, (f), Serb, 65 years old, born in Gvozdanski, Majdan bb, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. She stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and disappeared in the period between August 6 and August 9, 1995.
178. **Nenad (Damjan) STANIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1924 in Gornji Javoranj, Gornji Javoranj 30, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in Gornji Javoranj during military–police operation Storm. Since then all traces of him have been lost.
179. **Milorad (Daragana) TRIVANOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, around 40 years, Zut, Dvor Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm and disappeared in the period between August 6 and 9, 1995.

Gvozd municipality

180. **Nikola (Mile) BRNJAVAC**, (m), Serb, 40 years old, Samardžije, Slavsko Polje, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in his village during military–police operation Storm, when he disappeared.
181. **Dragan DUGOŠIJA**, (m), Serb, 65 years old, Blatuša, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm, when he disappeared. All traces of him have been lost since then.
182. **Nikola (Ostoja) KOLUNDŽIJA**, (m), Serb, b. 1950, Crni Potok, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He was last seen in Crni Potok on August 10, 1995.
183. **Radoslav (Stojan) KORDIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1939, Gređani, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He joined the refugee column that was cut off near Glina and decided to return to his village. He was last seen on August 7, 1995 at around 9:00 a. m.
184. **Vasilj (Uroš) MIŠČEVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1950, Katinovac, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military–police operation Storm, when he was last seen.²⁷
185. **Stevan (Marko) PAVLOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1928, Kirin, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He stayed in Kirin during military–police operation Storm, when he was last seen.
186. **Nikola RAJAK**, (m), Serb, Ostrožin, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. He disappeared during military–police operation Storm.

27 A rumour circulated in the village that the dead body of Vasilj Mišćević was in the well, at street number 38.

Petrinja municipality

187. Dragan DAVORIJA, (m), Serb, 70 years old, born in Grabovac, Šušnjar, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He disappeared during military-police operation Storm.
188. Soka KRNJAJIĆ, (f), Serb, 70 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She was a sick and disabled person, and she stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm, when she was last seen.
189. Nikola (Stevana) JEKIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1936, in Banski Grabovac, Banski Grabovac 82, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. One day on his way to Gavrilović Company, where he worked during the entire Krajina period, he disappeared.
190. Mirko MARIČIĆ, (m), Serb, around 50 years old, Šušnjar, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. He disappeared the same day that Dragan Davorija disappeared.
191. Miloš MILJČEVIĆ, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Luščani, Petrinja Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He was elderly and sick. When the Croatian army entered the village during military-police operation Storm, he disappeared.

Cemetaries

War results in all types of victims. The most tragic consequence of war is the death of civilians. This report deals with the people who died and were killed persons during military-police operation Storm and whose deaths could have been avoided. It also deals with the way victims of the war were treated by the authorities, most of all with respect to identification, registration and burial. The CHC monitors and activists were not able to do any work regarding the issue during military-police operation Storm. Immediately after the war stopped, they engaged in the following activities: first, finding victims; second, monitoring (or at least trying to monitor) burials of the victims; and third, searching for information on the fate of registered and unregistered victims.

After the first phase, the second phase followed and the investigative phase went in three directions: monitoring the situation in the cemeteries and in public burials, finding secret and unknown graves, and finding witnesses. The primary goal was to prevent any unnecessary victims in the future. The CHC activists did everything in their power to prevent the killing of more people.

1. Situation of Burials after Military-Police Operation Storm

The procedure regarding burial of all war victims should have been precisely documented and identified by the authorities. Deaths should have been officially confirmed, and the victims should have been buried by the state in their native town or villages, if they did not have relatives. However, we have witnessed an entirely different course of events. Many victims who were killed during military-police operation Storm were not properly buried and often their bodies were torn apart by stray animals. There are a great number of grave mounds in the villages and lonely places. Many victims were buried near their own houses or places where their bodies were found. The authorities took away many corpses from the places where they were killed to unknown locations. Victims were also buried under NN (Unknown) signs, even though their identity could have been established very easily. Many mass graves exist, in which victims were buried under one tombstone in clear violation of international human rights law. In order to carry out such investigations, the CHC activists needed a special authorised permit, which they could not receive. The numerous witnesses' statements speak clearly about the manner in which the victims were buried.

2. Reports on the Situation at Some Cemeteries in the former Sector North (izbor)

Gornje Selište, Glina municipality

There were 47 grave mounds found with the bodies of the war victims, killed during military-police operation Storm in Gornje Selište, Glina Municipality. These grave mounds are situated south of the cemetery and are marked by NN signs. Only 6 crosses carry the names of the buried people.

The tombstones are marked with the following numbers: 113 — 117, 155 — 179, 181 — 189, and 192 — 197. Under ordinal number 116 Kutlić Miloš was buried, under no. 172 Vila Mile was buried, under no. 173 Lončarević Stevo, under no. 174 Lončarević Ljuban, under no. 177 Stanić Đuro, and under no. 19 Daić Dragan.

In the third row, there is mound without a mark on it, and further down the row, there are holes dug out. According to witnesses' statements, these victims from the region of Vojnić and Gvozd were killed on their way to B&H.

Dvor municipality

On the right side of the cemetery, a series of graves were marked NN. The graves are situated in two parallel rows of the same length and in front of them there is one shorter row.

The first row near the external fence consists of graves with the following marks:

56/3; 57/3; 52/3; 82; 53/3; 83; 80; 78; 59/3; 60/3; 61/3; 58/3; 96; 95; 89; 94; 86; 87; 85; Bosiljka 17/2 Janjić; 16/2; 18/2; 19/2; 21/2; 20/2; 23/2; 22/2; 92; 91; 93.

Before that row, there is a parallel row with the following marks:

54/3; 84; 55/3; 90; 81; 79; 99; Milić 98 Ljubica; Borojević 97 Pero; 106; 104; 105; 107; 102; 103; 100; 101; 110; Nikola 108 Miličević; Mihal 109 Konstantin; 111; 112.

There is one shorter row in front of that one:

NN 11 (below it written male); NN 10 (below it is written female); NN 9; NN 8 (below it is written Ostoji and DŽ); Stanko Meninčanin (1911–1996); NN 7; NN 6; NN 5; NN 4; Vujanić Jelena (1910–1996), Joka Milan (1931–1995); Zorka Pavković; NN 3; NN 2; NN 1.

Mali Kozinac, Slunj municipality

On July 16, 1996, the CHC activists investigated the situation of this cemetery. The cemetery is situated behind the village of PENIĆI near Donji Skrad, some 3 meters away from the road. There are 9 NN (Unknown) marks and 5 graves carry crosses. Four graves are without any mark at all and on them a heavy moss grows. (The shape of the mound pointed to that conclusion). Between the unmarked mounds and NN crosses, there was a plot of freshly dug earth. A part of the cemetery was not possible to investigate due to the dense greenery.

Veliki Kozinac (Vurdeljsko groblje)

Heavy greenery covers the cemetery. There was a piece of black plastic protruding out of one mound. There was also one NN grave found. According to the witnesses' statement, this could have been the grave of Stevo Lukšić, the professor who the peasants saw dead after military-police operation Storm. His torso was found in the vicinity of the cemetery and his head was cut off.

Petrinja

The entire cemetery consists of two different parts, Catholic and Orthodox, 5 meters apart from each other. The Orthodox cemetery consists of two parts: an old part, in which the Orthodox church is situated, and the new cemetery. Below the old cemetery, there is patch of land with 146 crosses, put up during and after military-police operation Storm. The crosses were placed in 6 rows, and in the first one—just opposite the old cemetery—left of the grave number 198, there is one hole, the size of a coffin. Beside this hole, there is patch of land where it was clear that the earth had been freshly dug out.

On the path which connects the Catholic and Orthodox cemetery, near the parking lot, there is a patch of land where traces of a big vehicle (5x10m) were clearly seen. On that same plot of land, bands marked, STOP POLICE, were also placed.

1. Row, in front of the old cemetery, from the right side to the left:

Stana Begović; Maca Polovina 1926 — 96; Draginja Zorić; Pero 30 Petković; 40; 42; 39; 26; 25; 20; 16; NN; NN; 1A NN; 2 A NN; 3A NN; 4 A NN; Zorić Janko; 5 A NN; 19/3; 19; 18/3; 23; 198.

2. Row:

Mija Milošević; Milić Dalibor 1971 — 96; 36/3; 38; 37; 41; 42/3; 48; 47; 51; 52; 54; 31; 13; 32; 15; 10/2; 12 Turajlić Dragan; Đuričić Nikola 14; 11; 61; 66; 65; 60; 59; 5; 6; 8; 7; 11/2; 15/2; 14/2; 74; 73; 75.

3. Row:

41/3; Borota 48/3 Nenad; 16/3; 50/3; 49/3; Gruborovi8ć 7/3 Evica; Munić 13/3 Nenad; Jazavac 10/3 Živko; 6/3; 45 Mnaić Drago; 49; 35; 39/3; 50; 36; 76 Tomić Miloš; 55; 70; 69; 72; 77; 44; 68; 8/2; 9/2; 15/3; 13/2; 67; 64; 58; 56.

4. Row:

1 Bogdan Lekić; 3; 4; 5; 9; 10; 18 Nedeljko Đeverlija; 17; 21; 27 Nikola Cimeša; 24 BOROTA Feglica; 28; 22; 2/2; 12/2; 1/2; 3/2; 71; 62; 63; 34A; 43; Nevenka Vidić; 34 Mila Vavlović; 33 Milan Slavić; 11/3.

5. Row:

38/3; 37/3; 32/3; 29/3; Koračić 21/3 Ljuban; 34/3; 26/3; 7/2, ; 4/2; 5/2; 5/3; 25/2.

6. Row, next to the Orthodox cemetery:

33/3; 28/3; 31/3; Koračić 22/3 Miloš, Vorkapić 12/3 Milan; Korašić 23/2 Milka; 27/3; 17/3; Vinčić 9/3 Dušan; 40/3; 46; 24/2; Miličević 20/3 Anka; 51/3; Ivelić 25/3 Danica, 24/3; 6/2.

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Destruction of premises

Immediately after military-police operation Storm took place, the CHC activists carried out field investigations in difficult and unsafe conditions in the recently liberated regions of Croatia. Numerous incidents, such as devastation of houses, theft, murders, and disappearance of civilians, occurred in the region. Most of the incidents occurred immediately after military-police operation Storm. According to statements by the remaining residents of the region, a great number of incidents occurred several months after the military operation. The first wave of Croatian army units passed through villages without causing significant damage in the liberated area. The Croatian units who came later and remained in the villages for several days committed most of these crimes. Also, the newcomers, refugees from other parts of Croatia and B&H who settled in the region after military-police operation Storm, caused a great number of incidents.

The European monitors wrote in their report the following observations: *"In the entire Krajina region, the houses were burned down and even today, 5 weeks after the final battles in the region ended, houses are still being burned down. Devastation of a great part of the non-Croat property is a clear indication that this was not done merely by mobs, but the Croatian authorities tolerated the whole thing. The entire situation would result in scaring off the Serb residents from moving back. It is impossible to establish the exact range of destruction, but it is noticeable that the former Sector South is more devastated than the former Sector North."*

The UN former Sector South was less devastated in comparison with the former Sector North. However, it is clear that lower-ranked army commanders must have given "a parallel command" to their soldiers. That means that the army units did not receive their orders to loot, burn and destroy from the main Croatian army headquarters. Rather, this destruction was a consequence of the voluntary commands of certain subordinate officers. The Orthodox churches were mostly spared in this region, as well as in the former Sector South. It is important to mention one more essential characteristic of the events that occurred in this region. Specifically, immediately after military-police operation Storm and during the operation itself, many premises were not destroyed in the region. Most of the premises and objects were destroyed some time later. However, it is difficult to define exactly the period in which the greatest number of premises was destroyed. In the period between 1996 and the end of 1998, the intensity and frequency of arson remained relatively constant and did not diminish.

"Namely, in the region (former Sector North), which is a compliment to the Republic of Croatia, most of the houses were not burned down. They remained intact and they could be used. The newcomers from B&H and Vojvodina were resettled daily into that region. The empty houses that are not inhabited are entirely looted. There is nothing to be found in that region. Our Minister of the Interior Affairs and authorised police officers

have repeatedly stated that their field workers are doing everything in their power to preserve temporarily abandoned property. I do not feel sorry for the abandoned property, whose owners are away temporarily. If they come back they will somehow manage to get another property or somebody will help them get their property back. I am worried as a human being and believe that it is unacceptable that the property is being taken away from those who had courage to believe the speech of the President of the Republic and to remain in their country and their native villages or towns, where they wished to stay until the end of their lives. This is the most unacceptable and horrendous discrimination against them. The state does not wish to help these people. I will not say that the police are doing a bad job in general but in these cases they are entirely inefficient.”¹

In the following sections of our report, we have provided some examples of the devastation in the former UN Sector South. Due to the enormous number of cases of mining and devastation of houses and other objects, we shall hereby only release the information gathered and confirmed by the CHC activists. The report does not cover the entire region of the former Sector North, because in some parts of the region, the CHC was not able to establish the manner and time of the incidents. Some villages were completely devastated, and conditions for return have not been established. Some villages were entirely wiped off the map, as if they had never existed in the Republic of Croatia.

A. Mining and Devastation of Objects

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Duga Resa municipality

The family house of Rade DERETE from Bukovac Perjasički, Duga Resa Municipality was mined in the period between August 5 and August 28. The owner left the territory during military-police operation Storm but later on returned home and found his house mined.

Karlovac municipality

In the period since August 19–27, 1995, the farmland and property of Anka and Rade CAREVIĆ in Gornji Sjeniĉak 161 was entirely devastated. The house was entirely looted and the farm for raising cattle, farmhouses, garages and other objects were completely destroyed. Everything from vehicles to agricultural tools to cattle was taken away. Then finally, the farm was set on fire. A criminal file was submitted to the County Prosecutors' Office in Karlovac in December 1995 without any results.

¹ Presentation of Petar Mrkalj, the former Executive Director and the prominent CHC activist, at the Round Table Discussion on the "Struggle against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance," held on November 23–24, 1995 in Zagreb.

Milan MARTINOVIĆ's house in Podgorje Krnjačko was mined in 1996. The walls of the house and the front door were damaged. Besides damage to the physical structure, there was no other damage. The incident was immediately reported to the police. However, according to the statement of Milan Martinović, the police were highly abusive and insulted him. The CHC field team visited the Memorial Region of the Šamarica region. The activists found one big house, in front of the memorial to the Yugoslav People's Fight for Freedom during the Second World War, that was completely devastated and its prior purpose was not known. The house could have been a hunting lodge or served some similar purpose.

Danica MAČEŠIĆ from Karlovac, Milana Nemčića 17, returned to her house in July 1996. She found a displaced person from Slunj, living in her house. He soon left her house and took away all of her personal belongings, including furniture, with the approval of Vesna KONDIĆ, from the Commission for Temporary Use of Abandoned Property. On February 24, 1997 at around 3:45 a. m., an explosive device went off in her house. The cellar, workshop, and boiler room were destroyed. All the windows, walls, windowsills and doorsteps were destroyed. The windowpanes of the neighbouring houses also burst.

Slunj municipality

The village of Kordunski Ljeskovac is situated on the border with B&H. During military-police operation Storm, the Fifth Corps of the B&H Army and the Croatian army met there. The village was entirely destroyed (170 households). None of the former residents remained in the village. The army that guarded the border crossing systematically devastated the village, school building, monument of the Yugoslav People's Fight and cemetery. Written on one of the few remaining, untouched houses was the following message: "Fuck you, you orthodox people, what the fuck are you doing in Croatia? Get away from us, over Drina, we do not need you here. Fifth Corps."

In Cetingrad, Polojska Varoš hamlet, three houses were devastated, all cattle was driven away, and all electricity towers were demolished.

In the village of Donja Visočka, 9 houses were looted and all of the windowpanes and doors were broken. All the cattle was taken away, and all agricultural tools were looted.

In the village of Gornja Visočka, three houses were looted and everything was taken away from the houses.

In Tržić Primišaljski, three houses were destroyed, their roofs were taken away, and one house was burned.

Five houses were devastated in Donje Primišlje, all movable property was taken away and all cattle driven away.

In the hamlet of Bukovac Perjasički, four houses were destroyed and all the wooden trimming was taken away, together with agricultural tools and cattle. Two houses were destroyed in Slušnica, a door was devastated on a third one, and the house was looted.

Eight houses were devastated in Veljun, two were burned and all cattle and agricultural tools were taken away.

Six houses were destroyed in Točak. After military-police operation Storm, Tomislav Turek continued to commit lootings in the region. Many complaints were filed against him—all without success.

Dragica ZUBOVIĆ's house in the village of Irinovac, Slunj Municipality was attacked with a grenade in July 1996 around 3:00 a. m. An unknown person threw the grenade at the house from the nearby road. Half of the house was damaged. The owner was situated in the other part of the house at that time. That part of the house was not demolished.

The house of the Mrkić family was mined on April 8, 1997. They returned in June 1996 and lived in their son's house because their own house was devastated and looted during the "Storm." All the doors and windows had been stolen. Their hay barn had been burned. They were slowly reconstructing and restoring their house, when mines planted in the house destroyed it.

In Lapovac, Mile and Radoša TRBOJEVIĆ's house was destroyed on April 7, 1997. Two weeks earlier, they returned to the village. They stayed at the house of Dragica, Radoš's sister, in the same village. They started to restore doors and windows in order to be able to move into the house again. On April 7, they were reconstructing a demolished wall inside their house when the police patrol came from Slunj. They asked Radoš whether this was his house and went away. The same night, a mine was planted in the house. Now the family does not have a place to live. Refugees were accommodated in their flat in Karlovac and they cannot move there. Roofing was also taken off of other houses in the village.

Vojnić municipality

A hand grenade was thrown at the house of Rade and Dragica PERIĆ in Vojišnica, Vojnić Municipality. The bomb was thrown in the room next to which other tenants of the house slept. Besides physical damage, there were no other serious consequences. The house had been burned earlier in 1995, but since it was not entirely destroyed, the house was inhabited by these people in such condition.

An explosive device was thrown into the yard of Ranka Korać, on August 29, 1997 in Donji Vojnić. Besides minor material damages, there were no serious consequences.

In the village of Johovo, unknown perpetrators took away pieces of the hay barn belonging to Milić MARTINOVIĆ. The rest of the farmland was looted earlier when the roofs from all the houses were taken away.

In June 1997, two newcomers, Rasim and Fikret OKANOVIĆ, arrived in the village of Široka Rijeka, took apart the house of an unknown owner, transported the pieces to Mracelj, and put it up again.²

The CHC received on September 19, 1995, an anonymous report regarding the looting of the family belongings of Katica Gaćeša and Ljubica PUDRLJA in the hamlet of Gaćeša, the village of Kartalija. All property, windows, doors, radiators, technical equipment were stolen. The owner, of Croat ethnicity, fled with a refugee column during military-police operation Storm. She lives in Belgrade and she expressed a desire to return to the Republic of Croatia.

2 Report by a female citizen of Vojnić Municipality.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Dvor municipality

The CHC team visited the region between Donji Žirovac and Dvor on January 19, 1996 and established that many houses were devastated and looted in the region. In spite of the great damage to the houses, Orthodox churches in Žirovac and Dvor remained intact. A group of civilians was seen in the region of Brezovo polje, where there were many vehicles with the following register plates: SK 438 AE. They took the stolen furniture in an unknown direction, towards Glina. In the village of Trgovi, four soldiers in a vehicle with the register plates, HV 430 AB, looted neighbouring houses.

Border police moved into the house of Dušan and Dragica SUZIĆ in the village of Kobiljak and lived there for 6 months. The house was completely devastated in that period. They took floor tiles, windows, door handles and knobs. The sofa was destroyed and the electricity cables were cut. Two cabinets were destroyed and two blankets were burned, along with the Suzić family dog.

Hrvatska Kostajnica municipality

The family of Jadranka and Đorđe ŽILIĆ spent the entire war period living in Zagreb, where they have an apartment, and in Umetići, where they have a house and farmland that the parents of Đorđe Žilić left them. Their house was destroyed during military-police operation Storm. By their hard work and efforts, they were able to put everything in order again. At first, they had a very good relationship with their neighbours, because they lent them agricultural tools and machinery, but the situation changed over time. Jadranka is a Croat and her husband is a Serb, and the rest of the residents started to threaten them and insult them. The neighbours told the husband to leave and go back to where he came from even though he had lived in Zagreb throughout the war. Finally, on May 13, 1997, in their absence, an unknown perpetrator entered their house and broke all their furniture, curtains, ceramics, and other valuables. On May 18, when the Žilić called the police and asked them to come and give them police protection to visit their house, the police told them that the escort was unnecessary because the regular police patrols were over there. The Žilić family gave up on the idea of visiting their house and gathered all their remaining belongings because they feared the reaction of the neighbours.

In the period from May 13 to May 31, a great number of incidents occurred in the region of the Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, but only a few examples are given in this chapter. The rest are mentioned in the chapters on Terrorism and Resettlement.³

3 This report includes only few cases of violence against returnees.

Petrinja municipality

The house of the ŠUŠNJAR family was broken into on December 1995, in Petrinja and almost everything was taken away from the house. The house was shot at on March 7, 1996, the electricity was disconnected on purpose, and almost everything was taken away from the house. A part of the wiring and some furniture was destroyed.

Most houses in the village of Gornja Bačuga were completely devastated during military-police operation Storm and some were mined and burned. In the centre of the village, a school building was completely devastated: The windows and doors were removed, and some contents of the building were demolished. There is a new building near the school that was destroyed in the same way.

In the second half of 1996, in the village of Donja Bačuga, the house of Živko ĐUKIĆ was destroyed.

The house of Helena and Luka RADOVANOVIĆ, who had been living in Frankfurt (Federal Republic of Germany) for almost 25 years and who upon their retirement returned to Gornja Bačuga, was mined and completely destroyed in the period between April 10 and 20. Their cousin, Vladimir KOTORAN, from Zagreb regularly visited their house after military-police operation Storm. When he came to visit the house on April 21, 1997, he found only the remnants of the mined house.

B. Burning of Premises

"... Although it is impossible to give the exact number of houses which were destroyed, the ECMM estimates that (according to their field teams and investigations done in the field) almost 30% of the houses in rural areas were burned in the former Sector South and that 60% of the houses were burned in the former Sector North.

The leading principle in this senseless devastation and burning of houses lies in its cultural significance. In the Balkans, the family house is the symbol of a person's property. By burning down the houses, the worst offence has been committed. In this way, the wish to destroy is connected to the wish to keep the owner away from the house forever."⁴

"The initial reaction towards the reports of the monitors present in the region at the time of burning was a conscious denial of the facts. However, under international pressure, a statement was finally delivered which suggested that perpetrators would eventually be punished. The question is when. Allegedly, it is dangerous for the police to prevent such offences. Those who commit such crimes are decisive and vengeful; fire-fighters were threatened with death when they tried to put out the fires.

There are official statements by the Croatian authorities that point to the fact that they wished to prevent such incidents:

4 Special Report of the Monitoring Mission of the European Community (ECMM). (Translated from the Croatian).

— General Čermak told the head of the ECMM mission on August 10 that the military officials received strict orders to prevent burnings and lootings and that special forces were sent to the war-stricken regions in order to carry out investigations.

— Vice-president Mišetić stated on September 7, that those who burned houses are responsible for destroying Croatian property and in that way they contribute to the further damaging of the state. This should be stopped immediately,' said Mišetić.

— The Croatian media reported that on that same day General Čermak started a campaign to stop the plunder, theft, burning, and illegal appropriation of houses which according his statements, were mainly committed by members of the Croatian army.

— The Ministry of Defence stated on September 10, that the government initiated investigations into crimes in the area around Knin, that civilians dressed in military uniforms committed. It was also said that the perpetrators would be arrested and prosecuted."⁵

Although some of the burning incidents occurred during military-police operation Storm, a great number of burning incidents were recorded later. In the former Sector North, some villages were systematically burned after refugees from B&H resettled these regions. Individual cases of arson were recorded, as well as the burning of three houses at the same time. In some cases, entire villages were burned. Cases of burning houses were commonly recorded immediately before Serb residents returned to their homes.

Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, former president of the Croatian Helsinki Committee, warned about the mass burning of houses in the region of Gvozd and Vojnić in the period between February and March 1998. He stated that, most of the time, Serb houses were burned and that local and state authorities remained silent. The head of the Gvozd Municipality, Mirko Putrić, said that these were lies. He claimed: "No one is burning Serb houses. They often cause the fire themselves by cleaning around their houses and burning weeds. As far as I know, only old cabins were burned, not important premises."

Deputy to the head of the Sisak-Moslavina police station, Ivan Tounec, confirmed that many arsons (273) were recorded in the county. However, he claimed that Serbs and Croats alike caused the fires while they were cleaning weeds. He added that 47 persons were reported: 27 Serbs, 47 Croats, and 6 Muslims.

In the Karlovac police station, Branko Furač was of the same opinion. In the region of the Vojnić Municipality, between February 11 and March 4, there were 34 fires recorded. 33 fires were caused by the burning of dry weed and grass, and only one was started on purpose.⁶

The CHC field teams discovered that in the majority of cases, the fire was planted on purpose. No traces of burning weeds were found. Some of these villages did not even have any residents at the time of the incidents.

The CHC sent a letter to the Sisak-Moslavina police station on March 27, 1998 regarding the fires. The CHC also sent the police a detailed report on April 9, 1998 that recorded, in the period between January 1 and April 6, 1998, 469 fires (362 in open space, 99 in buildings or other structures, among which 44 were in chimneys, 11 were in trash containers, 3 were in electricity and telephone towers, 8 were in vehicles) in the jurisdiction of the police of Sisak-Moslavina County. The report also noted that 458 out of 469 fires were caused by negligence, and only 11 were ignited on purpose.

5 The same as the footnote above.

6 "Vjesnik" — March 18, 1998.

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Karlovac municipality

In the village of Gornji Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality, a house and other household premises belonging to Nikola KATIĆ and a hay barn of Rade ŠAŠIĆ were burned to the ground. A wooden house of the late Marta TEPŠIĆ was burned between August 10 and 15, 1995. A house and a hay barn of Sava BIJEIĆ, and a hay barn of Mirko MANOJLOVIĆ, were burned between August 15 and 20, 1995. A house of Nikola NIKOLIŠ was also burned to the ground, but the date was not known. On August 21 or 22, 1995, the house of Jovo JURIĆ was burned.

Dušan BASTAJIĆ, Prkos, Karlovac Municipality. His hay barn was burned on February 12, 1998.

Miloš BASTAJIĆ, Prkos, Karlovac Municipality. His hay barn and haystack were burned in February 1998.

Mirko BUNČIĆ, Mlakovac 27, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his haystack was burned to the ground.

Đuro ĆEKELIŠ, Lasinjski Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality. Between June 14 and 15, 1996, unknown perpetrators burned his wooden family house, which had previously been looted. The house was burned a day before the owner came home.

Miĉo ĐUKIĆ, Gornji Sjeniĉak 137, Karlovac Municipality. His pigsty, warehouse, haystack, and hay barn were burned at the end of February.

Đuro DOBRIĆ, Prkos, Karlovac Municipality. On February 12, his hay barn was burned. A witness to the incident said that the fire was caused by some unknown combustion.

Sveto DOBRIĆ, Prkos, Karlovac Municipality. He is currently working in Germany. His haystack was burned on February 12, 1998.

Svetozar GRIJAKOVIĆ, Mlakovac 26, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his haystack and farmhouses were burned.

Petar KARAMARKOVIĆ, Mlakovac 35, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. Two haystacks, two hay barns and two farmhouses were burned on February 17, 1998.

Desa KNEŽEVIĆ, Mlakovac, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. A hay barn and a haystack were burned on February 17, 1998.

Milica KNEŽEVIĆ, Mlakovac 29, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. On February 17, 1998, a wooden house and adjacent farmhouses were burned.

Desanka and Mihajlo MAĆEŠIĆ, Mlakovac no. 31, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. Their haystack and a hay barn were burned to the ground on February 17, 1998.

Marko MANOJLOVIĆ, Gornji Sjeniĉak 135, Karlovac Municipality. At the end of February, 1998, his house, hay barn and a haystack were burned. The incident occurred immediately before his return.

MIRKO MRKALJ, Donji Sjeniĉak 96, Karlovac Municipality. During the night of April 8 or 9, 1998, his farm was burned (house, hay barn, haystack, etc.). His farmhouse was burned immediately before his return to his native village.

A wooden house belonging to an unknown owner, located in the vicinity of the house no. 135 in Karlovac Municipality was burned at the end of February 1998. It was most probably a weekend vacation house.

Vlado PAGAČ, Mlakovac bb, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. On February 17, his hay barn was burned.

Nenad PODKRAJAC, Mlakovac bb, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality. His weekend house was burned on February 17, 1998.

(?) ROKNIĆ, Lasinjski Sjeniĉak, Karlovac. A returnee. Around February 20, his household (house, hay barn, haystack, garage, etc.) was burned.

Vaso ROKNIĆ, Donji Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality. His family house was burned on October 7, 1998 and had been previously looted.

Milorad SIMIĆ, Mlakovac 20, Krnjak Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his haystack was burned.

Miloš SIMIĆ, Mlakovac 28, Krnjak Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his two hay barns were burned.

Miloš ŽIVKOVIĆ, Mlakovac 25, Krnjak Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his hay barn and warehouse were burned.

Plaški municipality⁷

Dušan BUDIMLIJA, Zebići, Plaški Municipality. His farm was burned during the night of May 31, 1997.

Mile BUDIMLIJA, Zebići, Plaški Municipality. His hay barn was burned during the night of May 31, 1997.

Slunj municipality

In the middle of August 1995, in Gornje Primišlje, Slunj Municipality, the houses of Miloš ČUBRILOVIĆ, Đure TRBOJEVIĆ and Draginja KUKIĆ, were burned and later entirely destroyed. A hay barn of Mihajlo SMOLJANOVIĆ was burned. Two more houses in the village were looted.

At the beginning of December 1995, a letter (from an individual who has asked to remain anonymous) was delivered to the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in which the following incidents were listed. These incidents, described below, occurred in parts of Kordun, in the period from September 3 to November 28, 1995, and are listed in chronological order:

"A house and the household objects belonging to Ćane Kljajić from Stojmerić, near Bande bridge were burned in the period between September 3 and November 28, 1995. According to witnesses' statements, men in Croatian army uniforms committed these acts. The houses was first looted, and afterwards gunshots were heard. The whole affair lasted for an hour. Soldiers stood guard so that no one could approach the house.

7 In Plaški Municipality, fewer cases of arson were recorded, because many Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina settled in this area, and the original inhabitants were still living in the area.

On September 3, 1995, around 4:00 p. m., men in Croatian army uniforms set on fire a haystack belonging to Mile KOZLINA, and a haystack, house and farming premises belonging to another Mile, called "Šilota," in the village of Stojmerić. Shots were also heard over the course of several days.

On September 7, 1995, men in Croatian army uniforms set on fire the haystacks of Nikola Banda and Duje Banda in Bandino selo (near Bandin most bridge). Unknown perpetrators continued with burning down houses and hay barns in Bandino selo, and also in Mojsije Bande, Cvijanović Brdo, Kutanja, Veljun and other surrounding villages."

In Točak, Slunj Municipality, immediately after military-police operation Storm, Dušanka KOSANOVIĆ's house was burned and looted.

Desanka DUDUKOVIĆ, Točak 1, Slunj Municipality. Her house was burned at around 22:00 hours. This incident occurred while Desanka was temporarily living in Božić Selo, Krnjak Municipality.

Milić DUDUKOVIĆ, Točak 27, Slunj Municipality. His hay barn was burned on February 15, 1998.

Vojnić municipality

The house of Vasilj PAJIĆ was burned while the Croatian army was passing through the village of Pješćanica, Vojnić Municipality. The owner's body was found in the house one year after the house was burned.

The house of Rada and Dragica PERIĆ from Vojišnica, Vojnić Municipality was burned in August 1995.

Anka ČAVIĆ, Kokirevo 32, Vojnić Municipality. She returned from exile on March 1, 1998 and found that her haystack and her cellar were both burned.

Branko ČAVIĆ, Kokirevo 33, Vojnić Municipality. Around February 23, 1998, both his haystack and shed were burned down.

Miloš ČAVIĆ, Kokirevo 30, Vojnić Municipality. Around February 23, 1998, immediately after his return, his two haystacks were set on fire.

Danica GAČEŠA, Gačeša Selo, Vojnić Municipality. A returnee who lived in a neighbouring village with her daughter. On February 17, 1998, her house, shed, haystack and well were burned down.

Mirko GAČEŠA, Gačeša Selo, Vojnić Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his haystack was burned down.

Mila GVOJIĆ, Brdo Utinjsko, Vojnić Municipality. Dana 31. Her hay stack was burned down in March 1998.

Dragica IVOŠEVIĆ, Brdo Utinjsko 21, Vojnić Municipality. Her hay barn was burned on March 31, 1998.

Mileva JANJIĆ, Gačeša Selo, Vojnić Municipality. On February 17, 1998, her hay barn and shed were burned down.

KOSIĆ family, Brdo Utinjsko, Vojnić Municipality. On March 31, 1998, her old family house, hay barn, and shed for agricultural tools were burned down.

Dragan MAJSTOROVIĆ, Kolarić 15, Vojnić Municipality. In the middle of March 1998, his haystack was burned down.

Stevan MALOBABIĆ, Gaćeša Selo around 13, Vojnić Municipality. On February 17, 1998, his haystack was burned down. The owner is currently in exile.

Zora MAZALICA, Vojišnica bb, Vojnić Municipality. A returnee from exile. On February 11 or 12, 1998, her haystack was burned down. While she was making rounds on her farm, a neighbour-returnee threatened her. Earlier, houses had been burned.

MILIČEVIĆ family, Brdo Utinjsko 38, Vojnić Municipality. On March 31, 1998, his hay barn, pigsty and two sheds were burned.

Ranka PAJIĆ, Brdo Utinjsko, Vojnić Municipality. On March 31, 1998 her hay barn, pigsty and shed were burned down.

Đuro PEKIĆ, Biljeg, Vojnić Municipality. His restaurant, located near the road, was burned and damaged.

Orthodox cemetery, Radonja, Vojnić Municipality. The cemetery was burned down on February 11, 1998 around 3:00 p. m.

Miloš STOJAKOVIĆ, Gaćeša Selo 28, Vojnić Municipality. Her haystack was burned on February 17, 1998.

Milan VUJIĆ, Vojišnica 7, Vojnić Municipality. A returnee from the exile. After his return home, his orchard was burned down.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Gvozd municipality (Vrginmost)

Shots were heard around 10:00 p. m. on November 16, 1995 in Gvozd Municipality. Later on a family's house was seen on fire. The owners live and work in Germany.

Đuro and Ljubica AJDINOVIĆ, Kozarac 21, Gvozd Municipality. On March 1, 1998, immediately before their return from Podunavlje, their haystacks, garage and sheds were burned down.

Milka ARLOV, Gornja Trstenica 92, Gvozd Municipality. Her wooden house and a shed were burned down between February and March 1998.

Miloš BEKIĆ, (m), Serb, b. 1928, Čemernica 7, Gvozd Municipality. A returnee from Podunavlje. His haystack was burned on February 24, 1998. Two days later, upon his arrival from B&H, he was physically attacked by a refugee from B&H.

Evica BOROTA, Gornja Trstenica around 95, Gvozd Municipality lives in Zagreb. He is an owner of two houses, which were burned in February and March 1998.

Milan BOROTA, Gornja Čemernica bb, Gvozd Municipality. His hay barn was burned down.

Milka BOROTA, Gornja Trstenica 91, Gvozd Municipality. Her hay barn and haystack were burned in February and March 1998.

Milan BRUIĆ, Gornja Trstenica around 89, Gvozd Municipality. During February and March 1998, his haystack and hay barn were burned.

Kata DANČUO, Pješćanica 17, Gvozd Municipality. Kata is currently living in Serbia, and her grandchildren live in Karlovac, and visit the house in the village from time to time. Her house, hay barn and haystack were burned.

Marija DROBNJAK, Donja Čemernica 46, Gvozd Municipality. Two haystacks on her farm were burned on February 23, 1998.

Pavao DROBNJAK, Donja Čemernica 45, Gvozd Municipality. On February 23, 1998, his house was burned.

Nikola KAJGANIĆ, Donja Čemernica 49, Gvozd Municipality. On February 23, 1998, his haystack and household premises were burned.

Petar KAJGANIĆ, Donja Čemernica 40, Gvozd Municipality. Upon his return to his farm, his house, haystack, wooden house, shed, and wooden hay barn were all burned on February 23, 1998.

Žarko KAJGANIĆ, Donja Čemernica 43, Gvozd Municipality. He is currently in exile. On February 23, 1998, his hay barn, corn barn and a haystack were burned.

Pavao KORAC, Gornja Čemernica 112, Gvozd Municipality. His haystack was burned.

Danica KRAGULJAC, Gornja Čemernica 55, Gvozd Municipality. His haystack and hay barn were burned.

Mile KRAGULJAC, Gornja Čemernica 54, Gvozd Municipality. A part of his haystack was burned.

Danica KUKOLJ, Podgorje 37, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack was burned.

Dragan MRAOVIĆ, Blatuša 50, Gvozd Municipality. At the beginning of April 1998, his haystack, pigsty and a part of his old wooden house were burned.

Dušan MRAOVIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 151, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack, hay barn and shed were burned down.

Ilija MRAOVIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 148, Gvozd Municipality. Around February 20, 1998, her haystack, pigsty and hay barn were burned.

Miodrag MRAOVIĆ, Serb, b. 1964 in Trstenica, Trstenica 151/A, Gvozd Municipality. He returned from exile with his family. Two to three days later, on February 20, 1998, his whole farm—his house, garage, haystack, hay barn and a shed—was entirely burned.

Pero MRAOVIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 125, Gvozd Municipality. His two haystacks, two hay barns and a pigsty were burned.⁸

Mile MRKALJ, Podgorje 36A, Gvozd Municipality. His smaller farm house was burned.

A unknown owner's house was burned in the village of Blatuša, Gvozd Municipality. On September 12, 1995, immediately after two unknown civilians entered the house, the house was set on fire.

On the farm belonging to an unknown owner, a wooden house and two other premises in Gornja Čemernica, around house number 50, in Gvozd Municipality, were burned down.

A farm house was burned in Gornja Čemernica 64, Gvozd Municipality.

A house of an unknown owner was burned in Gornja Čemernica, across from the house number 81, Gvozd Municipality. A smaller wooden structure was also burned down.

8 On March 26, 1998, the CHC staff, led by President Ivan Zvonimir Čičak, Martha Patterson from the American Embassy to Croatia, Nataša Andonovski from the French Embassy to Croatia, Petar Mrkalj, head of the CHC Department for the most severe human rights violations, and Jadranko Mrkalj, head of the CHC Regional Centre in Karlovac, visited some villages in the municipalities of Karlovac, Gvozd and Vojnić and spoke with the owners of the burned houses who suffered from this loss.

A house of an unknown owner was burned in Gornja Čemernica, near house number 105, Gvozd Municipality.

In the vicinity of the house of Pavle KORAĆ, Gornja Čemernica, Gvozd Municipality, a farm house of an unknown owner was burned.

NN (Unknown) — a house and two unknown farm houses were burned in Gornja Čemernica— near house no. 54, which was also burned.

Adam OBRADOVIĆ, Gornja Čemernica 75, Gvozd Municipality. A house on his farm was burned to the ground.

Jovo and Vojo PAVLOVIĆ, Podgorje 38, Gvozd Municipality. Jovo lives in Germany, and Vojo in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Their hay barn and haystack were burned.

Milka PAVLOVIĆ, Podgorje 40, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack was burned.

Mirko PAVLOVIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 115, Gvozd Municipality. His hay barn, pigsty, and two haystacks were burned on February 2, 1998.

Selo PODGORJE, hamlet of Pavlovići, Gvozd Municipality. Around February 25, 1998, the whole village was burned. There was nobody living in the village and there had not been any burning of weeds.

Milka RAJAK, Gornja Čemernica 66, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack and a hay barn were burned on that same day.

Petar RATKOVIĆ, Gornja Čemernica 46, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack and hay barn were burned.

SAMARDŽIJA family, Podgorje 42, Gvozd Municipality. His haystack was burned.

Gojko SIMIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 117, Gvozd Municipality. Her haystack and hay barn were burned during February or March 1998.

Ljuban SIMIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 106, Gvozd Municipality. During February or March 1998, his pigsty was burned.

Milan SIMIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 121, Gvozd Municipality. His hay barn and haystack were burned in February or March 1998.

Stanko SIMIĆ, Gornja Trstenica 103, Gvozd Municipality. Around February 20, 1998, his hay barn was burned.

Stojan SIMIĆ, Gornja Trstenica, Gvozd Municipality. His two haystacks were burned on his farm during February or March 1998.

Jadranka VUJAKLIJA, Gornja Čemernica 106, Gvozd Municipality. Her new house and a barn were burned.

Milan ZIMONJA, Gornja Čemernica 67, Gvozd Municipality. Her hay barn was burned.

Milorad ZIMONJA, Gornja Čemernica 60A, Gvozd Municipality. His two farm houses, house and one haystack were burned.

Miloš ZIMONJA, Gornja Čemernica 60, Gvozd Municipality. At his farm, two farm houses and a house were burned.

Rade ZIMONJA, Gornja Trstenica 105, Gvozd Municipality. He had plans to return from exile. In February or March 1998, all his farm houses were burned.

Glina municipality

Stojan, Marija and Dušanka KUREPA, Dragotina, Glina Municipality. The family returned from exile two days before March 26, 1998. Three days after their return on March 29 or 30, around 2:00 a. m., unknown men broke into their house and tried to set it on fire. They failed in their attempt to burn the house down but managed to burn two hay barns down to the ground.⁹

Hrvatska Kostajnica municipality

There were 19 structures burned in the village of Mračaj in the period between May 14 and 21, 1997. Out of these 19 objects, 11 were household premises. In spite of the fact that this village was mostly inhabited by Croats (according to the 1991 census, there were 96 Croats and 53 Serbs living there), the village was divided into two parts. Croats lived in one part of the village and Serbs lived in other half of the village.¹⁰

During the "Kostajnica events" in 1997, the majority of Serb returnees were beaten by Croats newcomers.

Petrinja municipality

In the second half of 1996, in the region of Bačuga, Petrinja Municipality, a farm belonging to Jovan ŠUŠNJAR and houses belonging to Stevo MILJEVIĆ, Stanko OBRADOVIĆ and Milan OBRADOVIĆ were burned.

On November 10, 1996, a house and other premises belonging to Rade ŠUŠNJAR, and houses belonging to Miloš ĐUKIĆ, Nikola ĐUKIĆ, Adam ŠUŠNJAR and Milan NEVAJDE were burned.

Jovan CVIKIĆ, Donja Bačuga 44, Petrinja Municipality. During the night between July 30 and 31, 1996, his hay barn was burned.

Miloš ĐUKIĆ, Bačuga, Petrinja Municipality. His house was burned on November 10, 1996.

Nikola ĐUKIĆ, Bačuga, Petrinja Municipality. His house was burned on November 10, 1996.

Stanko ĐUKIĆ, (m), Serb, Donja Bačuga 10, Petrinja Municipality. His house was burned on March 18, 1997. Prior to this event, in Donja Bačuga, 30 family houses were burned. The perpetrators have not been found.¹¹

Mihajlo GRUBJEŠIĆ, Donja Bačuga 126, Petrinja Municipality. At the beginning of March 1998, prior to his return to the Republic of Croatia, his house was burned.

Stojan JASIĆ, Moštanica, Petrinja Municipality. His house was set on fire on March 30, 1996 and it was still burning the following day.

9 CHC— Report on this event.

10 While visiting this village after the incident, the CHC field staff noticed that in the Croatian part of the village, a few houses were inhabited, but the part of the village where Serbs used to live was completely destroyed.

11 CHC — Supplement to the report on events that occurred between January 1 and April 20, 1997.

Destruction of premises

Stevan KALAMBURA, Donja Bačuga 71, Petrinja Municipality. Two unknown persons burned his house and all farmhouses in the vicinity on October 29, 1996. The house was looted earlier.

Sofija KEKEŠ, Dodoši 39, Petrinja Municipality. Prior to her return on March 15 or 16, 1997, her hay barn and haystack were burned.

Janko KOZIĆ, Luščani, near house no. 36, Petrinja Municipality. In the middle of March 1998, his hay barn was burned.

Rade ŠUŠNJAR, Bačuga, Petrinja Municipality. His house was burned on November 10, 1996.

Stanko ŠUŠNJAR, Donja Bačuga 36 or 38, Petrinja Municipality. On July 30 or 31, 1996, her house and stables were burned.

Ljubica VUJAKLIJA, Donja Bačuga, in the vicinity of the village store. Her house was burned at the beginning of March 1998, prior to her return.

The above-mentioned cases of destruction provide a clear picture of the events that occurred in the territory of the former Sector North during and after military-police operation Storm. It is important to note that, despite all the statistics accumulated and presented to the public by the Ministry of the Internal Affairs and Ministry of Justice, the perpetrators of these crimes have not been discovered or prosecuted. Another significant problem involves the right of all refugees to reconstruct their property. The houses, flats and other household objects destroyed and devastated by terrorist acts after the war are not subject to the Law on Reconstruction. As a result, the owners of these houses do not have any rights regarding renovation and reconstruction of their property. Furthermore, they do not have any right to compensation of damages from the Republic of Croatia, due to the 1992 annulment of Article 180 of the Law on Obligatory Relationships by a provision of the government of the Republic of Croatia. According to Article 180, the state is responsible for compensating all the damages done by the terrorist acts. After the annulment of this article, all court procedures were stopped against the Republic of Croatia until a new law regulating this question could be established. Unfortunately, new regulations have not yet been created, despite the numerous initiatives that have been put before the Croatian Parliament and Ministry of Justice.

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Terrorism and violence

“Ethno-linguistic tensions in some Western countries are no less acute than in the Balkans. The main difference is that in liberal democracies, these tensions are not in most cases considered a “security” risk because they take place in a civil society with a rule of law, where there are institutional mechanisms to manage and defuse them. Three elements — civil society (where ethnicity is not the exclusive organizing principle), rule of law (guaranteeing human rights and minority rights), and institutional means of mediation and arbitration — are central features in the creation of a “community of security.” Such a community cannot be reduced to a set of legal measures or policies, but it represents an environment from which the use of force to deal with inter-ethnic differences is excluded (except as a last resort to ensure law and order). And that is also a central message for the Balkans: Legislation on minorities that observes international standards is a prerequisite; but no amount of legislation will be effective without democracy, civil society and the rule of law—in other words, without the creation of a community of security.”¹

At the end of military-police operation Storm, in the former Sectors South and North, all kinds of terrorist acts occurred in the liberated regions. There were numerous cases of murder, beatings, harassment and mistreatment, arson and destruction of property recorded.

A substantial number of persons of Croatian ethnicity, especially people from mixed marriages, were marked as “objectionable” Croats. Without any reason, they were accused of serving the Serb authorities, taking the side of the rebels, and fighting against the Republic of Croatia. They were denied all the rights that they were due. They were subject to harassment, threats and physical mistreatment. They were pushed to the margins of society. The authorities at the local level did not do anything to protect them from all kinds of repression. To the contrary, they even tacitly approved of all these events.

“The position of the HDZ assembly, adopted on Tuesday, March 12, 1996:

We hope that all individuals and forums accept our position on why we believe that it would be appropriate to prevent Serbs from returning to their houses. We decided to take this action, because of the psychological condition of the recently settled Croats. There have been a few cases where Serbs have come back and asked about their property and the possibility of future return.

1 From the text, entitled, “Inter-Ethnic Relations and Treatment of Minorities” — Report of the International Commission for the Balkans, published in the book “Unfinished Peace” (page 164).

We believe that such events bring anxiety into the population currently living in the region, and this fear and insecurity causes the Croats to show a certain unwillingness and lack of interest in the jobs awaiting them. Since there have not been any inter-state or international agreements regarding our status and the return of the Serbs, we suggest, that at least for now, a moratorium be placed on the return of the Serbs to our regions.

*We are aware of the fact that we are doing something that does not contribute positively to the official policies and the state of Croatia; on the other hand we believe that we are doing the best for the interests of our people. We also know that this document is not an official one, but we wish to show openly our attitude and our approach to this problem.*²

The government representative in the Gvozd Municipality, Mirko Putrić, expressed a predominantly negative attitude toward Serb returnees, which affected the process of return and return of their property. As a result, a great number of returnees have not been able to enter their houses, where Croats from B&H still live. The government of the Republic of Croatia dismissed Mirko Putrić from his post on October 3, 1996. It appeared as if his dismissal would bring positive changes and results. Mirjan Slavica was appointed to the post and even though he expressed a greater willingness to solve the above-mentioned problems, significant steps have not been taken.

In the region of the city of Karlovac, numerous anti-Semitic and pro-fascist incidents have been recorded. During the night of May 1, 1997, at the Jewish cemetery in Dubovac, Karlovac, Nazi and Ustasha symbols and anti-Semitic graffiti appeared on ten tombstones. Swastikas, Ustasha signs, and slogans such as, "U," "Sieg Heil!, and "Arbeit macht frei!" were written all over marble tombstones. The police removed the slogans in the morning. It is important to note that the Jewish cemetery has been declared a cultural monument, and must be protected as such.

On August 28, 1998, during the festival, "Days of Beer," in Karlovac, an unknown perpetrator tried to take away a flag from a girl from an Israeli ensemble. When he was not able to do that, he raised his hand, gave a Nazi salute, and declared "Heil Hitler."

In other parts of the liberated territory, as well, tensions further contributed to the dissemination of ethnic hatred, discrimination, and primitivism.

On June 6, 2000, during the commemoration of the murders of 520 inhabitants of the village of Veljun, Biserka LEGRADIĆ urinated on a tombstone.

At the press conference of the Social Liberal party in Obrovac, held on May 23, 2000, the head of the branch, Đuro ŽUPAN, blamed the international community for the situation in the regions under special state protectorate. He stated that: ". *The rule of law in this region was brought into question when it was decided that 20,000 persons of Serb ethnicity must return to Croatia because they are on the list of wanted persons. That is why the Croats are again faced with criminals.*"

That same day, posters appeared in Obrovac, with a list of 100 names of citizens of Obrovac accused of armed rebellion against the Republic of Croatia.³

On June 8, 2000, members of the Slunj branch of the association of "Hrvatski domobran," organised the unveiling of the monument dedicated to the Ustasha com-

2 This text, entitled, "HDZ Attitude — Vrginmost — Gvozd," hung on the bulletin board of the Government Special Appointee for the Gvozd Municipality. It was signed by Leopold Bilal, President of the HDZ branch who was at the same time Deputy Government Special Appointee for the Gvozd Municipality.

3 The names of these persons were published in 1992, in the daily newspaper, "Slobodna Dalmacija."

mander, Juro Francetić. On that occasion, the president of the branch, Dragan HAZLER, delivered a hate speech message that is quoted here: "*Croats should live on every part of the Croatian land. Therefore, we will not allow the members of the ethnic minority, which is our greatest enemy, to breed.*"

In Karlovac, on June 11, 2000, posters entitled, "These are our fellow-citizens," appeared. 131 persons were listed on these posters, and they were accused of being members of the Krajina police. The author of the poster was Tomislav TUREK. The CHC activists have gathered a collection of documents about him regarding his physical and verbal harassment of Serbs in the region.

At very busy locations in Petrinja, on June 15, 2000, posters appeared with the condemnatory title: "THEY WERE THE ONES WHO DESTROYED PETRINJA!" These posters listed 173 names from the indictment of the Military Court. Below the text, the following statements were also written: "*This is a list of members of the paramilitary units of the Srpska Krajina, who on April 16, 1991 took part in the attacks against the city of Petrinja, and fought against members of the Croatian army and against the representatives of the Ministry of the Interior. They wounded and killed over 600 of their fellow citizens. They also systematically devastated a great number of buildings in our city. 173 of them committed criminal acts against the Republic of Croatia by endangering the territorial integrity of the state and by committing armed rebellion against the state.*"⁴

The most recent incidents surrounding the Veljun monument, in the Slunj Municipality, provide a clear indication of the renewal of intense hatred and intolerance, which could spread even further if the authorities do not take decisive steps to prevent the occurrence of such incidents. In order to express disapproval of the latest right-wing extremists incidents, the CHC planned a trip to Veljun on June 22, 2000, the Day of the Anti-Fascist Fight, in order to place wreathes of flowers on the graves of the victims of fascism. This idea was not, however, welcomed by the local authorities. The members of the CHC were told to postpone their trip to Veljun. The mayor of the town of Slunj delivered a letter to the highest authorities, the media and the CHC, in which he accused Milorad Pupovac, president of a Serb minority organization, and the CHC of seeking to "... *bring anxiety to the region.*" Additionally, he said that there were not any incidents in the region until Milorad Pupovac came to the village on May 6, 2000. Mr. Skukan, the mayor, demanded that the highest authorities "*prevent the deliberate incitement of confrontations in the region.*"

The following day, on June 21, the Slunj branch of the association of the war veterans, "*Hrvatski domobran,*" delivered a letter of protest, accusing the CHC of "*acting subjectively even toward dead people and neglecting Croats.*" The letter was signed by the president of the association, Dragan Hazler, and delivered to the highest state officials and the media.

The CHC decided to cancel the announced action in order to prevent any incidents that might result from false information and gossip spread among the Slunj population. On June 21, the CHC published a statement, "Information for the Public," and delivered

4 On the same day, the CHC team went to the location, took a photograph of the poster, spoke with some inhabitants of Petrinja and met with the Sisak-Moslavina police officers. During the talks with Ante Ašćić, the Assistant to the Chief of the Police Station, the CHC activists noted that he was greatly upset by the subject and stated that the event had attracted too much attention.

it to all media organizations. Among other things, the statement refers to the behaviour of the political parties as extremely frivolous. Only one political party decided to honour the victims of fascism, noting: *"We believe that to overcome the evils of neo-fascism and fascism, as well as to attempt progress toward liberal democracy and the rule of law, all democratic political subjects should stand together, in public, decisively and united."*⁵ This afore-mentioned quote is printed at the end of the CHC statement.

1) Missing persons and murders

A series of incidents occurred in the liberated territories during military-police operation Storm. Reckless and out-of-control individuals were primarily responsible for these acts. However, in some regions, the terrorist activities were planned in advance and tacitly approved of by the party then in power. Some individuals, who did not leave their houses during military-police operation Storm, were subject to physical abuse and harassment, and some died from the consequences of these bodily injuries. In addition to members of the Serb minority, the people targeted included citizens of Croat ethnicity, who had contacts with Serbs. A special case is that of Kostajnica, where Croat newcomers from B&H beat up many Serb returnees. The incident occurred in May 1997, when ten members of the Serb community from Eastern Slavonia returned to Hrvatska Kostajnica. False information was purposely spread among Croatian residents that around 300 Serbs would return home. On that occasion, the Serb returnees were beaten and their property was destroyed. The former party in power did not prevent these conflicts and did not punish the perpetrators.

*"After the Republic of Croatia was forced to carry out military-police operation Storm, after a series of unsuccessful peaceful attempts and after strict orders not to use force were given, a number of criminal acts occurred. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice undertook all possible measures to find the perpetrators of these acts and to prevent similar incidents from occurring again. 1,005 criminal procedures have been initiated against the perpetrators of criminal acts during and after military-police operation Storm. The act of arson is included in the criminal acts against general security. A great number of cases have already been decided."*⁶

"I stated in my latest report that the Croatian government informed the public about 25 persons indicted in front of the judicial authorities and 31 persons accused of murders during and after military-police operation Storm. The information contained in the last government report points to the fact that 22 murder cases are still in the investigative

5 In the Croatian public, an idea has recently been introduced about adopting a law against using Ustasha's ideology and practice. This law is advocated by Vesna Pusić, President of the Croatian People's Party, and Ivan Jakovčić and Damir Kajin of the Istrian Democratic Party. The highest state officials, Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic and Ivica Račan, the Prime Minister, as well as the ruling six-party coalition, have supported this idea. Vesna Pusić announced that she would propose a draft law as a common initiative at the first meeting of the ruling coalition members.

6 Part of the presentation of Dr. Ivica Kostović at the round table discussion entitled, "Serbs in Croatia yesterday, today and tomorrow," organized by the CHC on October 18-19, 1996.

phase, and legal procedures have already been initiated in 30 cases. The government stated that a final decision had only been made in one case."⁷

CHC activists demanded, on several occasions, a written report from the Minister of Justice regarding the criminal procedures taken in specific cases. However, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Šeparović, merely provided them with numbers regarding the initiation of criminal procedures and did not give any explicit details regarding the criminal cases.

Killed and missing persons during or after military-police operation Storm

1. **Anda BEKO-JANOŠEVIĆ**, (f), unknown ethnicity, 7 years old, Matijevići, Dvor, Sisak-Moslavina County. Slain in her own house on May 14, 1996. Mile Sljepčević killed her and took all her money. He was caught the following day and criminal procedures were initiated against him.
2. **Mirko KNEŽEVIĆ**, (m), Croat, b. 1936, Blinjska Greda, Sunja, Sisak-Moslavina County. Four men from Komarevo beat him on May 2, 1997. Allegedly, he had tried to protect a group of Serbs from the attackers, and as a result, he received serious bodily injuries. He was transferred to the surgery unit in the Sisak General Hospital. On May 25, 1997, he succumbed to his injuries and died.
3. **Milan (Pavle) LACKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1960, in Crevarska Strana, Crevarska strana 100, Gvozd, Sisak-Moslavina County. After military-police operation Storm, he was detained for 2-3 months, after which he finally returned home. He disappeared sometime in the autumn of 1997. His disappearance was reported to the police, but Mr. Lacković has not been found.
4. **Duška (Đure) MENIČANIN**, (f), Serb, b. 1925, in Rujevac, Rujevac 129, Dvor, Sisak-Moslavina County. During military-police operation Storm, she stayed in the village. Three men dressed in uniforms came to her house some time after the operation. They destroyed her TV and took her to a room in order to rape her. She tried to defend herself but was heavily beaten. She received several serious injuries to her head and chest. She fell unconscious and the three attackers, believing that she was dead, left her lying beside the nearby stream. When she regained consciousness, she managed to crawl back home, where she died two months later from the inflicted injuries.⁸
5. **Mile MILOVAC**, (m), Croat, b. 1928, Bukovica, Gvozd.
6. **Marija ZIMONJA**, (f), Serb, b. 1929, Bukovica, Gvozd, Sisak-Moslavina County. Firearms were used to kill this unmarried couple in their house on September 11, 1996, around 10:00 a. m. Their house was set on fire, and they were left in the hall to burn.

7 Report of the Secretary General of the UN to Security Council (p. 16) — June 21, 1996. (Translated from the Croatian).

8 A female witness A. R., Dvor.

7. **Milan (Nikola) NOVAKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born on November 9, 1932 in Bjelovac, G. Bjelovac 21, H. Kostajnica. He was beaten by newcomers from Bosnia during the Kostajnica events. He died from injuries in the Sisak hospital on July 4, 1997. The cause of death was lung failure. Yet, even though he suffered from lung disease, the doctors believe that he would not have died under normal circumstances.
8. **Dušan PAVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1933, in Donji Klasnić, Donji Klasnić, Glina. He stayed in the village during military-police operation Storm. At the beginning of 1997, he disappeared. The police looked for him for over 6 months. A returnee found his corpse near the well in the vicinity of her house. Allegedly, Zvonko, a returnee from Bosnia, killed him and threw his corpse into the well.

2. *Threats, harrasment and maltreatment*

Domiciled Croat residents and returnees from B&H were politically manipulated and, as a result, contributed greatly to the harassment of Serb residents.

In comparison to the former Sector South where a great number of mine plantings was recorded, similar incidents were not widely recorded in the former Sector North. Instead, people often heard shots from firearms directed at civilian houses. Such acts were aimed at scaring off local residents, forcing them to leave, and preventing others from coming back.

Members of the Serb minority received numerous anonymous threats. In Vojnić, between February 27 and 28, there were many slogans written on the roads, on houses and on other buildings, such as: "*Serbs back to Serbia,*" "*Serbs out,*" "*Serb citizenship papers will be their death certificate,*" "*Čedo, you are dead,*" "*Run Serb to Serbia,*" "*Death to Serbs,*" and so forth.

The following is a list of cases of violence and terrorism:

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Karlovac municipality

1. **Danica BIŽIĆ**, (f), Serb, b. 1929, Lasinjski Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. Jandre Radoĉaj from Skakavac attacked her on February 11, in front of the village store. He beat her several times with his fist. He was under the influence of alcohol.
2. **Jovan (Stevan) LONĀAR**, called JoŹan, (m), Serb, b. 1925, Slunjski Moravci 37, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. On March 11, 1998, around 10:30 a. m. in front of the post office in Skakavac, a resident from Skakavac, called "Ŗtef," held Jovan Lonĉar by his chest and slapped him 5 or 6 times. Prior to this event, the perpetrator verbally attacked a post office employee, stating: "Why are you giving pensions to Chetniks; where is my pension?"

3. Rade JURIĆ, (m), Serb, 55 years old from Prkos, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. He was caught by Vjekoslav Boljkovac, a police officer from Kablar, and tied to a tree in the centre of Banski Kovačevac, near the store. The officer verbally and physically abused Rade Jurić until 4:00 a. m. He put the gun barrel in his mouth and threatened to cut his throat, while asking him to reveal who killed five Croats in the village during the Serb rebellion.

Ogulin municipality

4. Vlado STIPETIĆ, (m), Croat, Ogulin Municipality. The police inspector and the co-unseller of the HDZ in the Ogulin City Council seriously beat him on June 2, 1997. Vlado Stipetić was transferred to the Ogulin hospital with serious bodily injuries, where he was visited by the head of the Ogulin police, who asked him not to press charges against the perpetrator.

Plaški municipality

5. Branko GRKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, Ulica Save Kosanovia bb, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. While Branko was visiting his house on July 4, 1997, Samardžija, a former commissioner of Plaški, came to the house in the presence of a few other persons. These persons attempted to carry out some measurements because they had decided to open some cafes in that house. When Branko opposed the idea, they started to curse and threatened to kill him. Branko Grković attempted to escape from them on his bicycle. They drove after him with a car and ran him over into the ditch beside the road.
6. Zorka PANDUROVIĆ, (f), Serb, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. On May 3, 1997, the returnees from B&H, who lived nearby, shot at her house three times.
7. Marija ROKNIĆ, Serb, Vojnovac, Plaški Municipality, Karlovac County. While trying to enter her own house on July 20, 1996, she activated a booby trap mine. She was seriously wounded. Her father, who was in the vicinity, sustained minor bodily injuries.
- 8-9. Sofija and Mile ŠUMONJA, Serbs, Vera, Plaški Municipality. On October 3, 1996 at around 1: 15 a. m., three unknown persons used firearms to shoot at their house. Two shots were fired at their windows. The bullets were later found in the ceiling above their room. The police investigation established that one tromblone mine, which was thrown from 200 meters distance, did not explode. After police intervention, the harassment stopped.

Slunj municipality

10. Mato ANDRIJANIĆ, (m), Croat, Rakovica, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. A Croatian army member shot at his house and threatened him on July 4, 1996. The

reason for this attack was that Mato lived in the occupied territory during the war and fled to Serbia during military-police operation Storm.

11. **Miloš ČUBRILOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, 70 years old, Zeča Varoš, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County.
12. **Marija ČUBRILOVIĆ**, (f), Serb, 70 years old, Zeča Varoš, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County (Miloš's sister-in-law). The two of them were beaten on July 22, 1999 during the night, around 2:00 a. m. The attackers were known to them, and the case was reported to the police. Miloš's wife was raped some time earlier.
13. **Milka MAGDIĆ**, (f) Serb, born Tepavac, January 14, 1934, Slušnica 129, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. The CHC received information that Milka Magdic was physically abused and raped by a certain "Jura" from the village of Lumbarda, near Slunj, on June 14, 1998. She was beaten, but the information regarding rape was not confirmed by the CHC activists.
14. **Marica (Ante) TRBOJEVIĆ**, (f), unknown ethnicity, Vjekoslava Karasa, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. She was abused by the police. Milan Hazler, a police officer, took her passport away and told her that he would return it when she told him who had devastated and looted his house during the Serb rebellion. He did not give her any form of confirmation, such as a receipt, to show that he had taken away her passport.
15. **Ive VUKOVIĆ**, (m), Croat, Rakovica, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. An unknown perpetrator came into his yard on September 30, 1996 and threw a hand grenade at the house. The windowpanes and the glass of the main door broke from the detonation. The perpetrator's motive was not known.

Vojnić municipality

16. **Dragana (Mile) KOTUR**, (f), Serb, born Đurić, May 19, 1963 in Vojnić, Radonja 14, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. On November 15, 1998, she was physically abused in the vicinity of her house by Mate Volić. He hit her three times on her head with his fist and his hands. Medical examination later on established that her ear drum had been injured and she had a head concussion.
17. **Ilija MARTINOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, Miholjsko 76, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. An unknown male attacked him and beat him up on April 13, 1997 in the evening hours. He met three unknown persons (a man, a woman and a child) in the vicinity of the police precinct in Kupljensko, on his way home. The man saluted him and Ilija saluted him back. When Ilija walked passed him on the street, the man attacked Ilija and beat him up. He lay unconscious for a couple hours until the police patrol found him and took him to the Vojnić health centre. He was then transported to the Karlovac hospital.
18. **Miloš MIHAJLOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, b. 1908, Vergaševa 33, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. He was attacked and beaten up on May 30, 1997. A few days earlier, somebody had written on his doors: "This is a Serb."

19. Nikola RAPO, Serb, Brezova Glava, Vojnić Municipality, Karlovac County. An unknown assailant severely beat him up on March 9, 1997. The police took him to a hospital and kept him there a few days. He did not leave the Republic of Croatia.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Glina municipality

20. Evica (Jovo) BOŽIĆ, (f) Serbian, born Ljiljak, on April 15, 1963 in Veliki Obljaj, Veliki Obljaj 54, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. On the nights of December 1 and 2, 1998, perpetrators broke into her house. They forced Evica and her husband, Rade, to lie down and cover their heads. They searched the whole house, took night lamps, and then they poured liquid over her face almost choking her. They then proceeded to molest her physically, and they allegedly raped her.⁹

Gvozd municipality (Vrginmost)

21. Dubravka BEKIĆ and Branko BOROTA, Serbs, Čremušnica 87, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. On the day of July 16, 1997, a car with wailing sirens and unidentified licence plates pushed the gates of the backyard of Dubravka Bekić's house. The purpose was to frighten her and her friend, Branko Borota.
- 22-23. Đuro and Dragica PAVLOVIĆ, Serbs, Čemernica 128, Gvozd Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. In the night of November 30, 1998, a car with unidentified licence plates fired an automatic weapon at the wooden house where the Pavlović couple live. The car came from the direction of Bučice-Ilovačka. The distance between the car and the house was 10-20 meters, and eight bullet holes can be seen on the house. Two bullets ended up in the stable, one in a pillow on the bed, and a fourth in the opposite wall of the room.

Hrvatska Kostajnica municipality

24. Kata BIJELIĆ, (f), unknown nationality, around 67 years old, Donja Velešnja 55, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. She was attacked in her house in September 1998. She tried to escape and jumped from her window, at which time she broke both of her legs and her hipbone.
25. Branka BOROJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, Knezovljani, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. On October 26, 1997, a man (one of the Croats who had resettled from B&H) stopped in front of her house and claimed that someone had stabbed his dog. He broke into her house, damaged the table, broke the chairs and windows, and threw around house furniture. Finally, he stabbed her dog.

9 Even though Evica told others in the village that she had been raped, she did not confirm that with the CHC field team.

- 26-27. In the village Umetić, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, a group of unidentified settlers from Orašje, physically attacked Jovan and Ljuba BOROJEVIĆ several times between May 13 and 15, and totally demolished their house. They spoiled all the food they found and then threatened the Borojević's saying, "Leave from here and do not come back." Everything started on May 13, when a group of settlers broke into their house, demolished the interior and broke the furniture and other property. Two days later, a group of citizens from Hrvatska Kostajnica sought help from the CHC. The team of the CHC, together with teams from the OSCE and UNHCR, as well as the General Consul of the USA in Zagreb, Bennet Y. LOWENTHAL, went to the field. When the CHC, OSCE and UNHCR teams left the house of Ljubica and Jovan Borojević, a group of settlers came back to the house and beat up the couple. The CHC activists took Jovan and Ljubica Borojević by car to the trauma hospital in Zagreb, where Dr. Krištofić assessed the condition of their wounds and gave them medical help.
28. Savo BOROJEVIĆ, Serb, Borojevići, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. While he was in the field with his sons on March 10, 1996, a tromblone mine from the police precinct was launched at them. The police refused to respond to the incident. Furthermore, the family lived under permanent threat and were mistreated by the settled Croats who stole their cattle, food, and tools among other things.
29. Gojko (Simo) CRNOJEVIC, (m), Serb, born around 1920, Malo Krečevo, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. In April 1998, when he was visiting his house, two unknown persons from Malo Kresevo beat him up.
30. Jovo (Pero) DABIĆ, (m), Serb, born on September 28, 1931, Donja Velešnja, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality.
31. Ljuba DABIĆ, (f), Serb, born Ljubišić, on December 27, 1931, G. Kukuruzari, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. They did not leave their village. At the end of August 1995, Croat refugees from B&H started to settle Hrvatska Kostajnica. With the beginning of their settlement, the mistreatment of the rest of the Serb population began, along with the mistreatment of returnees. Several times, weapons were fired at the house of Jovo and Ljuba Dabić, even though a bomb had been thrown in front of their house. During the last event, on May 14, 1997, several returnees tried to break into the house by shattering the windows. Jovo and Ljuba managed to escape through one window and hid at the house of their neighbour, Ivo. However, the attackers came after them at Ivo's house, broke the windows and demolished the furniture. A certain "Miro" from the group of attackers put the barrel of a gun in Jovo's mouth, and then took him out in the backyard. During that time, a second attacker beat up Jovo with his fists. Allegedly, the police were present at this event, but they did not react. After the last incident, Jovo and his wife, Ljubica, decided to leave the Republic of Croatia. Even though they have been told not to take anything with them, they took their movable and some fixed property. On May 17, 1998, around 6 p. m., in the presence of activists from Amnesty International/London and the CHC, the couple left their home with their tractor and personal car.

32. Veronika (Alojz) MILIĆ, (f), Croat, born Vukić, on July 12, 1947, in Mirkovac, Veliko Krečevo 34, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. A refugee from B&H, who lived in a neighbours' house, came into her house on September 3, 1998, and started to slap her. In addition to the numerous incidents caused by settlers from B&H, on September 30, 1998, Veronika and her husband, Dušan, received the following letter: "*Milić Dušan, called Dule–Dujó,*

We wonder what you are doing here in Croatia, the country you've never claimed as your country. You were a supporter of Srpska Krajina which we have wiped clean, and that is what we are going to do with you too, if you do not leave this place and go back to where you have been until now. By the way, tell all Chetniks, and especially, Stevo Crnojevic, that the same destiny is waiting for him and all the others that are with him as well.

The deadline for you to leave Krečevo is October 6, 1998, by 4 p. m. After that date, your life will be worth that of a wandering dog."

On October 10, 1998, around 1:30 a. m., Veronika heard an explosion in the backyard of her house, and she informed the police about everything.

- 33–34. Otilija and Danilo RAPAJIĆ, Serbs, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On the nights of February 27 and 28, 1996, unidentified persons set off explosives in the backyard of their house and all the windows in the house broke. On that same night, these aggressors had fired shots at the house. However, the mistreatment of the Rapajić family did not stop with those incidents. On March 1, 1996, at about 12:30 a. m., shots were again fired at the house. A few bullets broke through the plastic that had been put up in place of the missing windows and landed in the interior of the house. Even though the house was only 500 meters away from the police station in Hrvatska Kostajnica, the police waited until the next morning to come to their house, when the owner of the house reported the incident.
- 35–36. A group of unknown persons, on May 14, 1997, broke into the house of the unmarried couple, Miljka MALJKOVIĆ, 65 years old, and Milan VELJAČA, 69 years old, which had returned to their village in January 1997. The group broke the windows and furniture in the house with a wooden bat and beat the couple up. Before the attackers broke into their house, Miljka and Milan ran to the attic, but the attackers forced them to come down. Then, one person from the group hit Milan Veljača on his head with a hammer and another person hit him with a hand. As a result, Milan fell to the floor and cut himself on broken glass. The doctors diagnosed him with a cracked skull. The perpetrators tore off Milka Maljković's clothes and pushed her into the kitchen. After the attack, the couple ran away to the woods and stayed there until the next morning.
37. Nikola ŽIVKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, Gornji Hrastovac 141, Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On May 3, 1997, stones were thrown at the windows of his house. Two days after that event, on the evening of May 5, a few unknown persons broke into his house, started to threaten the people living in the house, and told them to "Go away" or else they would "skin them." Settlers from B&H (Orašje) perpetrated these incidents.

Sisak municipality

38. Pajo ARBUTINA, called Pualo, (m), Serb, born on March 8, 1929 in Kinjačka, Kinjačka 10a, Sisak Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. While he was staying in the house of Jovan Dukić in Staro Selo 69, on May 20, 1997, four unknown suspects from Komarevo beat him up. The attackers came with a tractor and on the same day beat up a few more persons. Pajo Arbutina was taken, unconscious, to the hospital in Sisak.
39. Pero BOJČETIĆ, (m), Serb, Gornja Kinjacka, Blinjski Kut, Sisak, Sisak–Moslavina County. A few days after he returned to his village, at the beginning of 1996, he was exposed to disturbances and threats by settlers from B&H. Unidentified persons also threw three bombs onto his property, breaking all windows and damaging the facade of the house as well. The perpetrators have not been found, but after the police came, the incidents stopped.

Sunja municipality

40. Ljuba KARLOVIĆ, (f), Serb, about 60 years old, Blinjski kut 103, Sunja, County Sisak–Moslavina County. She was physically abused on May 20, 1997, in her backyard. The molesters were four unidentified persons.
41. Draga MILJEVIĆ, (f), Serb, Blinjska Greda 18, Sunja, Sisak–Moslavina County. On May 20, four unknown men beat up Draga between 5:00 and 6:00 p. m. in her backyard. On that occasion, they insulted her and called her a "Chetnik woman." They also threatened that if she did not leave her house, they would come back and then she would not remain alive.

3. Robbery and theft of property

In the liberated territory, immediately following military–police operation Storm, robberies and thefts of property occurred. It was usual for robbers to come during the night and mistreat the people who they found sleeping in the houses. These people were then threatened with death. Their property was demolished and robbed, and their cattle were taken away. The number of robbers that have been reported or found is much too small to account for the quantity of these types of robberies. The citizens have remained there without basic conditions for living, and have not been compensated in any way.

Almost everywhere in the entire liberated territory of the former Sector North, robberies frequently occurred after military–police operation Storm. The robbers dressed in army and civilian clothes, and were often armed and wore masks. If the owners of the property tried to resist or protect their property, the robbers physically attacked them, often with guns. The majority of the population consisted of elderly and helpless people, and they were the most common victims of the robberies and mistreatment.

It is not possible to divide a robbery from physical mistreatment because in most cases both were done together. In the former Sector South, robberies were connected with the burning of houses. In the former Sector North, however, arson was not common, even though after military-police operation Storm, houses were frequently robbed. Almost everyone took part in robberies: individuals from the Croatian army, the Fifth Corps of the B&H army, and civilians. In the territory of Topusko, Glina and Dvor, according to testimonies of the citizens, "robberies were mostly done by Muslims."

"According to government reports, between January 1, 1996, and May 1, 1996, in the former sectors, 845 cases of serious theft were reported. Out of these, 462 cases were solved and criminal procedures were started against 448 persons. The reports also cite 17 cases of robberies, which resulted in criminal offence procedures against 21 suspects."¹⁰

CHC has received a large number of reports of stealing and mistreatment, especially in the period immediately after military-police operation Storm, but also during 1996. This report only cites a few examples.

KARLOVAC COUNTY

Karlovac municipality

42. During the night of November 24, 1995, unknown suspects stole a cow from Danica DRAGIĆ of Manjerović village, Utinja, Karlovac Municipality. During the night between November 28 and 29, 1995, her three pigs were also stolen.
43. Anka GAZIBARA, (f), unknown nationality, b. 1937, Ponorac 28, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County.
44. Stevan GAZIBARA, (m), Serb, b. 1930, Ponorac 28, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. One night in mid-December 1995, unknown suspects, who were armed, stole their cow.
45. Dušan KRKLJUŠ, (m), Serb, Lasinjski Sjeniĉak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. While the Croatian army was in the village he did not have any problems. But, on August 25, 1995, in the presence of police, unknown suspects stole 10 breeding horses and took them to an unknown location.
46. Simo MARINKOVIĆ, (m), Serb, about 75 years old, Ponorac, Krnjak, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. During mid-December 1995, two men came to him. When he saw them standing in front of the stable, he asked them what they wanted. They replied that they wanted to buy cattle, but Simo stated he would not sell anything, so they left. That night, two heavy and well-cared-for oxen disappeared.
47. Milica MILJENOVIĆ, (f), Serb, about 95 years old, Mala Crkvina, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. This elderly lady, known as "Baba Gunjeva," stayed in

¹⁰ Report of the UN Security Council, June 21, 1996. (Translated from the Croatian).

her home during military-police operation Storm. On June 30, 1996, unknown civilian suspects stole a pig from her and beat her up. Directly before that a cow was stolen from her as well.

48. Branko RUDAN, (m), Serb, Donji Sjeniĉak 20, Karlovac Municipality, Karlovac County. On the night of January 15, 1996, two mares, two foals and a cow were stolen. The theft was reported to the police, and a police investigation confirmed that those responsible for the theft were three Roma.

Slunj municipality

49. *"In Cvijanoviĉ Brdo, Veljun and other villages, everything that is found in houses and stables is being taken away, especially the cattle. Cattle were slaughtered inside the stables, on the paddocks, and shot at with automatic weapons. Thighs were cut off from calves and the rest was left for dogs and pigs to eat, until eventually they too were killed. Mostly men, but occasionally women, committed these acts. They were all dressed in Croatian army uniforms, and armed with automatic weapons."*

On September 3, 1995, in the backyard of Mile Manojloviĉ, four persons, two in Croatian army uniforms and armed, pushed one cow and two calves inside a tractor trailer. They also took down the front door of the house, and took everything away in an unregistered tractor.

On the 10th of September 1995, Croatian army members and the civilian police killed three calves that belonged to Milan Novakoviĉ from Veljunska Glina. They skinned the animals, and took them away in an unmarked vehicle. The robberies are continuing, but this time a lot more treacherously. Car registration plates are being taken off just before they enter the village, and then the heavy fire starts from the weapons, so that even the few people who are left there must hide. If the robber finds you near the cattle. the shooting starts just above the head, to scare off the cowherd, so that they can take away the animals.¹¹

- 50-51. On November 20, 1995, three people in Croatian army uniforms came into the house of Milica and Nikola MANOJLOVIĀ, in Veljunska Glina, Slunj. The couple was not in the house, and only a 95-year-old woman was there. They put the nozzle of the automatic weapon inside her mouth, told her that could be used to kill her, and asked her if she knew what it was. They said that they would not waste a bullet on a Serb, and then they searched her. They also searched the house, broke into the basement and threw a kilogram of mice poison into a barrel of pickled cabbage. They found an electricity meter and took it away. They returned the following night at around 2:00 a. m. This time, they first went to the house of Anka MANOJLOVIĀ, a neighbour. They ordered her to stand in the corner, and then shot bullets at her legs. They made her go from one corner of the house to the other. She then had to lie down in a bed, and was ordered not to leave the house. After that, they stole some tools and a calf from the stable.

11 Part of a letter that the CHC in Karlovac received and gave to the CHC in Zagreb.

They then went to the house of Milica and Nikola MANOJLOVIĆ. They directed their guns at Nikola, asking him to come along with them, but he took a chance and escaped by jumping out through the window. His wife, Milica, remained inside the house, struggling with the man who was holding the gun. Suddenly, the owner of the gun started firing and wounded her left leg in the knee. They left her wounded without administering any first aid, and as they were leaving, they took two calves from her stable.¹²

Most of those responsible for those thefts and incidents were Croatian army soldiers from the Dugorešanska battalion that was located in the school in Veljun.

52. **Simo MANOJLOVIĆ**, Serb, Veljunska Glina, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. On September 29, all windows together with doorframes, boards from the heater and the bathroom doors were taken from his weekend house. Then, on September 12, the rest of his wood furniture was robbed and devastated.
53. **Milan SMRZLIĆ**, Serb, Ruševica, Slunj Municipality. On March 9, 1996, two unknown suspects broke in to his house. They kicked Milan in his ribs, they tied his hands and legs and put a band-aid over his mouth. Then, they threw him on the floor. They had knives. They searched the house, made coffee, prepared a meal, and took meat from the cellar. They also took the radio from his house, as well as a horse and a cow.¹³
54. **Svjetlana UGARKOVIĆ**, Serb, Veljunska Glina, Slunj Municipality, Karlovac County. On around September 20, 1995, all the windows and doors, as well as the furniture, were taken away from her weekend house.

Vojnić municipality

55. **Milan RAJIĆ**, Serb, b. 1936, Rajić Brdo 29, Vojnić Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On April 30, 1996, he was verbally and physically mistreated when three soldiers–special forces units from the refugee camp–came into his house. They stole 2,000.00 DM and demolished his property. After that event, two other policemen came and Rajić told them what happened. They took him to the refugee camp to identify the suspects, and then they mistreated him even more in the presence of a superior officer. On that occasion, the other policemen beat his face more, and one policeman even cut part of his hair with a knife. He was also stabbed in the leg with a knife. The money has not been returned to him.¹⁴

12 CHC— Summary of the Report on the Condition of Human Rights in the Republic of Croatia in 1995.

13 The CHC Annual Report on Human Rights Violations in Croatia in 1996.

14 CHC reports from July 25, 1996.

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

Glina municipality

In the area of Glina, from the middle of 1996 until the middle of 1997, robberies and cattle rustling occurred frequently. In that period, more than 60 head of cattle were stolen from the villages of Borovita, Mali Obljaj and Veliki Obljaj.

56. **Milka (Janka) BALJAK**, (f), Serb, b. 1923, Mali Obljaj, Veliki Obljaj 168, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. On June 14, 1997 at around midnight, three unknown suspects tried to lift her 2 mares, a cow and a calf, but the cattle escaped. When Milka begged them not to do it, one of them tried to shoot her. In the beginning of April 1997 she sold a cow and a calf for 700 DM. On October 21, 1997, unknown suspects stole 500 DM from her.
57. **Rade (Trifuna) CRNOGORAC**, (m), Serb, b. 1934, Bojna 60, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. He returned from exile on the August 10, 1996. On the March 10, 1997, two cows were stolen from him.
58. **Dragan ČUČKOVIĆ**, (m), Serb, Mali Obljaj, Glina Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. During 1996 and 1997, on five occasions, five cows, two calves, one horse and 17 sheep were stolen from him. Each time, the perpetrators physically attacked Dragan and his wife.
59. **Marica (Ilija) DMITROVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born in Bojna 117, Glina Municipality.
60. **Stanko (Dušan) DMITROVIĆ**, (m), Serb, born in Bojna 117, Glina, Sisak-Moslavina County. After military-police operation Storm, the Croatian army took a tractor from them with their most valuable things on it and explained that they would keep those things from thieves. To the contrary, someone informed them that their tractor had disappeared. Between August 19 and September 4, 1995, their 7 cows, 9 pigs, and all cattle have disappeared. On September 26, 1996, at around midnight, men under masks broke into their house with a hostage, who was their neighbour. The antagonist asked them to give him 2,000 DM, threatened to kill them and physically mistreated them. He also shot the sofa with a bullet from his gun. Since no one had that amount of money, he took 18,000 Slovenian Tolar. Many other incidents occurred in that period. On July 31, 1997, three men in uniforms attacked Marica with a hand bomb and tried to steal cows from her. On August 14 and 15, 1997, a hand bomb was dropped in their backyard, and on September 25, 1997, during daylight, someone stole two cows from them. Finally, on November 8, 1997, a tractor labeled "IMT-539" was stolen from them.¹⁵

15 Due to the frequent thefts that occurred in this region, the police organized special watch units to guard families and their households. The police prohibited the inhabitants from leaving their houses after 5 p. m., because the police would be "using weapons" against thieves. Despite the constant police surveillance, in the village of Bojna alone, from August 8, 1995 until November 21, 1997, 3 tractors, 1 tractor trailer, 13 cows, 13 pigs, and many sheep and poultry were stolen. Six persons were physically abused, one person was raped, money was stolen from one, shots were fired at two houses and one was bombed.

61. **Stoja DMITROVIĆ**, (f), Serb, born Opačić in 1929, Bojna, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. The masked man, who had previously broken into the house of the married couple, Marica and Stanko Dmitrović, also broke into her house on September 26, 1996, and physically abused her. On that occasion, he fired his gun in the house and he raped her daughter–in–law. After that event, on August 14 and 15, 1997, a cow was stolen from Stoja Dmitrović.
62. **Pero (Đuro) GRMUŠA**, (m), Serb, b. 1934, Bojna 77, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. During 1995, a Croatian army soldier took four pigs from him and slaughtered them. Each pig weighed 200 kilograms. On July 24, 1997, around 5:00 p. m., a cow was also stolen from him.
63. **Dušan KRIVOŠIJA**, (m), Serb, Bojna, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On September 1995, a tractor labeled “URSUS” was stolen from him.
64. **Ljuba STANAR**, (f), Serb, b. 1930, Mali Obljaj 33, Glina Municipality.
65. **Dragan ČUČKOVIĆ**, (m), Serbian, b. 1932, Mali Obljaj 63, Glina Municipality, Sisak–Moslavina County. On January 4, 1998, at around 6:30 a. m., three armed men broke into the house of this unmarried couple. They tied up Ljuba with a rope and kicked Dragan several times in the sternum. The whole time, the men threatened them with their weapons. They pushed pieces of cloth taken from the landlady’s nightgown into their mouths. After that, they robbed them. They took a horse–drawn cart and a horse, and put food and other valuables from the house on it and then left in the direction of B&H. Prior to that robbery, 7 cows, 17 sheep, 1 horse, 2 calves and horse trappings had already been stolen from them.¹⁶

Gvozd municipality (Vrginmost)

66. In February 1998, unknown suspects took off the boards from the farm buildings on the property of **Ljuban JOVANOVIĆ** from Bović, Gvozd, Sisak–Moslavina County. The roof and windows from the buildings were taken off as well.
67. **Rade TRKULJA**, (m), Serb, born around 1920, Mala Trepča 221, Gvozd, Sisak–Moslavina County. On the night of January 17, 1996, two unknown suspects were firing guns and swearing, and finally stole the cattle from the elderly man. At that time, there were two policemen in his house, but they did not try to prevent the theft. They said that they would ask for help from the police in Gvozd. Before that event, on November 1, 1995, at around 4:00 a. m., four cows and two pigs were taken from him. Finally, on December 24, 1995, just before midnight, three armed persons in a Croatian army truck came to his house. On that occasion, he was mistreated again, and four cows and three calves were stolen from him. They even threatened him that they would take the horses too. After this event, Rade Trkulja told the police that he had been robbed, and police came to his house.

16 The field investigation of the robbery of Ljubo Stanar and Dragan Čučković was conducted by Professor Ivo Banac and Petar Mrkalj, members of the CHC, on January 8, 1998.

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Resettlement

Immediately after military-police operation Storm, the government of the Republic of Croatia established the Law on Temporary Take Over and Administration of Certain Property and the Law on Renting Apartments in the Liberated Territory. The Croats from B&H were mainly resettled into recently liberated territories. In the beginning, only a smaller portion of the population received decisions on the temporary takeover of property. However, abandoned property was appropriated by domiciled residents on their own, and later on, the housing commission issued decisions for these domiciled residents on the temporary use of abandoned property. Displaced persons and returnees from other parts of Croatia, who were not able to move back into their own homes, appropriated houses in the former UN Sector North. Members of the Serb minority, who did not move away from the region during military-police operation Storm and only left their villages or towns for a short period of time, found their houses appropriated upon their return. They were often physically attacked if they asked that the usurper leave their house, and they were ultimately prevented from moving back into their own homes. Finally, all of these people were forced to find accommodation at their relatives' or friends' houses.

"We should emphasise that the 1995 Law on Temporary Take Over and Administration of Certain Property and the Law on Renting Apartments in the Liberated Territory of the Republic of Croatia do not question the rightful ownership of property, but merely place the property under the temporary administration of the Republic of Croatia."¹

Unfortunately, this statement is not correct. Until now, the majority of returnees have not been able to reacquire their property. The housing commission has annulled all prior decisions on the temporary use of property. But a great number of temporary users have refused to return the property to their rightful owners, because they were promised this property that did not actually belong to them. On the other hand, the majority of users who were given alternative accommodations, even better than the ones they were temporarily using, have refused to move. They have continued to occupy the premises because they do not wish to turn over the houses to their rightful owners. In such cases, the housing commission is obliged to initiate court procedures against the temporary users. The cases are turned over to courts, and the trials last for several years.

180,000 Croats from B&H, Vojvodina and Kosovo have resettled on the liberated territories in the following municipalities: Glina, Gvozd, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Krnjak,

1 Dr. Ivica Kostović, the vice-president of the government of the Republic of Croatia, at the CHC round table, entitled, "Serbs in Croatia yesterday, today, tomorrow," held on October 18 and 19, 1996 in the Press House in Zagreb.

Plaški, Petrinja and Vojnić. Serb property was given to the Croat newcomers for them to keep initially for 10 years, and subsequently, forever.

"In spite of the fact that many settlers wished to return to B&H, the Croatian authorities did not take appropriate measures to create conditions for their return. They demanded that the Croatian government put some pressure on Republika Srpska in order for them to be able to return home. Instead, the authorities threatened them and refused to give them help, accusing them of being ungrateful toward their mother state, which had given them shelter. To date, neither the president of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, nor any other state official has seriously asked for the return of all Croats to their homes. The officials only speak about the issue when the international community puts pressure upon them regarding the return of Serbs to Croatia. The refugees from B&H put pressure upon international bodies in their request to return to their homes, however most international organisations remained quiet."²

According to Croatian government reports, returning refugees and displaced persons, as well as people of Croat ethnicity who were forcefully removed from B&H, were primarily accommodated in abandoned property because the intensity of their arrival did not allow for the planning of alternative accommodations.³ 2,700 Croat refugees from B&H were taken care of in the region of Sunja.⁴ 1,105 displaced persons from the Plaški Municipality were accommodated in B&H.⁵

The greatest problem regarding the accommodation of refugees from B&H in Serb houses was the fact that Croatian government did not systematically solve their problems. Rather, the government mainly used refugee resettlement as a means to prevent the return of the Serbs who had left during military-police operation Storm. The state tried to convince the refugees that nobody could turn them out of the houses they occupied. The government told them they had the right to remain in those houses forever, despite the well-known fact that the right to private property should be respected. Many of the incidents occurred because the government expressed this type of attitude. Resettlers from B&H caused most of the incidents and victims were mainly returnees of Serb ethnicity.

Many cases were recorded where refugees were physically attacked while visiting their homes, prior to their actual return. For example, at the end of 1996, Marko Sremić, the mayor of Glina, led a group of citizens from Glina who stoned a bus full of Serb returnees who had come to visit their village. Information about this incident was provided by international monitors. In addition, in April 1997, a group of 67 citizens from Vojnić sent a letter to Stjepan Šterc, the deputy minister of Development and Reconstruction of the Republic of Croatia, stating that their private houses were occupied by refugees of B&H. The letter noted that they were not allowed to visit their houses because it would "disturb persons who were temporarily occupying their houses." The letter also warned the deputy minister that his statement regarding the reacquisition of pro-

2 The report about some segments of the human rights situation in the Republic of Croatia, which the CHC gave to the International Helsinki Federation (IHF) in Vienna.

3 "Narodne novine," no. 92/98.

4 "Vjesnik," June 15, 1998.

5 The head of the Municipality of Plaški, Ante Tukarić, and himself a Croat from Bosnia and Herzegovina, gave this information to the CHC at a meeting on September 11, 1997.

perty by returnees and the provision of alternative accommodation for temporary users was not true. The end of the letter written by the group of citizens from Vojnić states: *"Among us, 67 persons from the attached list, have not been allowed to move into their houses for the time being. Nobody has even been allowed to move into the hen-houses!"*

It is a common occurrence for one settler family to use several Serb houses. Each member of the family has a different house at his or her disposal. There have been cases where individuals, with the tacit approval of the authorities, have occupied several houses, bars, and farms of exiled Serbs. For example, in the former Sector North, in the village of Točak, Slunj Municipality, a well-known citizen from Zagreb, Tomislav TUREK, first appropriated two houses and then received valid decisions for their use, along with the use of adjacent farmhouses and a restaurant. He later received a third house for the waiter who worked in his restaurant. Turek harassed and physically abused the rightful owners of the property, who had returned a long time before. Tomislav Turek is well known in the region for harassing almost all members of Serb community. Although the police intervened many times in his particular case and filed complaints against him, the County Prosecutor's Office did not press criminal charges against him for harassment of or threats to kill Serb residents.

Hundreds of incidents were reported to the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights after military-police operation Storm. Unfortunately, such incidents still happen today. The latest incident was reported on May 1, 2000 in the village of Komogovina, Kukuruzari Municipality, Sisak-Moslavina County. A displaced person from B&H used the house of an elderly lady, Smilja DABIĆ, and she was also beaten up. Two men tried to help and ran to her defence, but they were also beaten. In contrast with the conflicts that occurred in 1997, at which time the police were not at all efficient in preventing such cases, this time, the police reacted and charges were pressed against the perpetrator.

Although incidents occurred throughout the entire former Sector North, it appears that the most incidents occurred in Hrvatska Kostajnica. The former ethnic composition of the Hrvatska Kostajnica Municipality clearly indicates that mostly Serb residents lived in that region. Specifically, according to the 1991 census, there were 14,851 persons living in the municipality, of which 9,343 were members of the Serb minority, 4,295 were of Croat ethnicity and 119 were members of Muslim community. However, not long after the liberation of the regions from Serb occupation, Croats from B&H systematically populated the municipality. Recently, there have been a great number of incidents recorded there. After military-police operation Storm, a hundred persons of Serb ethnicity remained in the region of Hrvatska Kostajnica. 6, 223 Croats were from Orašje and Bosanski Šamac and other places in B&H were resettled in the region.⁶ According to the data published in "Večernji list" on May 17, 1997, only 80 returnees of Serb ethnicity had come back to the region at the time of incidents.

Allegedly, the indirect cause of the incidents in Hrvatska Kostajnica was the fear of the newcomer Croats (from Orašje and Bosanski Šamac) that there would be a "mass" arrival (around 300 people) of the Serb minority from the UNTAES region. On May 13, 1997, 9 persons returned to Gornji Bjelovac (two Serbs, one Muslim and four children from mixed marriages). 100 to 150 persons of different age and sex gathered around

6 Statement by Mate Brandić, settler from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

them and first verbally and later physically abused and harassed the returnees. Later on, they devastated the returnees' houses and property. On that same occasion, Serbs, who were living there earlier and did not leave the region, were also attacked. The attacks began in Umetići, Knezovljani and on May 31 spread to almost all villages in the Kostajnica Municipality. Witnesses stated that when the incidents occurred, members of the police were present. Witnesses also noted that some police officers insulted them and advised them to leave their homes and not come back anymore.

It all started when the first group of returnees came and stayed at the house of Milka TUFEGDŽIĆ in Gornji Bjelovac around 5:00 p. m. Some time later, a group of settlers (around 100 people) came into her yard and started to insult and physically abuse her. They put a rope around her neck and pulled her around the yard, kicking her and hitting her with sticks. Children also participated in this horror: They threw eggs at the returnees. All the furniture was devastated at Milka TUFEGDŽIĆ's house. All the documents were taken away from the returnees and then ripped apart and burned in the yard.

A returnee, Dragan BANADINOVIĆ, and his father, Milan, were both punched several times. Milan did not leave the region during military-police operation Storm. They beat Dragan with their fists, threatened him with a gun and made him eat dirt. The shots were heard around the house. Prior to these attacks, personal vehicles blocked both entrances to the village.

In the period since May 31, 1997, almost 80 incidents were recorded. There were over 100 victims. The first news about these events was received by the CHC on May 14, in the morning. An anonymous message was found on the answering machine. Groups of CHC activists reacted immediately and were sent to the field, but they could not prevent further incidents from occurring. Tensions were exacerbated by statements by state officials, who accused Serb returnees of causing incidents. For example, the district-prefect of Sisak-Moslavina County, Đuro BRODARAC, stated at a meeting held in Hrvatska Kostajnica on May 27, 1997, that all the incidents were the fault of returnees. According to the district-prefect, the returnees came back "unexpectedly and without announcement," and the settlers "received accommodation here and established a kind of authority over this region, and it is entirely up to them to decide who can come back and who cannot."

American ambassador, Peter GALBRAITH, visited the region of Hrvatska Kostajnica, on May 2, 1997, along with several foreign journalists. He talked to a number of attacked Serb citizens, Croat settlers, and representatives of the local authorities.

In the field visits, the CHC activists suffered insults, threats and curses. During their visit to Umetići, and while monitoring the damage to Pero BIRAČ's house, two men approached the CHC activists, demanding an explanation of who they were and what they were doing there. These men began to threaten them, and, very soon, a group of men and an elderly woman gathered around the house. One man in particular, a certain Franjo, who came to the village in his "Opel Ascona" car with registered plates OR 044 BB, was the loudest person there. He insisted that the whole team leave the region and threatened the activists, stating: "*Do not gather here. The people will do crazy things. Who is this Serb that the whole world protects him. Fuck him in his mouth. They should all be slain. If I see anyone coming here, and taking pictures, I guarantee that he will not leave this region with his head on.*" However, the police arrived quickly and protected the ac-

tivists. They could not intervene because the gathered crowd surrounded them and the activists had to leave the region in order to avoid further incidents.

Attitude of some of the resettled Croats from B&H living in the Republic of Croatia

Although most of the settlers were manipulated politically and were pressured to act toward the returnees with intolerance, many noted that they disagreed with the policies toward Serb returnees. Most of the settlers expressed a wish to return to their former residence. Some of the settled Croats tried to establish normal relationships with returnees of Serb ethnicity, but accusations and threats followed these attempts.

The following part of the report cites some of the most important parts of the statement written by 50 settlers and sent to the CHC department for serious human rights violations on January 17, 1999 by one of the settlers,⁷ a refugee from Banja Luka, Republika Srpska (B&H). He wrote on behalf of 50 settlers from Banja Luka who wished to return home:

"Until now, we have not submitted a request for return to anybody, except the Caritas office in Zagreb, organised by Bishop KOMARICA. There is no one to whom you can submit such a request in Croatia, nor can you talk about it at all. After all we clearly see that we have been forcefully driven here, in order to carry out the Karadordevo agreement on so-called human resettlement. The Croatian authorities wish to keep us here for two reasons: first, to be their barricade against the return of Serbs and second, to provide them with votes, and we know to whom we must give our votes. I wish to tell you that these leaders here in Croatia hope that Europe and the USA will get tired and give up on their pressure against Croatia. They expect us to forget our homes. They expect that the elderly will die and that the young ones will continue to live here more easily. At the same time, they believe that if they continue to treat Serbs in this manner, most of them will give up on trying to return. This Agency for Purchasing Real Estate is used for ethnic cleansing. They are making Serbs sell their property as cheaply as possible and forcing them to leave and not come back to Croatia. I see some Serbs returning to Croatia, and I do not know what will happen to them. Croatia had to let them return, and now Croatia does not give them anything. Their property has been taken. The newcomers from B&H received official decisions to move out of Serb houses. Yet, these decisions were not actually real, but rather, only fictional, and in fact the newcomers did not have to leave their houses at all. These decisions were given to them only to show the international community that Croatia is respecting the agreements that it signed. If the newcomers decide to stay in occupied houses, no one is going to remove them forcefully.

HDZ and HSP activists regularly visit Croatian settlers and tell them that all the appropriated property is theirs, and they should not leave the region. They note that everything is theirs and, eventually, the international community will calm down and give up on their requests. Furthermore, these activists teach the settlers that they should behave

7 Anto Krakić, refugee from Banja Luka.

indecently toward Serb returnees: they should threaten them and should prevent them from approaching their houses. If some newcomers do not obey the instructions, they are accused and threatened. I have been threatened with death and with the mining of my house and so forth. My name is not mentioned anywhere. Then the settlers have to sign petitions against Serbs. I wish to point out that they seek to maintain the artificially-created ethnic image of the region, and nobody wants to help us accomplish our right to return to our homes."

This statement shows clearly how the policy of forced resettlement of Croat refugees from B&H had an impact on the entire atmosphere in the recently liberated regions. It also shows what preconditions are being created for the return of refugees to that region.

Very recently, a first positive step was taken to create a normal relationship between Croats from B&H and Serb returnees. This step is a mutual agreement on the development of tolerance between both peoples, signed in Gračac by Nediljko KNEZović, President of the Community of the Resettled Croats and Milorad PUPOVAC and Veljko DŽAKULA, President of the Serbian People Council and Serbian Democratic Forum.

Upon signing the mutual agreement, Nediljko KNEZović stated: "*I know that some people will condemn my decision, but I think that it is a high time that dialogue and tolerance begin. I am conscious that many years will pass until our goals are realized and that the path will be difficult. But we have to start from somewhere. We will ask the government and the international community to keep their promises and to start rebuilding houses and apartments for resettled Croats, which is the necessary precondition for Serb property to be returned to their rightful owners.*"⁸

Although the signing of the mutual agreement will not solve the problems on the ground, the fact that it has been signed encourages further development of mutual co-existence and tolerance in the war-stricken region.

8 The weekly paper, "Nacional," June 14, 2000.

Return process

Immediately after military-police operation Storm, many refugees who found shelter in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, decided to return to their homes in Croatia. However, this return process has been extremely slow and has involved additional burdening circumstances.

25,000 refugees have filed requests to return to Croatia at the Belgrade Office of the Republic of Croatia. At least 4,500 relatives have submitted requests for the return of their cousins and relatives from exile. 4,000 persons had turned to the CHC office for help by December 31, 1995. The Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees issued 615 return permits. This first group mainly consisted of elderly refugees and their return was allowed based on "humanitarian reasons." The CHC sent 11 requests (with entire lists of the persons who wanted to return) to the Office for Refugees and Displaced Persons.

The head of the office, Mr. Adalbert Rebić, gave instructions on September 5, 1995 that Croatian citizens who wished to return to the Republic of Croatia must submit their request with to the Belgrade Office of the Republic of Croatia. They had to show any piece of personal documentation with a photo on it (ID card, passport or driver's licence) to the officials. The Office in Belgrade kept receiving requests but did not write a single reply until the end of 1995. Additional problems were created regarding the process of issuing citizenship papers and new Croatian documents which none of the refugees had because they had lived in the Serb occupied territories during the war. They could not receive any of documents at the Office in Belgrade. In order to obtain these documents they had to enter Croatia territory. To enter Croatian territory, they needed a passport. The whole situation was a kind of vicious cycle. The closest family members submitted requests for return to the government Office of the Republic of Croatia.

Family reunion programs had enabled the return of 3,639 refugees to their homes by April 29, 1996, which is a minor number when taking into account that 200,000 refugees still have to return.¹

According to official data, 42,000 Serb refugees² had returned to the Republic of Croatia, by September 1, 1998. The most recent data of the Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees of the Republic of Croatia noted that 73,000 Serb refugees have returned to Croatia thus far.

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- 1 According to the list created by the UNHCR and the Commission for the Refugees of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia in mid-1996, there are 336,999 refugees from Croatia in the former Republic of Yugoslavia.
 - 2 The report about some segments of the human rights situation in the Republic of Croatia, which the CHC gaveto the International Helsinki Federation (IHF) in Vienna.

"Since the end of January, when the new authorities agreed with the international community to return the first group of 16, 500 Serbs, until the middle of May, only 5,000 Serbs had returned to Croatia."³

The former authorities used all types of methods to complicate the return of the refugees to the Republic of Croatia. The Law on Reconstruction made their life even more difficult. They have had problems with a right to pension, difficulties in obtaining new Croatian documents, social care, unemployment, taxes, and fundamental security.

Refugees, once they have decided to return, face a series of problems in the Republic of Croatia. The government created a regulation on August 31, 1995, called the Provision on Temporary Take Over and Administration of Certain Property, which came into force on August 31, 1995. Under the law, housing commissions were established to give "abandoned" property to refugees from B&H. Some refugees were able to enter through Eastern Slavonia where they managed to obtain Croatian documents. However, the majority of Serb returnees faced problems because their houses have been given to Croat refugees. The rightful owners have submitted requests for the return of their property, but their cases have not been solved at all. There were many cases recorded in which the temporary users of the property entered the house on their own accord, and later on, received a decision in their favour from the housing commission. Some cases were even recorded in which the users received decisions by the housing commission, prior to the return of the rightful owner.

The rightful owner had to find accommodation at their relatives' or friends' houses, and some had to rent apartments. Some of the refugees were accommodated at barracks, without water or proper sanitary conditions, and some lived in camp-houses. After many years of waiting, they have not been allowed to enter their own houses. The inefficiency of state institutions has played the greatest role in blocking the return process.

Procedures that made it legal for people to break into and occupy Serb houses are unacceptable. These procedures legalised the criminal acts, and the people were later issued decisions of temporary use. Citizens of Croat ethnicity also faced similar problems.

One such case was recorded in Dvor, where the Commission issued a decision on temporary use even though the owner (a Croat woman) had lived in Dvor during the entire period. When she later complained to the Commission, she was told to keep quiet because they would move somebody not only into her bar, but also into her house. The following day, they issued a decision on temporary use to the intruder. Although this taking of property occurred at the end of September 1995, the bar was only returned to the proper owner in April 1999, after numerous interventions by the CHC and the State Ombudsman.

The establishment of the Agency for the Purchase of Real Estate was published in the National Gazette on April 29, 1997. According to article 3 of the founding provisions, the agency is "authorised to buy certain real estate and property in its name and for the Republic of Croatia, and to give loans to actual domestic persons for buying certain real estate defined by article 4 of this provision."

A great number of Serb residents, who decided to sell their property, have been damaged through the use of this agency. The owners of houses worth 150,000–200,000

3 "Vjesnik," June 7, 2000.

DM had to sell their houses for 40,000–50,000 DM, following the “take it or leave it” principle.

The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia annulled some provisions of the Law on Temporary Take Over and Administration of Certain Property on September 26, 1997. This is how the legal preconditions were supposed to be created for the owners to have free use of their own property. However, it was not implemented in practice. A small number of persons had many problems because their houses and flats were broken into overnight by people who illegally moved into their property. In some cases, they even threw out the owners. In the end, they could not do anything else, but seek justice before the authorised court. The court procedures on the other hand lasted for years. In cases where the court brought valid decisions, it was difficult to execute them in practice.

Another great problem is the negative attitude of certain state officials and politicians in Croatia. The mayor of Glina, in addition to leading a group of citizens who stoned a bus full of Serb returnees in 1996, openly opposed any kind of return. He sent a letter to the Vice-President of the government of the Republic of Croatia, Ivica KOSTOVIĆ, influenced by the “self-initiated return of Serbs” to their homes on April 21, 1997, in which he wrote: “Serb residents are returning without the permission of local authorities. We cannot be satisfied with their co-operation, nor with the co-operation of international organisations, which are helping them to return. We are not satisfied by their return, nor are we willing to accept them, because we cannot answer for any future consequences.”

An association of displaced persons from northwestern Bosnia organised a meeting in Plaški on November 21, 1998. Anto ĐAPIĆ, a leader of the Croatian Party of Rights (HSP), spoke at that meeting. He said that HSP carried out a referendum against the return of Serbs to Croatia. They managed to gather 300,000 signatures but nobody supported them.

There were numerous examples of political manipulations regarding the return of Serbs to their homes. At the beginning of 1997, a pamphlet appeared, entitled “Co-existence with Serbs—What and How?” which was distributed to post-offices, banks, hospitals, and other public places in the liberated territories. The author was never discovered and did not sign the document. Instead, displaced Croats signed the document.

In the introductory part of the pamphlet, there is an explanation regarding the reasons for writing the pamphlet, and it is, in a general sense, a story about co-existence with Serbs. The text is divided into 12 points, and below we have only stated the most characteristic ones: *“Serbs are all around us. As people and humanists, we cannot change anything in that respect. They have a right to their life, their human rights, but we can prevent their spreading among the Croatian people and destroying our national texture—as has happened until now. If you sell an apartment, house or land—do not sell it to Serbs even if they offer you a higher price. By selling it to a Croat for a lower price, you help our grandchildren avoid the horrors through which we have already passed. If the owner is a Serb, and you know for a fact that he is an honest man—still do not sell it to him. It is impossible to predict the behaviour of their descendants. Because many Chetnik executioners are the children and grandchildren of honest Serbs. When you decide to employ new workers, do not employ Serbs, because you can prevent their economic strengthening and infiltration of the Croatian economy. Avoid stores and services whose owners are*

Serbs. Let them live their lives on their own, and we on our own—without them. Teach your children not to become involved with Serb children. In that way, you will be able to prevent them from falling in love with young men and women of Serb ethnicity. Youths should be taught that marriage with people of Serb ethnicity is a way of undermining or even betraying the Croatian people, and is neglectful of Croatian victims and suffering. In the future, one should be careful in his/her relationships with Serbs and watchful of all phenomena that occur among Serbs.”

Finally, the pamphlet concluded: *“Serbs are among us, let them be, let them live their lives, but do not allow them to mix with us, because they are not like other people. Some of them immediately turn into thieves, executioners, and destroyers. Let our behaviour towards them be a type of boycott. The best thing would be that they go back to where they came from, or to where their ancestors came from, to Serbia. We have to apologise to honest Serbs for such attitudes, and if they are truly honest, they must understand us. History gives us this right. They should condemn their fellow Serbs, because they caused such mistrust among us. We have a right to survival. Until when? Until Croatian and Serb people reach the European level of thinking and understanding and until European integration is over. Therefore, be watchful of Serbs.”* The pamphlet is signed with the names of displaced Croats and a comment: *“Read this text, remember the content, and forget where you got it. Give it to others to read. Copy it several times and distribute it. Let it spread as a legend.”*

Under influence of the international community, the Croatian parliament established a Program for the Return of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Resettled Persons, on June 26, 1998. This program gave clear definitions on the manner and procedures regarding the return process. Despite the fact that all provisions of the program were not entirely appropriate, it was a way to speed up the process of return. This program should have implemented a two-way return process, enabling a greater return of Serbs, while simultaneously returning displaced Croats to their former places of residence. The program did not, however, make much-needed progress regarding the fulfilment of rights of returnees. Furthermore, most of the Croats were forced to stay in the Republic of Croatia because the authorities did not wish to change the ethnic structure they had created.

When housing commissions were established to take over the activities of the former Commissions for Temporary Use and Administration of Certain Property, another problem immediately appeared. All former requests were annulled and the owners had to file their requests again. Each new request caused additional costs for the claimants, most of whom were poor and socially endangered. Most of them could not obtain their pensions, and did not receive any social help because they were obliged to pay taxes.

An additional problem was the period in which the housing commissions were not yet established. Most of the commissions started their work in September 1999. In Slunj, the housing commission started to work in February 1999. The commissions consisted of 5 members, three newcomers—settlers and two candidates of Serb ethnicity who did not leave the Republic of Croatia during the war. Serbian Democratic Forum (SDF) tried to propose its candidates as members of the housing commissions, but that request was not at all considered. The return of the property to the rightful owner was used to complicate further the process of return. To this end, the housing commission in Gvozd, for example, demanded that all owners bring a list of their properties registered in the land books, even though most of them confirmed their property with an ownership paper or

building permit. Many owners were told that they were written in the land registry and that they would have to pay again to measure their property. Some of those who insisted that they had previously been registered, received their certificates and others did not have money to pay for them did not receive those certificates. There were other cases where the owners could not measure their land because the temporary users prevented them from doing so.

There were 100 empty flats in Gvozd at the beginning of 1999. These flats were devastated and plundered after military-police operation Storm. The head of the municipal office, Mirko Putrić, did not allow the Serb returnees, whose houses were devastated, to use these flats. Yet, these flats were also not used by the settlers from B&H, because that would have meant moving out of the Serb houses. When people raised questions regarding these flats, they were told that the flats were reserved for "staff."

The situation was a bit better in Vojnić, because some of the owners received their property back. But there were also many problems regarding the return process. The Đurić family, which returned to Vojišnica Vojnić in March 1996, was not allowed to return to their house, because it had been given to settlers from B&H, who also had two other houses to use. The Đurić family was not allowed to cultivate their land. When they finally reached an agreement to move into their house, the police from Vojnić threw them out the following day.

The situation in Plaški was extremely bad for the returnees. They were most unwelcome there. The housing commission consisted of settlers from B&H, who disagreed with the program of return. The commission annulled the decisions on temporary use, but did not provide any alternative accommodation to the temporary users. A returnee, Danica Večerinić, managed to prove that the person who had used her house, had prevented her from entering it, even though that person was no longer using the house. The housing commission then instructed the temporary user to move out of the house within 15 days, but he refused. The owner turned again to the housing commission and asked them to initiate court proceedings against the user. But the president of the Commission, Viktor Lukenda, stated, "I have no intention of doing anything like that," and told her to initiate court procedures herself.

The housing commissions in Slunj, started to work in February 1999, and have not shown any efficient results since then. The case of Tomislav Turek is well known there, because he appropriated two houses, adjacent farmhouses, a restaurant, etc. He is also well known for his verbal and physical abuse of returnees of Serb ethnicity. Yet, although the police filed complaints against him for committing offences, the Karlovac County prosecutor's office has not done anything regarding his case. Turek continued to abuse and harass the residents of Točak and even planted explosive devices in front of their houses.

Only 8 residents stayed in the village of Lička Jasenica near Saborsko during military-police operation Storm. 60 returnees came back home. The followers of Krishna moved into the village with the permission of the head of the Saborsko Municipality, Luka Hodak, who is also a member of the sect. 20 Serb houses were taken in this way. These houses had a flower drawn on them and a sign: "Municipal council — occupied." In spite of the fact that Luka Hodak has a house and a restaurant in Krapinskim Toplicama, he received a decision on temporary use of the property belonging to Desanka and

Ozren Popović. Hodak does not use the house, but collects rent for it, and the owners live there as subtenants.

In almost all municipalities of the former Sector North, Glina, Dvor, Gvozd, Vojnić, Petrinja, and a part of the Karlovac Municipality, in which the villages were mostly populated by Serbs, electricity was not restored. Specifically, villages situated in distant areas of the municipality were left without electricity and phone connections, and electricity was only installed in the parts of the villages where Croats live.

The most drastic case is that of a returnee, M. J., from a village in the area surrounding Petrinja, who was seriously ill and required insulin every day. He needed electricity in order to keep his shots in the fridge. Yet, despite the fact that all the houses in his village had electricity, he did not receive it. Finally, after three interventions by CHC activists, he received electricity.

The housing commission has annulled all former decisions of the former Commission for Temporary Take Over and Administration of Certain Property, but the temporary users refuse to give the property back to their rightful owners, and do not wish to move to alternative accommodations. In cases where owners are finally able to return to their homes, they find everything devastated or stolen. In some houses, the wiring installations were destroyed. Some houses were looted during military-police operation Storm, while others were looted upon the departure of the temporary users. The housing commissions again proved highly incompetent in giving back property to rightful owners, because the housing commissions were obliged to write a list of all property found in the house before the temporary users left the house. The temporary users were obliged to protect the property found in the house. Most of the time, the houses were damaged, and the owner did not find any movable property inside.

A question of reconstruction of property is yet another problem faced by the Serb returnees. Cases of discrimination have been recorded regarding the reconstruction process. Specifically, the majority of Croat villages have been reconstructed and have electricity and telephone lines. Serb villages are, however, still devastated and destroyed. The process of reconstruction is slow, and in some regions, has not yet started at all. The population, mostly elderly Serbs, live in terrible conditions without electricity and phone lines.

With the change of the party in power after the recent elections in the Republic of Croatia, possibilities for more open and efficient realisation of the return process have been shown. Announcements of changes to the Law on Reconstruction and the annulment of the housing commissions are encouraging. The government of the Republic of Croatia has proposed that the Ministry of Reconstruction and Development completely control the procedure.

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