# Draža Mihailović and the National Policy of the Chetnik Movement, 1941-1945

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# Statement of Candidate

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University. I also certify that this thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of this thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in this thesis.

Jovo Šuščević

17 November 2011

# Abstract

This thesis examines the national policy of the Chetnik Movement and the role played by Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović in its formulation, development, and implementation. A national policy is a political program formulated to create a workable political system and state organisation in response to a national question, which is the conflict that arises from the competing national aspirations of the people who inhabit a nationally heterogeneous region. Whilst this thesis emphasises Mihailović's role in the shaping of the national policy, it attempts to demonstrate how other important military and political figures who constituted the leadership of the Chetnik Movement influenced this process. Since a national policy would guide the movement's actions and policies during the war, and serve as the blueprint for the organisation of the postwar state, formulating a national policy was the most important political task faced by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership. Despite this, it was only in January 1944 that an official national policy was composed, although an unofficial one existed before this date. This thesis contends that the Chetniks' national policy was composed of two parts: (1)

a *postwar national policy*, which addressed the future of Yugoslavia and its peoples after the war, and dealt with such matters as the borders, national composition, political system, and state arrangement of the Yugoslav lands; and (2) a *wartime national policy*, which refers to the conduct and policies towards the populace during the war. The relationship between these two parts of the national policy is examined, as is the question of whether either changed during the war, in what ways, and for what reasons.

Mihailović and the other leading figures in his movement were guided, first and foremost, by what they deemed to be in the interests of the Serbian nation. In view of this, the national policy of the Chetnik Movement is best described as nationalist. Nationalism, to cite Ernest Gellner's famous dictum, "is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent." To construct such a nation-state for the Serbian people, the Chetniks sought to amalgamate regions with a sizeable Serbian population, as well as a number with a negligible Serbian populace, in to a single political unit after the war. This postwar Serbia was to be part of a wider South Slav union alongside Bulgaria, Croatia, and Slovenia. Concurrent with the creation of four federal units, was the recognition of only four South Slav nations: Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes. The Chetnik leadership viewed the Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims as part of the Serbian nation, and planned to homogenise the national composition of their imagined postwar Serbia through the expulsion of a number of undesirable nations (Albanians, Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians) and the assimilation of the remaining South Slav

population (Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims). It is argued that such a national policy did not have widespread support even amongst the Serbs, and the reasons why Mihailović adopted it are discussed.

An examination of Mihailović's wartime national policy demonstrates that he focused almost exclusively on the Montenegrins and Serbs, and on the Slovenes to a lesser extent. Numerous attempts to attract the Croats and Muslims were made, but the other Yugoslav peoples were largely ignored. Three methods were employed to mobilise Croats and Muslims in to the Chetnik Movement – propaganda, approaches to their established political and religious leadership, and the creation of an organisational framework – but these tactics failed to draw any significant number of them in to the Chetnik Movement. The question of the number of Croats and Muslims killed by the Chetniks, and the most appropriate label for these mass killings is also discussed. Finally, Mihailović's defence at his postwar trial is examined in the context of the national policy espoused by the Chetnik Movement.

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# Notes

## Spelling and Pronunciation

The pronunciation of Serbo-Croatian words is relatively simple since the writing is phonetic and each letter has only one corresponding sound. The following are the nearest English equivalents:

| | |
|---|---|
| A a | a is in father |
| C c | ts as in cats |
| Ć ć | ch as in cheese (soft) |
| Č č | ch as in chop (hard) |
| Đ đ | g as in George (soft) |
| Dž dž | j as in just (hard) |
| E e | e as in den |
| G g | g as in gold |
| I i | i as in pin |
| J j | y as in yet |
| Lj lj | li as in million |

| | |
|---|---|
| Nj nj | ni as in dominion |
| O o | o as in lord |
| Š š | sh as in shark |
| U u | u as in full |
| Ž ž | z as in azure |

Vowels in combination do not form a diphthong, but are pronounced separately. For example, *narodnooslobodilački* (na-rod-no-os-lo-bo-dil-ač-ki).

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AVNOJ | *Antifašističko Veče Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije* (Anti-Fascist Council of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia) |
| BBC | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| JRP | *Jugoslovenski Revolucionarni Pokret* (Yugoslav Revolutionary Movement) |
| JVO | *Jugoslovenska Vojska u Otadžbini* (Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland) |
| KPJ | *Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije* (Communist Party of Yugoslavia) |
| MNVO | *Muslimanska Nacionalna Vojna Organizacija* (Muslim National Military Organisation) |
| NDH | *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (Independent State of Croatia) |
| SOE | Special Operations Executive |
| UNGC | United Nations Genocide Convention |

## Commonly Used Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| *Banovina* | Administrative unit in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia |
| Chetnik | Member of any of the armed units that operated in Yugoslavia during the Second World War and recognised Draža Mihailović as their leader |
| *Domobran* | Member of the regular NDH armed forces |
| *Odred* | Rebel detachment |
| Partisan | Member of any of the communist-led armed units that operated in Yugoslavia during the Second World War |
| *Prečani* | Serbs from the former Austro-Hungarian territories |
| *Sporazum* | Agreement signed in August 1939 which established the Croat *Banovina* |
| *Srbijanac* | Serb from Serbia |
| Ustaša | Member of the Croat fascist Ustaša organisation led by Ante Pavelić |
| *Vojvoda* | Traditional title for a Chetnik commander |

## Administrative Divisions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

*Banovina*

County (*Oblast*)

District (*Srez*)

Municipality (*Opština*)

Village (*Selo*)

## Administrative Divisions of the Independent State of Croatia

Great County (*Velika Župa*)

District (*Kotar*)

Municipality (*Općina*)

Village (*Selo*)

# Preface

When Army General[1] Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović, the commander of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland (*Jugoslovenska Vojska u Otadžbini* – JVO) during the Second World War, appeared before the Military Council of the Supreme Court of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia on 10 June 1946,[2] forty-seven charges were leveled against him, which can be approximately divided in to two groups: those related to collaboration and treason, and those related to war crimes.[3] Regarding the war crimes with which he was charged, indictment Number 42 read: "Mihailović also issued orders to his commanders to annihilate the Muslims (who he called Turks) and the Croats (who he equated with the Ustaše)."[4] Presenting the argument and evidence against Mihailović, the Deputy Military Prosecutor of the Yugoslav Army, Colonel Miloš Minić, claimed that

[1] The ranks of the Royal Yugoslav Army can be found in Appendix 1.
[2] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 17.
[3] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 21-39.
[4] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 37.

> [f]rom beginning to end, having set up his organisation as a Great Serb organisation, as the armed force of the Great Serb reaction, Mihailović inspired his organisation with chauvinistic hatred against the other peoples of Yugoslavia, in the first place against the Croatian people and the Muslim population.[5]

Mihailović's ultimate aims, alleged Minić, were the establishment of a "regime of open dictatorship and national oppression … and even the extermination of certain nationalities in various regions".[6] Suitable documents and witnesses were produced to demonstrate the accused's culpability. Having been found guilty, Mihailović was executed, he and his Chetniks thereafter branded guilty of collaboration, treason, and war crimes, and labeled Great Serb chauvinists.

How guilty were Mihailović and the Chetniks of these charges? Regarding treason, if it is understood to mean collaboration with the occupier and quislings, then they were no more guilty than the communist Partisans who tried and executed Mihailović. Their record on the matter is far from spotless; it is sufficient to mention the negotiations conducted between the Germans and Partisan leadership in March 1943,[7] or the First Proletarian Brigade's 'parallel actions' with the Ustaša Black Legion (*Crna Legija*) against the eastern Bosnian Chetniks in April 1942.[8] Talk of patriots and traitors is childishly simplistic, particularly when referring to Yugoslavia during the Second World War; both the Chetniks and Partisans 'collaborated' as a matter of survival, as well as to pursue

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[5] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 55.
[6] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 40.
[7] Djilas (1977) pp. 229-238; Karchmar (1973) p. 945; Leković (1985); Roberts (1973) pp. 106-112; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 243-246.
[8] Karchmar (1973) p. 500; Trew (1998) pp. 117-118, 257-258 (Endnote 112).

their goals.[9] The issue of war crimes is in a similar vein; of course the Chetniks committed war crimes, but so did the Partisans, as well as almost everyone else in wartime Yugoslavia. So was Mihailović a Great Serb chauvinist?

The answer to this question, perhaps unsurprisingly, is not clear. Many scholars and writers have declared that Mihailović was indeed a Great Serb chauvinist of the worst possible hue, and that he and his movement had nothing but hatred and the most nefarious plans for the non-Serbs of Yugoslavia, both during the war and in its aftermath. The British historian Mark C. Wheeler wrote that the "common goal of the politicians gathered around Mihailović was the creation after the war of a nationally homogenous Serbia embracing all Serbian-inhabited lands."[10] Zdravko Dizdar and Mihael Sobolevski, two Croat historians, believed that

> Chetnik genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina during the Second World War (1941-1945) were not accidental. They were programmatically planned and were thus a component of the military and political aims of the Serbo-Chetnik movement. Chetnik atrocities had only one aim: the creation of Great Serbia, cleansed of its Croatian and Muslim populations through killing.[11]

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[9] The American diplomat Walter R. Roberts (1973) astutely noted that "nothing in a civil war situation is ever black or white – there is only an infinite variety of shades of grey. Add to this the methods of guerrilla warfare – hit-and-run attacks one day, avoiding battles the next, temporary accommodations with the enemy the day after – and one describes the situation as it then existed in Yugoslavia" (p. 112).
[10] Wheeler (1980) p. 73.
[11] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 147.

Another British historian, Marko Attila Hoare, stated that "Chetnik chauvinism and genocide were motivated by the desire to create a Great Serbia."[12] Grim prophecies of what would have happened in the event of a Chetnik victory abound. The American historian Matteo J. Milazzo wrote that "[h]ad Mihailović's officers and the Serb civilian nationalist leaders triumphed … the restoration of the monarchy would surely have been accompanied by violent political purges and a reign of Serb vengeance".[13] Similarly, Hoare argued that "[h]ad the Chetniks won the Yugoslav Civil War, they would have plunged Yugoslavia into a bloodbath as they sought to exterminate non-Serbs in their efforts to create a Great Serbia."[14] The triumphant Partisans, the argument goes, had thus prevented a postwar Chetnik orgy of mass killing, and instead created a multinational socialist utopia based on the principle of Brotherhood and Unity (*Bratstvo i Jedinstvo*).

Others, however, have argued that Mihailović had quite a different wartime national policy, and that his postwar plans were far less flagitious. The American journalist David Martin wrote in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War that Mihailović wanted "Yugoslavia to be a peasant democracy freely attached to a Balkan federation and freely affiliated with the democratic sphere in Europe",[15] and that there was "little visible difference"[16] between the Chetnik and Partisan political platforms. Martin believed that

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[12] Hoare (2005).
[13] Milazzo (1975) p. 187.
[14] Hoare (2005).
[15] Martin (1946) p. 187.
[16] Martin (1946) p. 189.

> [o]n paper there was only one vital difference between the programme adopted by the Partisans at Jajce and that adopted by the Chetniks at Ba. The Chetnik resolution envisaged a Yugoslavia divided into three federal units: Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. The "Serbia" referred to was a Greater Serbia combining the four predominantly Serb provinces of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina with the Macedonian areas in the south. The Partisan resolution, on the other hand, envisaged a federal Yugoslavia in which Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Macedonia would be included as separate units.[17]

Citing the aforementioned resolution passed at the Chetnik congress in Ba, the Serb journalist Miloslav Samardžić wrote:

> The [Ba] Congress called for the renewal of Yugoslavia, not within its prewar borders, but rather with widened state borders ... This enlarged Yugoslavia would be a parliamentary monarchy, composed of three federal units: Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. The Serb federal unit would "on democratic principles encompass the entire Serbian people on its territory", and that "this same principle is valid for the Croats and Slovenes".[18]

More recently, the British historian Heather Williams declared that

> [i]t was only the Croats and Muslims who worked with the Ustashas that Mihailović regarded as enemies. In December 1942 he had passed on a message to the king from Maček supporters on the Adriatic coast on the 24th anniversary of the creation of Yugoslavia, and informed his PM that he had addressed the Muslim Committee which was working to win Muslims away from the Ustasha.[19]

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[17] Martin (1946) p. 191.
[18] Samardžić (1997) p. 29.
[19] Williams (2003) p. 111.

When the pundits make such contradictory claims, it is obvious that the issue is open to enquiry.[20] This thesis hopes to enter the debate and provide a thorough analysis of the Chetnik Movement's national policy, paying particular attention to Mihailović's role in its formulation, development, and implementation.

This task is complicated somewhat by the passions that Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement elicit, both of which are, many decades after the conclusion of the Second World War, still controversial. When on 9 May 2005, Mihailović's daughter was presented with the Legion of Merit that had been posthumously awarded to her father by President Harry S. Truman of the United States in 1948,[21] this was condemned in some quarters;[22] one commentator described it as being akin to choosing "the anniversary of VE day to present an award to Marshal Pétain, or to the Dutch policemen who arrested Anne Frank."[23] In April 2006, the Serbian national assembly passed the *Law on Rehabilitation* (2006),[24] which was similarly criticised,[25] with one scholar lamenting that it rehabilitated fascists and legalised the falsification of history.[26] During a hearing in to Mihailović's rehabilitation in the High Court in Belgrade on 29 October 2010, security guards were forced to intervene to prevent a physical altercation between two older men standing in front of the building, one carrying a photograph of Mihailović

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[20] This is the British historian E. H. Carr's justification for writing his famous book, *What is History?* (1961) ("Where the pundits contradict each other so flagrantly, the field is open to enquiry." (Carr (1961) p. 2)).
[21] "Dražinoj ćerki orden u tajnosti", *Blic* (Belgrade), 10 May 2005.
[22] Boris Pavelić & Bojana Oprjan-Ilić, "USA nevertheless decorates Chetnik leader Draža Mihailović", *Novi List* (Rijeka), 10 May 2005.
[23] Hoare (2005).
[24] "Zakon o rehabilitaciji", *Službeni Glasnik Republike Srbije,* Issue 33/2006, 17 April 2006.
[25] Zečević (2008a, 2008b).
[26] Zečević (2008a, 2008b).

accompanied by the words "Draža and the Chetniks – Hitler's collaborators", and the other obviously angered by such an accusation.[27] More than six decades after the destruction of the Chetnik Movement and the death of its leader, both remain contentious subjects.

The controversial nature of Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement has meant that much of what has been written about them is clouded by ideological, national, personal, and political bias. Whilst this thesis does not claim to be free of any such prejudices – indeed, such an assertion should arouse the reader's suspicion – it attempts to avoid being either an apologia for or condemnation of Mihailović and his movement. Instead, it aims to be the most thorough examination of the Chetnik Movement's national policy, a political program formulated in response to the pressing need to find "'the best solution' to the problems raised by [the] confrontation between the ethno-religious and linguistic mosaic [of the South Slav lands] and the national aspirations of the South Slavs in 'the age of nationalism'",[28] to quote the American historian Dennison Rusinow.

It is not possible to know what the Chetniks' solution to the Yugoslav national question would have looked like in practice and whether it would have solved this intractable problem, despite some commentators' fondness for making such predictions. Mihailović and his movement were defeated and destroyed by their competitors, the communist Partisans, who created a radically

[27] Miroslava Derikonjić, "Obezbeđenje sprečilo sukob četnika i partizana", *Politika* (Belgrade), 30 October 2010.
[28] Rusinow (2003) p. 12.

new Yugoslavia and boldly proclaimed to have solved the national question.[29] Regardless, it is not the purpose of this thesis to attempt clairvoyance. Its purpose is to comprehensively examine the Chetnik Movement's national policy and to focus on Mihailović's role in its formulation, development, and implementation.

[29] Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Partisans, declared in 1950 that the importance of the Second World War lay in the fact that during it, "in the first place, the national question was solved, thus laying the solid foundations for the further development of the new Yugoslavia" (Quoted in Čulinović (1959) p. 76).

Chapter I

# Introduction

## Literature

The Chetnik Movement, the predominantly Serb anti-communist organisation that operated in Yugoslavia between 1941 and 1945, and its leader, Army General[1] Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović, have been the subject of a number of studies, not all of which are as academically sound and unbiased as one would hope. Two of the better general histories produced in socialist Yugoslavia, despite their overt ideological slant, are Jovan Marjanović's *Draža Mihailović Između Britanaca i Nemaca* (1979) and Nikola Milovanović's *Kontrarevolucionarni Pokret Draže Mihailovića* (1984). Although much of what the Chetnik émigrés wrote after the war is little better than hagiography, they managed to produce some valuable works such as *Knjiga o Draži* (1956), Sergije Živanović's *Đeneral Mihailović i Njegovo Delo: Treći Srpski Ustanak, 1941* (1962, 1966), and Ivan Avakumović's *Mihailović Prema Nemačkim Dokumentima* (1969). Three

[1] The ranks of the Royal Yugoslav Army can be found in Appendix 1.

excellent studies on the Chetnik Movement appeared in the United States in the 1970s: Lucien Karchmar's *Draža Mihailović and the Rise of the Četnik Movement, 1941-1942* (1973), Matteo J. Milazzo's *The Chetnik Movement and the Yugoslav Resistance* (1975), and Jozo Tomasevich's *The Chetniks* (1975).

The relationship between the Allies and Chetniks has received a great deal of attention, with Walter R. Roberts' *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies, 1941-1945* (1973), Phyllis Auty and Richard Clogg's *British Policy Towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece* (1975), Elisabeth Barker's *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War* (1976), Mark C. Wheeler's *Britain and the War for Yugoslavia, 1940-1943* (1980), Veselin Đuretić's *Saveznici i Jugoslovenska Ratna Drama* (1985), Milan Deroc's *British Special Operations Explored: Yugoslavia in Turmoil 1941-1943 and the British Response* (1988), Simon Trew's *Britain, Mihailović and the Chetniks, 1941-1942* (1998), and Heather Williams' *Parachutes, Patriots, and Partisans: The Special Operations Executive and Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (2003) being amongst the best works devoted to the subject.

A number of regional studies of the Chetnik Movement are worth mentioning. Radoje Pajović's *Kontrarevolucija u Crnoj Gori: Četnički i Federalistički Pokret, 1941-1945* (1977) and Vučeta Redžić's *Građanski Rat u Crnoj Gori, 1941-1945* (2004) look at the Montenegrin Chetniks, while those of the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* – NDH) are examined in Fikreta Jelić-Butić's *Četnici u Hrvatskoj, 1941-1945* (1986), Enver

Redžić's *Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Second World War* (2005), Vladimir Cerovac's *Nastanak Četničkog Pokreta u Severnoj Dalmaciji* (2006), Marko Attila Hoare's *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941-1943* (2006), and Kosta Nikolić's *Italijanska Vojska i Četnici u Drugom Svetskom Ratu u Jugoslaviji, 1941-1943* (2009). The Mihailović movement in Serbia is investigated in Branko Petranović's *Srbija u Drugom Svetskom Ratu, 1939-1945* (1992), Milan Lazić's *Ravnogorski Pokret, 1941-1945* (1997), and Kosta Nikolić's noteworthy *Istorija Ravnogorskog Pokreta* (1999).

Various aspects of the Chetnik Movement have received the attention of scholars. Its relationship with the Yugoslav government-in-exile is analysed in Veselin Đuretić's *Vlada na Bespuću: Internacionalizacija Jugoslovenskih Protivriječnosti na Političkoj Pozornici Drugog Svjetskog Rata, 1941-1944* (1982) and Mirjana Stefanovski's *Srpska Politička Emigracija o Preuređenju Jugoslavije, 1941-1943* (1988). Chetnik ideology as presented in its propaganda in Serbia is examined in Milan Matić's *Ravnogorska Ideja u Štampi i Propagandi Četničkog Pokreta u Srbiji, 1941-1944* (1995), whilst its national policy is outlined in Milan Vesović and Kosta Nikolić's *Ujedinjene Srpske Zemlje: Ravnogorski Nacionalni Program* (1996). The latter two works include large appendices of primary documents.

The unsavoury side of the Chetnik Movement is discussed in Zdravko Dizdar's *Četnički Zločini u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1941-1945* (2002) and Tomislav Dulić's *Utopias of Nation: Local Mass Killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1941-*

*1942* (2005). Documentary collections of Chetnik crimes against Croat and Muslim civilians include Vladimir Dedijer and Antun Miletić's *Genocid nad Muslimanima, 1941-1945* (1990), Šemso Tucaković's *Srpski Zločini nad Bošnjacima-Muslimanima, 1941-1945* (1995), Smail Čekić's *Genocid nad Bošnjacima u Drugom Svjetskom Ratu* (1996), and Zdravko Dizdar and Mihael Sobolevski's *Prešućivani Četnički Zločini u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini, 1941-1945* (1999).

Whilst earlier studies of the Chetnik Movement focused on its military and, to a lesser extent, political aspects, recent years have seen an increase in interest in the war crimes that it perpetrated against non-Serb civilians, primarily Croats and Muslims. This is the result of a number of factors. Internationally, the study of genocide and other forms of mass killing was largely ignored between the 1950s and 1980s, only to be followed by a dramatic increase in public interest in the 1990s.[2] Yugoslavia followed the same trend, although domestic factors gave this process a further impetus. As the power of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (*Savez Komunista Jugoslavije*)[3] and its ideology of Brotherhood and Unity (*Bratstvo i Jedinstvo*) waned, nationalistic feelings increased amongst the nations of Yugoslavia, and past strictures on discussions of genocide loosened.[4] The ethnic cleansing and mass killing of civilians that accompanied the Wars of Yugoslav Succession of the 1990s further stimulated the examination of the crimes committed during the Second World War.

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[2] Jones (2006) p. 15.
[3] The official name of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije* – KPJ) after 1952.
[4] See Sindbæk (undated).

As attested to by the aforementioned studies, Chetnik crimes have not escaped the attention of scholars, a number of whom have condemned the Mihailović movement as chauvinistic, fascist, and genocidal. This, however, is not a recent phenomenon; similar accusations date back to the Second World War. Chetnik atrocities were a common theme of Partisan and Ustaša propaganda. In June 1942, the NDH Ministry of Foreign Affairs produced a publication in which it was claimed that insurgents led by "Chetnik leaders, active Serb officers, Jews, and prominent communists"[5] had killed tens of thousands of Croats and Muslims.[6] Similarly, the Partisans condemned the "bestialities of the Chetniks, who are under the command of Minister Draža Mihailović, against all of the peoples of Yugoslavia"[7] in the resolutions of the first meeting of the Anti-Fascist Council of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašističko Veće Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije* – AVNOJ) in November 1942.

## Mihailović the War Criminal

While Mihailović was evading the Yugoslav army and secret police in the mountains of eastern Bosnia following the destruction of his army in May 1945, the new government published a collection of documents, titled *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića* (1945), in an effort to tarnish his reputation by demonstrating the collaborationist, genocidal, and treasonous nature of the Chetnik Movement, and to place Mihailović squarely at its centre. Although the bulk of the collection is devoted to demonstrating the Chetniks' collaboration

[5] Kovačić (1942b) Chapter IX.
[6] Kovačić (1942b) Chapter IX.
[7] *Rezolucija o Osnivanju Antifašističkog Veća Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije* (1942) p. 1.

with the occupiers and quislings, a fair deal is said about Chetnik crimes, mostly against the Partisans and their supporters and sympathisers, but also against the non-Serbian population of Yugoslavia. One of the key pieces of evidence for the charge that Mihailović was a "terrible Great Serb criminal"[8] was a forged document[9] from December 1941, in which the aims of the Chetnik Movement were supposedly outlined:

> (2) Create a Great Yugoslavia and in it a Great Serbia, ethnically pure, in the borders of Serbia – Montenegro – Bosnia and Hercegovina – Srem – Banat and Bačka ...
> (4) Cleanse the state territory of all national minorities and anti-national elements.
> (5) Create a direct – joint border between Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Serbia and Slovenia, through the cleansing of the Sandžak of its Muslim inhabitants, and Bosnia of its Muslim and Croat inhabitants.[10]

A letter included in the collection[11] purportedly revealed Mihailović's "thoughts, malevolent and perfidious, towards the Muslims in Bosnia and the Croats".[12] This letter was interpreted as

> a perfect example of how the "legendary hero" saw his mission. The army was not to be squandered during the war, but rather preserved for peacetime as an instrument for the vengeful extermination of the Croats and Muslims for the Ustaša bestialities, then as a tool for the realisation of Great Serb imperialistic aims, and finally as a tool for an archfascist regime, which Draža sought

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[8] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 10.
[9] See Appendix 2.
[10] Order (Number 370) by Brigade General Draža Mihailović for Major Đorđe Lašić and Captain Pavle Đurišić, 20 December 1941, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 12 (#3).
[11] Letter by Captain Borivoje Mitranović for Sergeant Jovan Mišić, 23 March 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 237-240 (#128).
[12] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 235.

> to inaugurate after the war, and which his Ravna Gora clique named the Chetnik dictatorship.[13]

Thus was Mihailović presented as a chauvinistic Great Serb war criminal who desired to establish a Chetnik dictatorship after the war, and to create a Great Serbia whose non-Serbian population would be eliminated through expulsion and extermination.

The victorious Partisans argued that the Chetnik High Command with Mihailović "at its head was the centre from which was spun the web of treachery and plans for the fratricidal butchery",[14] and that Mihailović "did not merely know everything that his Chetniks were doing, but in fact gave the orders and directives, determined the political course, and prescribed the tactic of treason."[15] Furthermore, he was "informed about everything by his commanders, who sought his permission for every action."[16] This was illustrated through numerous authorisations and orders, correspondence between Mihailović and his commanders,[17] and telegrams to and from the High Command.[18] The aim was to demonstrate that the mass killing of Croats and Muslims perpetrated by the Chetniks was part of a policy formulated and directed by Mihailović, and that he was the most powerful figure in the organisation, and thus bore responsibility.

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[13] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 236.
[14] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 473.
[15] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 473.
[16] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 473.
[17] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 7-8 (#1), 9-10 (#2), 11-13 (#3), 26-27 (#7), 30-34 (#9), 111-112 (#59), 112 (#60), 116-118 (#66), 164-165 (#90), 197 (#113), 211-213 (#118), 230-231 (#124), 232 (#125), 237-240 (#128), 245-246 (#131).
[18] *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 473-537 (#417-#645).

Mihailović was eventually captured and brought to trial. Many of the crimes he was accused of were related to his national policy, and included having "issued orders to his commanders to annihilate the Muslims … and the Croats",[19] inspiring "his organisation with chauvinistic hatred against the other peoples of Yugoslavia, in the first place against the Croatian people and the Muslim population",[20] and planning the establishment of a "regime of open dictatorship and national oppression … and even the extermination of certain nationalities in various regions".[21] Eager to demonstrate to the citizens of Yugoslavia and the entire world that Mihailović was a traitor and war criminal, the new Yugoslav government turned his trial in to a spectacular propaganda event. Over one hundred journalists, of whom about sixty were foreigners, were in attendance,[22] many of them from the largest news agencies[23] and newspapers.[24] A Belgrade radio station transmitted the entire trial to a transfixed domestic and international audience. The triumphant Partisans sought to portray their most reviled domestic enemy[25] as a Great Serb chauvinist with dictatorial and

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[19] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 37.
[20] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 55
[21] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 40
[22] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 8. Journalists came from Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, and the United States, amongst other places (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 8).
[23] The Agence France-Presse (France), Albanian Telegraphic Agency (Albania), Associated Press (United States), Čeksá Tisková Kancelář (Czechoslovakia), International News Service (United States), Jewish News Agency, Overseas News Agency, Polska Agencja Prasowa (Poland), Reuters (Great Britain), TASS (Soviet Union), Tele-Press, and United Press (United States) all sent special correspondents (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 8).
[24] *Daily Express* (Great Britain), *Daily Worker* (United States), *Izvestia* (Soviet Union), *New York Herald Tribune* (United States), *New York Times* (United States), *News Chronicle* (Great Britain), *Pravda* (Soviet Union), *The Times* (Great Britain) (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 8).
[25] Tito called Mihailović "the most shameful traitor" at the second meeting of AVNOJ in November 1943 (Quoted in Čulinović (1959) p. 207).

genocidal goals, who was responsible for the terrible crimes committed by the Chetniks against the population of Yugoslavia. They were largely successful.

## Yugoslav Historiography

Most historians in socialist Yugoslavia presented a picture of Mihailović's wartime national policy and postwar aims that did not differ significantly from the one presented by the prosecution at his trial. Jovan Marjanović, one of the most prolific historians of the period, argued that "Mihailović's movement was … first for the creation of 'Great Serbia' through the reckless persecution and extermination of the Croatian, Muslim, and Macedonian population, then for Yugoslavia, in which 'Great Serbia' would have total hegemony."[26] Fikreta Jelić-Butić, another prominent historian, wrote that "in the programmatic documents of the Chetnik Movement the idea of Great Serb hegemony and chauvinism was principally formulated."[27] More recently, yet in the same vein, the historian Enver Redžić stated that the Bosnian Chetniks sought to "exterminate all non-Serbs in Bosnia and Hercegovina".[28] This is what might be termed the orthodox view of Mihailović and the Chetniks, and for almost four decades following the conclusion of the war, Yugoslav historiography presented a homogenous and united view of the Chetniks, one which had not changed significantly since 1946.[29] The unquestioned monolith of socialist truth, however, began to crack,

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[26] Marjanović (1963) p. 189.
[27] Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 20.
[28] Redžić (2005) p, 125.
[29] The first serious challenge to the orthodoxy was Veselin Đuretić's *Saveznici i Jugoslovenska Ratna Drama* which was published in 1985 and caused quite an uproar throughout Yugoslavia, primarily because it argued that the Mihailović movement was anti-fascist in character (Pavlowitch (1987, 1988)). According to Sindbæk (2009), the first challenge came in 1983 from

not incidentally, at about the same time that Josip Broz Tito's union based on Brotherhood and Unity began to fall apart.[30]

Mihailović and his movement were generally ignored in Yugoslav historiography; insofar as historians studied them they were primarily concerned with the issues of their collaboration and responsibility for starting the civil war.[31] Other aspects, including Chetnik crimes against Croats and Muslims, were largely overlooked or relegated to a distant second place. It is not true, as has been alleged, that the study of Chetnik crimes was forbidden.[32] In fact, discussions of the war crimes perpetrated by all of the parties in wartime Yugoslavia – with the important exception of the Partisans – were quite lively, and were discussed by none other than Tito and the Partisan turned historian Vladimir Dedijer.[33] Tea Sindbæk, who has researched how the mass killings were represented in postwar Yugoslav historiography and popular representations of history,[34] argued that discussions about mass killing occurred within a particular historiographical framework: concurrent with the principles of Brotherhood and Unity, "the ascription of guilt of war crimes to only one of the Yugoslav parties collaborating

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the respected historian Branko Petranović, who argued that the Chetniks were in origin and principle anti-fascist, but that their collaboration precluded them from being 'real' anti-fascists like the Partisans (p. 51). This important qualification, as well as the author's known loyalty to the party and its version of history, probably explain why such a statement failed to elicit the response that Đuretić's did a mere two years later.

[30] Bjelajac (1997) pp. 129-144.

[31] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 6.

[32] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) claimed that Chetnik crimes were not studied until the late 1980s because this was forbidden in socialist Yugoslavia, and that Ustaša ones were "exclusively studied" (p. 83). Dizdar (2002) repeated this claim in a later work (pp. 7, 12).

[33] Sindbæk (undated) pp. 2-4.

[34] Sindbæk (2007).

with the occupier"[35] was "prohibited";[36] the guilt had to be "balanced".[37] Thus, one could discuss Chetnik crimes, but it was necessary to mention the crimes committed by the other 'collaborators' as well.

## Anglo-American Historiography

Whilst most historians in the Anglophone countries who wrote about the Chetnik Movement paid little attention to its national policy, they were generally in agreement with their colleagues in Yugoslavia on the matter. The American historian Matteo J. Milazzo, for example, devoted only a minimal amount of space to the subject in his monograph *The Chetnik Movement and the Yugoslav Resistance* (1975); a brief reference to Order Number 370[38] and the Ba Congress Resolutions.[39] Despite this, he concluded that the "Chetnik officers rallied behind a Greater Serbian political program, attempted to put it into effect during the war, and apparently saw no contradiction between their Pan-Serb schemes and devotion to the Yugoslav idea."[40] William Deakin, a British historian, wrote that the "Četnik movement was out to protect the future of the Serbs, and destroy the main competitors – the Croats. 'Zagreb must be destroyed; and he [Mihailović] would like to hang Maček [in a speech to a Serbian youth delegation].'"[41] That Mihailović said such a thing is highly unlikely.[42]

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[35] Sindbæk (undated) p. 4.
[36] Sindbæk (undated) p. 4.
[37] Sindbæk (undated) p. 4.
[38] Milazzo (1975) p. 46.
[39] Milazzo (1975) pp. 166-168.
[40] Milazzo (1975) p. 112.
[41] Deakin (1971) p. 196 (Square brackets in original).
[42] Deakin's source is a memorandum – it is one of two – sent by Captain Duane T. Hudson, a British officer with Mihailović, to Special Operations Executive (SOE) Cairo in April 1943, which can be found in the United Kingdom National Archives, FO 536/31. The two memoranda were

Another American historian, Jozo Tomasevich, argued that the creation of a nationally homogenous Great Serbia was the "Main Objective"[43] of the Chetnik Movement, and, unlike other historians, devoted a fair amount of space to describing its postwar aims in his important work, *The Chetniks* (1975).[44] Not all of the documents employed by Tomasevich, however, are entirely reliable. He cited the forged Order Number 370,[45] as well as a manual prepared by the "Chetnik leadership"[46] whose contents are discussed in some detail. Regarding the issue of postwar vengeance, Tomasevich wrote that the "manual opposed disorderly and unsystematic retributions by individuals and groups; it advocated collective retribution, that is, by the state on the basis of proper legislation and carried out according to sentences of special people's courts by special troops."[47] According to the handbook, communists, Ustaše, and a portion of the Croat intelligentsia would be targeted. Tomasevich argued rather sophistically that the manual advocated killing between 600,000 and 800,000 Croats, basing this figure on a very broad interpretation of the discussion of postwar vengeance.[48] The manual does not propose any figure; the numbers cited are Tomasevich's.

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described by George Rendel, the British ambassador to the Yugoslav government-in-exile, in the following words: "A great deal of it seems to me very incoherent and quite a number of sentences don't seem to make very good sense, but this may be due partly to hurry in drafting and partly to faults in translation." (Letter by George Rendel for Douglas Howard, 12 April 1943, United Kingdom National Archives, FO 536/31). Hudson was presumably referring to the Chetnik Youth Conference held in Šahovići, Montenegro, from 30 November to 2 December 1942, which neither he nor Mihailović attended. Whilst the delegates at the conference indeed made a number of anti-Croat statements, no evidence exists that they threatened to destroy Zagreb or hang Maček. The minutes of the Šahovići Conference can be found in *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 15-22 (#4).

[43] Tomasevich (1975) p. 166.

[44] Tomasevich (1975) pp. 166-174.

[45] Tomasevich (1975) p. 170. Karchmar (1973) demonstrated that these instructions were forged by Captain Pavle Đurišić (pp. 395-398, 427-430). See Appendix 2.

[46] Tomasevich (1975) p. 172.

[47] Tomasevich (1975) p. 261.

[48] Tomasevich (1975) pp. 260-261. Tomasevich repeated these figures in a later work (Tomasevich (2001) p. 783).

Although it is claimed that "[i]nternal evidence suggests that the manual was prepared during the last months of 1942 with [Stevan] Moljević's help",[49] this evidence is not cited; in fact, no proof exists that Moljević or anyone else in the Chetnik leadership participated in its formulation or adopted it as official policy.[50] In his eagerness to portray the Chetniks as genocidal fascists, Tomasevich, like many other scholars, was far too willing to employ documents of dubious origin.

**Milan Vesović and Kosta Nikolić (1996)**

The last two decades have witnessed an increase in the number of publications that examine the national policy of the Chetnik Movement. One study that looks specifically at the Chetnik Movement's national policy is Milan Vesović and Kosta Nikolić's *Ujedinjene Srpske Zemlje: Ravnogorski Nacionalni Program* (1996). It begins with an analysis of the history of the Serbian national question prior to the Second World War, which is essentially the question of the borders of the Serb national state.[51] Some of the general characteristics and themes of the Chetnik Movement's national policy are outlined,[52] before it moves on to a summary of the major programmatic documents produced before the Ba Congress in January 1944.[53] The solution to the national question proposed at the

[49] Tomasevich (1975) p. 172. Stevan Moljević was one of Mihailović's closest political advisors from the autumn of 1942 onwards. See Chapter IV, "Stevan Moljević".
[50] The manual is located in the United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-311,* Roll 192, Frames 315-390. It would seem that it was composed by an unknown individual in the Command of Vojvodina (*Komanda Vojvodine*) for local conditions and use.
[51] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 11-29.
[52] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 33-40.
[53] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 41-55.

congress is given an entire chapter,[54] as are the programs produced by the NDH Chetniks.[55] Although brief, *Ujedinjene Srpske Zemlje* manages to present a general overview of the Chetniks' national policy. It argues that prior to the Ba Congress

> a comprehensive program was not formulated concerning the national question and the political and social shape of the future state, but there existed a number of individual projects, various instructions, and other documents, as well as writings in the press and other publications.[56]

Vesović and Nikolić argued that the "Ravna Gora concept of the new Yugoslavia's shape foresaw the unification of all Serbs in one separate unit."[57] They concluded that the Chetniks' national policy was largely unacceptable to the other Yugoslav nations, with the exception of the Slovenes,[58] and that it suffered from two main problems: it (1) vacillated between Great Serbism and Yugoslavism; and (2) failed to explain how the policy of massive population movements would have been implemented.[59]

*Ujedinjene Srpske Zemlje*, despite its virtues, has a number of shortcomings. It is far too short to adequately deal with the subject of the Chetnik Movement's national policy. Due to its brevity, it does not satisfactorily analyse the various programmatic documents; the majority of them are described in only

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[54] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 56-71.
[55] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 86-106.
[56] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 44.
[57] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 44.
[58] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 142.
[59] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 149-151.

a few short paragraphs. A mere fourteen pages are allocated to the most important documents produced in the period before the Ba Congress, which was arguably the most important period of the movement's short life.[60] Only a handful of documents, albeit important ones, are examined, with the result that it does not offer a comprehensive account of the national policy. Mihailović's role in the formulation of the national policy is largely ignored,[61] despite his position as head of the movement. Furthermore, it overlooks the extent to which the policies outlined in the documents were implemented during the war, if at all. Limiting itself to a study of the postwar national policy, it ignores the far more pressing problem of dealing with the national question during the war faced by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership.

**The Collections**

During the 1990s, four collections of documents about Chetnik crimes against Croats and Muslims were published,[62] each of which was prefaced by an essay.[63] Since they are similar in format and essentially make the same argument, they will be examined together. The authors of these works argued that the Chetniks intentionally pursued a policy of genocide with the aim of creating a nationally homogenous Great Serbia,[64] and that the mass killing and forced expulsion of Croats and Muslims during the war was an integral part of this

[60] Karchmar (1973) pp. vii, 923.
[61] The forged Order Number 370 is cited (Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 46-47).
[62] Čekić (1996); Dedijer & Miletić (1990); Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999); Tucaković (1995).
[63] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) pp. i-xxxi; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 21-22, 25-149; Tucaković (1995) pp. 7-174.
[64] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxiv; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 91, 93, 104, 110, 146, 147, 148, 149; Tucaković (1995) pp. 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

policy. Šemso Tucaković, for example, argued that "[i]n the fundamental principles of the Chetnik Movement's strategy, … in its fundamental political orientation, lies also the destruction of the Bosniaks. This was to be accomplished during the war through physical liquidation and forced movement."[65] The war provided Great Serb ideologues in the Chetnik Movement with the opportunity to implement a genocidal national policy, which was elaborated in various programs.[66] Zdravko Dizdar and Mihael Sobolevski, two Croat historians, similarly stated that Chetnik terror was motivated by the desire to create a nationally homogenous Great Serbia. They wrote:

> Chetnik genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina during the Second World War (1941-1945) were not incidental. They were programmatically planned, thus being an integral part of the military and political goals of the Serbo-Chetnik movement. Chetnik crimes had only one aim: the creation of Great Serbia, cleansed through massacres of its Croatian and Muslim populations.[67]

Furthermore, the proposition that the motivation for Chetnik terror was anything other than its ideology was rejected, especially the argument that it was a reaction to the terror of the other Yugoslav wartime actors:

> Chetnik atrocities were a planned and common part of their military and political goals. In other words, there was no spontaneity of individuals or certain Chetnik groups, but rather a Fascist ideology that used all methods and crimes in the execution of their strategic goals. The essence of Chetnik criminal activities does not lie in religious and cultural differences, as is thought by one of the leading researchers of the Chetnik movement, Jozo

[65] Tucaković (1995) p. 9.
[66] Tucaković (1995) p. 10.
[67] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 147.

> Tomasevich, or in its terror and counter-terror. It lies in the fact that this movement promoted the establishment of an ethnically clean Greater Serbia on the territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the larger part of Croatia ... In its execution this was not revenge against an individual who had caused damage, or a blood crime, but rather against the nation as such ... it was criminally guided against the Croats and Muslims and it sought their biological termination.[68]

To demonstrate that this genocide was planned by the Chetnik leadership, the various authors cited a number of documents: a program (titled *Homogenous Serbia*)[69] and letter[70] written by a leading Chetnik ideologue; a program by a committee in Belgrade purportedly affiliated with Mihailović;[71] and Mihailović's Order Number 370.[72] These documents, according to Vladimir Dedijer and Antun Miletić, constitute the "fundamental genocidal documents of the Chetnik leaders, which their subordinates implemented, destroying the Muslim population, irrespective of gender and age."[73] Similarly, Dizdar and Sobolevski wrote that these documents "indicate that the Chetnik crimes of genocide against the Croats and Muslims were planned in advance."[74] These authors thus argued that the Chetniks perpetrated genocide through the implementation of the ideas outlined in various programmatic documents.

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[68] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 723.
[69] *Homogena Srbija*. Dedijer & Miletić (1990) pp. xxiv-xxv; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 37-39, 95, 160-165; Tucaković (1995) p. 10, 183-187.
[70] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) pp. xxv-xxvi; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 39; Tucaković (1995) p. 12, 193-194.
[71] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxv; Tucaković (1995) p. 10, 188-189.
[72] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxv; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 40; Tucaković (1995) p. 11, 189-192.
[73] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxvi.
[74] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 104.

The collections, however, are problematic for a number of reasons. Although all of them claim that the Chetniks committed genocide,[75] none of them discuss the term.[76] Also, the focus on ideology has resulted in an overly simplistic and straightforward explanation of the mass killings as a matter of the top-down implementation of ideology, thereby ignoring other factors. A related problem is the argument that Great Serbism is an agreed, coherent, and consistent ideology, when historically it has not been understood as such.[77] All of them cite the forged Order Number 370,[78] although this is somewhat understandable given the ubiquitous nature of this document.[79] Since the argument is based on a direct relationship between documents and behaviour, in an effort to demonstrate this connectedness a number of unsubstantiated and rather outlandish claims are made. Tucaković, for example, argued that "[o]nly a few days after the production of "Homogenous Serbia" there began, in regions where Chetnik units existed, the persecution of the Muslim population",[80] thereby suggesting that the Serb rebels were implementing the policy outlined in this program, yet it is not made clear how this was possible.[81] Similarly, he stated that the

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[75] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxiv; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 91, 93, 104, 110, 146, 147, 148, 149; Tucaković (1995) pp. 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.
[76] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) made a rather vague reference to the importance of intent in every crime, including genocide (p. xxiv), but this hardly constitutes a discussion.
[77] Allcock (2000) p. 343.
[78] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxv; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 40; Tucaković (1995) p. 11, 189-192.
[79] An incomplete list of the studies that cite this forgery as genuine includes: Antonić (1973) pp. 261-262; Dizdar (2002) p. 79; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 40, 97; Dulić (2005) p. 112; Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 20-21; Marjanović (1959) pp. 180-181; Milazzo (1975) p. 46; Petranović (2000) p. 143; Ramet (2006) p. 145; Redžić (2005) pp. 131-132; Tomasevich (1975) p. 170; Tucaković (1995) p. 11; and Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 46-47.
[80] Tucaković (1995) p. 10.
[81] *Homogenous Serbia* was written by a Serb lawyer from Banja Luka, Stevan Moljević, in Nikšić, Montenegro, on 30 June 1941 (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 9). It is highly unlikely that its contents would have been known to Chetnik commanders in the regions where the mass killing of

> massacres in the region of the upper Podrinje intensified especially after Draža Mihailović's directive that "Sandžak should be cleansed of its Bosniaks [*sic*] and Bosnia of its Bosniaks [*sic*] and Croats" arrived in Foča and Goražde at the end of December.[82]

Furthermore, Tucaković claimed that some 150,000 Muslims were killed during the war, two-thirds of them at the hands of the Chetniks.[83] These figures are highly dubitable and conflict with generally accepted numbers of Muslim war dead.[84] Although the documentary collections are an important source of primary materials on Chetnik crimes, the essays that accompany them have a number of factual errors and theoretical weaknesses that bring in to question their scholarly value.

**Zdravko Dizdar (2002)**

The first published monograph on Chetnik crimes was Zdravko Dizdar's *Četnički Zločini u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1941-1945* (2002), in which he argued that the "Chetnik Movement in its entirety was anti-Croat and anti-Muslim",[85] and that the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians was founded on an

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Muslims occurred at that time given Moljević's location and his lack of access to anything but the most rudimentary forms of communication.

[82] Tucaković (1995) p. 38. This is highly improbable. There is no evidence whatsoever that these instructions were seen by anyone in Bosnia in 1941. It would have been impossible for Mihailović to send the instructions since he was not even aware of their existence. Although it is conceivable that Đurišić sent them to the Bosnian Chetnik commanders named by Tucaković (Major Jezdimir Dangić, Major Boško Todorović, and Captain Sergije Mihajlović), there is no evidence that this happened, nor did Đurišić have any reason to do such a thing.

[83] Tucaković (1995) pp. 13, 169. Tucaković (1995) incorrectly stated that "[o]nly a few hundred Muslim civilians were killed by the occupiers and the NDH" (p. 169), thereby ignoring the at least 1,185 Muslims who perished in Ustaša concentration camps (Dulić (2005) pp. 313, 314; Appendix 5).

[84] Kočović (1990) calculated that 86,000 Muslims died during the war (p. 172), and Žerjavić (1992) came to the figure of 103,000 (p. 168).

[85] Dizdar (2002) p. 20.

"ideological and national basis"[86] and constituted genocide "according to international qualifications".[87] Furthermore, Dizdar claimed that as the Chetnik Movement formed, it "rapidly began to formulate [its] ... programmatic fundamentals, in which are clearly emphasised genocidal designs towards the Croats and Muslims."[88] This point in further elaborated:

> From Chetnik planned aspirations for the extent and character of their future state, which they outlined in numerous documents and cartographic pronouncements, emanated projects for the cleansing of non-Serbian peoples as well as the planned genocide towards the Croats and Muslims.[89]

Thus, the

> genocide against the Croatian and Muslim nations was planned by Chetnik commanders, headquarter commanders, and even the Chetnik leadership with Draža Mihailović at its head, and that it had the support of the emigrant royal government. Behind the pretext of revenge, which we find in almost all Chetnik documents, were hidden the real reasons for the massacres of Croats and Muslims.
>
> So as to implement the planned genocide of the Croats and Muslims on the territory of today's Bosnia and Hercegovina and Croatia, at that time the NDH, military-Chetnik units were organised.
>
> From the programmatic documents it is unambiguous that the Chetnik crimes of genocide were directed almost exclusively against the Croatian and Muslim nations, but also against the national minorities on the territory of the planned "Great Serbia".[90]

[86] Dizdar (2002) p. 20.
[87] Dizdar (2002) p. 11.
[88] Dizdar (2002) p. 71.
[89] Dizdar (2002) p. 71.
[90] Dizdar (2002) p. 89.

Dizdar argued that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership planned to commit genocide against the Croats and Muslims, as revealed in a number of wartime programmatic documents, and that Chetnik units indeed perpetrated genocide.

*Četnički Zločini u Bosni i Hercegovini* is plagued by a number of theoretical issues, factual errors, and unsubstantiated claims. The theoretical approach to explaining Chetnik mass killings is unidimensional and simplistic; it is reduced to a simple matter of the application of programmatic documents. Genocide's definition is given short shrift, limited as it is to that found in the United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (1948).[91] Some confusion surrounds the unity of Mihailović's movement. It is claimed that in

> the first half of 1942 the creation of the Chetnik organisation was completed, so that one can speak of a united Ravna Gora Chetnik Movement on the territory of Yugoslavia, whose main task was the creation of Great Serbia within Great Yugoslavia.[92]

Yet in the next sentence it is conceded that the establishment of a "unified structure … [did] … not completely succeed".[93] A number of unfounded assertions are made as well. For example, it is alleged that rapes were "[c]arried out systematically, in accordance with instructions from the Chetnik leadership",[94] but no such instructions are cited. That rape was a widespread phenomenon is

[91] Dizdar (2002) p. 12.
[92] Dizdar (2002) p. 152.
[93] Dizdar (2002) p. 153.
[94] Dizdar (2002) p. 297.

indeed true, but this does not mean that it was policy.[95] It is also asserted that the Chetniks organised their first concentration camps in August 1942,[96] but a more plausible explanation of the nature and purpose of these camps has been offered.[97] When it comes to the number of Croats and Muslims killed by the Chetniks, astronomical figures are cited, ranging from 100,000 to 300,000 for Muslims alone,[98] despite Dizdar's awareness that the "statements regarding the number of victims were increased many times."[99] After expounding these impossible numbers, the author settled on those tabulated by the Croat demographer, Vladimir Žerjavić.[100]

**Marko Attila Hoare (2006)**

The central theme of Marko Attila Hoare's *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia: The Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941-1943* (2006) is that the Partisans fought for a multinational Bosnia and Hercegovina, whilst the Chetniks fought for "an ethnically pure Great Serbia inhabited solely by Orthodox Serbs."[101] It is argued that

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[95] Dulić (2005) p. 354.
[96] Dizdar (2002) p. 325.
[97] Dulić (2005) wrote that "these facilities were primarily designed for the imprisonment of Communists and Partisans, most of whom were Serbs, and it is difficult to understand from Dizdar's description how they differed from ordinary prisons. In any case, the number of deaths in these facilities appear to have been quite limited, and they can hardly be described with the term "concentration camps"" (p. 120 (Footnote 85)).
[98] Dizdar (2002) pp. 331-333.
[99] Dizdar (2002) p. 330.
[100] Dizdar (2000) wrote that the number of Croat and Muslim victims of the Chetnik terror in Bosnia and Hercegovina according to Žerjavić was 33,000 Muslims and 12,000 Croats, but this is incorrect since he included both civilian and military casualties (p. 336). For a criticism of Žerjavić's figures, see Graovac (1998) pp. 216-217 and Graovac (2000b) p. 557.
[101] Hoare (2006) p. 159.

> Mihailović sought to build a shadow Great Serbian state and to promote his conception of Serbian interests within the framework of the Axis occupation. In practice, this amounted to seeking a modus vivendi with the Germans, while concentrating his efforts on destroying the *internal* enemies of his Great Serbian goals: the Ustashas, the Muslims of the Sanjak and Bosnia-Hercegovina, and ultimately the Communists.[102]

Mihailović is linked to the "genocidal policy and ideology of the Chetnik movement"[103] through a diary entry in which he expressed his belief that the Muslim population should be expelled from the country after the war, as well as "his appointment of Stevan Moljević to the Central National Committee of the Chetnik movement in August 1941".[104] This, according to Hoare, constitutes evidence of Mihailović's "readiness to embrace the destruction of the Bosnian Muslims".[105] No explanation is offered as to why the expulsion of the Muslim population would have resulted in its destruction; the forced deportations envisaged by Mihailović and others did not seek the physical destruction of the Muslims, but rather their removal to another place. Hoare also failed to explain how Mihailović could have been aware of Moljević's ideas – presumably those expressed in *Homogenous Serbia* – when he appointed him to his advisory committee in August 1941, given that the first chance he would have to acquaint himself with these ideas would be in early 1942.[106] Moljević was most probably

[102] Hoare (2006) p. 94 (Italics in original).
[103] Hoare (2006) p. 143.
[104] Hoare (2006) p. 143.
[105] Hoare (2006) p. 143.
[106] See Chapter IV, "Stevan Moljević".

selected at the suggestion of one of Mihailović's political advisors, the latter having been an associate of Moljević's prior to the war.[107]

*Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia* has a number of other weaknesses. It argues that despite the fact that the "Chetnik movement was not a disciplined, centralised movement with a leadership capable of ordering its underlings to carry out a systematic programme of genocide"[108] the leadership could nonetheless

> make Chetnik officers in the field aware of its general plan regarding the Croats and Muslims; these officers could then deal with the Croat and Muslim population in their respective vicinities on the basis of this plan, as they saw fit, so far as conditions in their respective localities permitted.[109]

Yet it appears to contradict itself at another point:

> The Yugoslav Army in the Homeland subsequently did not succeed even formally in linking to its command all the bands that together comprised the Chetnik 'movement' in Bosnia-Hercegovina. Bosnian bands organised themselves autonomously and pursued their own agendas. They sought to co-operate with Mihailović's Supreme Command, but on their own terms.[110]

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[107] Similarly, this political advisor, Dragiša Vasić, who is introduced and discussed in Chapter III, could not have been aware of the contents of *Homogenous Serbia* and its call for a nationally homogenous Serbian state in August 1941. Like Mihailović, he saw this document only in 1942 (See Chapter IV, "Stevan Moljević").
[108] Hoare (2006) p. 145.
[109] Hoare (2006) p. 145.
[110] Hoare (2006) p. 302.

If Mihailović did not succeed in "even formally"[111] establishing his authority over the Bosnian Chetniks, how is it possible that the policies they pursued were anything but their own, developed and implemented according to local conditions? Why should they obey the leadership's "general plan regarding the Croats and Muslims"[112] when they "pursued their own agendas"?[113] Hoare failed to demonstrate that Mihailović organised the mass killings committed by various Chetnik units because he failed to demonstrate that he had effective control over them, and that he ordered or even encouraged the mass killings. Genocide is described in only a single sentence: "A crime that can take a number of different forms, genocide involves an 'intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group".[114] Any deeper analysis or discussion of the numerous definitions of genocide is ignored, although this is hardly surprising since most studies of mass killing in Yugoslavia during the Second World War have similarly avoided any serious analysis of genocide. Great Serbism is emphasised as the most important factor in understanding Chetnik crimes, whilst others are largely disregarded. Indeed, this ideology is presented as a great bogeyman responsible for most of the ills suffered by the inhabitants of Bosnia and Hercegovina in the Second World War.[115]

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[111] Hoare (2006) p. 302.
[112] Hoare (2006) p. 145.
[113] Hoare (2006) p. 302.
[114] Hoare (2006) pp. 19-20.
[115] Hoare (2006) even suggested that Great Serbism was the force that destroyed the 'Second' Yugoslavia (p. 352), conveniently ignoring the revival of nationalism amongst the Yugoslav nations, as well as Yugoslavia's economic, political, and social problems, and the international situation at the end of the Cold War. Some of the best examinations of the causes of the collapse of Yugoslavia include Cohen (1995), Meier (1995), Pavković (2000), Sekelj (1993), and Woodward (1995). For a review of writings in English written before 1996 on the causes of the break-up, see Stokes, Lampe, Rusinow & Mostov (1996).

**Tomislav Dulić (2005)**

Tomislav Dulić in *Utopias of Nation: Local Mass Killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1941-1942* (2005) examined the mechanisms of mass killing perpetrated by the Chetniks and Ustaše in Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1941 and 1942. What is most salient in Dulić's monograph is the discussion of theory, something that most writers have avoided, which has resulted in studies that have little thematical or theoretical coherence. An associated problem is that genocide has not been adequately defined and examined; most writers have carelessly bandied around the word without any discussion of the vast literature on the debates surrounding its definition.

*Utopias of Nation* introduces a theoretical model to understand the phenomenon of mass killing, which hypothesises that it consists of three dimensions: (1) perpetrator *intent*, (2) *systematics* (or organisation), and (3) the *magnitude* of destruction. Mass killing is a process, and it goes through three stages that correspond to the three dimensions: (1) conceptualisation, (2) implementation, and (3) realisation. Intent is the most important dimension since it deals with the extent to which mass killings are consciously planned, thereby separating more premeditated from less intentional forms. Systematics refers to the level of organisation; this is the stage in which the actual killing takes place. Magnitude is primarily related to the number of victims. Four categories of

mass killing are indentified by Dulić based on a three axis model: genocide, attempted genocide, ethnocide, and massacre.[116]

According to Dulić's argument, demonstrating intent is crucial, and in order to demonstrate that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership planned the mass killings committed by the rank and file it is necessary to produce documentary proof. Dulić, however, experienced difficulties accomplishing this. One programmatic document cited is ascribed to Mihailović even though no evidence exists that he even saw it.[117] Another is an outright forgery.[118] A third is signed by the pseudonym "Pane",[119] who is never identified, leaving the reader confused as to why it should be included amongst the "policy documents … [of] Mihajlović [*sic*] and the Chetnik leadership".[120] Interestingly, this last document is the only one which encourages mass killing.[121] Notwithstanding this last document, which can hardly be considered an official programmatic document of the Chetnik leadership, Dulić was unable to find any evidence that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership advocated or planned mass killing in any form, forcing Dulić to write that the "Chetnik leadership emphasised deportations as a means of getting rid of the targeted populations."[122] Ultimately, Dulić failed to demonstrate that Mihailović intended the terrible crimes that were perpetrated

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[116] Dulić (2005) p. 23.
[117] Dulić (2005) claimed that "Mihajlović [*sic*] sent [this] programme to the government-in-exile's military cabinet. In article II, he ordered preparations to be made so that when the Allies win the war" the Chetniks could establish a nationally homogenous Great Serbia through massive forced expulsions of non-Serbs (p. 111). No evidence, however, exists that "this particular program had the approval of Mihailović or even whether he ever saw it" (Karchmar (1973) p. 571).
[118] Dulić (2005) cited the forged Order Number 370 (p. 112).
[119] Dulić (2005) p. 112.
[120] Dulić (2005) p. 112.
[121] Dulić (2005) p. 112.
[122] Dulić (2005) p. 112.

by his underlings, although given the difficulty of demonstrating intent, this is perhaps not surprising.

## Key Issues

From the preceding summary of writings it can be seen that the Chetnik Movement's national policy has been described as chauvinistic, fascist, Great Serb, and genocidal, although this last appellation was not commonly employed until the early 1990s. Since that time, a number of scholars have declared that the Chetniks committed genocide.[123] They hypothesise that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership developed a plan in the early part of the war, confident in the final victory of the Allies, to create a postwar Serbian state that would encompass all lands inhabited by Serbs, commonly referred to as Great Serbia, whose non-Serbian population would be eliminated through large scale expulsions and mass killings. Furthermore, this plan was to be implemented, insofar as circumstances permitted, during the war through the forced removal and killing of undesirable populaces in regions earmarked for the postwar Serbia. Mihailović and the High Command made their national policy known through orders, propaganda, and telegrams to commanders in the field who, as part of an organisation controlled and directed by Mihailović, enacted it according to local conditions. The mass expulsions and mass killings were thus the implementation of the Chetniks' national policy. This is, in its barest form, the argument of those who believe that

[123] Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. xxiv; Dizdar (2002) pp. 11-12, 71, 89, 149; Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 91, 93, 104, 110, 146, 147, 148, 149; Hoare (2005) pp. 19-20, 143, 159; Tucaković (1995) pp. 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

the Chetnik Movement was genocidal in character and that it perpetrated genocide.

Rather surprisingly, most scholars of this persuasion have given scant attention to actually defining genocide. Whatever the reasons, it is quite inexcusable considering the interesting and lively debates in academia.[124] Given that genocide is one of the most serious crimes, and that much of the writing about Mihailović and his movement has been, and indeed remains, clouded by ideological and personal prejudices, it is necessary to discuss some of the issues surrounding its definition. Another reason is that this thesis will examine the question of whether the Chetnik Movement committed genocide. Two other issues raised in the literature need to be addressed as well: (1) the ideology of Great Serbism, and (2) the unity and cohesiveness of the Chetnik Movement, and Mihailović's role in it.

It is necessary to define the terms nation, national question, and national policy given their centrality to this thesis. A nation is an "aggregation of persons who identify themselves as forming a group, as by common descent, customs, history, and language".[125] Although the terms ethnic group and nation are often

[124] There are almost as many definitions of genocide as there are writers on the subject, and it is perhaps for this reason that the aforementioned studies have avoided discussing the intricacies of the subject. Some of the best studies include: Andreopoulos (1994); Chalk & Jonassohn (1990); Fein (1993); Kuper (1981); Mann (2005); and Totten, Parsons & Charney (1997).
[125] *Macquarie Concise Dictionary* (2006) p. 803.

used interchangeably,[126] ethnic group will not be employed in this study because the inhabitants of the South Slav territories seldom refer to themselves as such. Instead, they utilise *nacija* (nation) and *narod* (people), and so will this thesis. The national question in the Yugoslav lands was described by the American historian Dennison Rusinow as "the problems raised by [the] confrontation between the ethno-religious and linguistic mosaic and the national aspirations of the South Slavs in 'the age of nationalism'",[127] and this thesis accepts this is an adequate definition. The national question is thus the challenge of dealing with the many difficulties that emerge from the nationally heterogeneous nature of this region coupled with the national hopes of the numerous peoples who inhabit it. A national policy is a political program formulated in response to the national question whose purpose is to create a workable political system and state organisation in the face of this complexity. The creation of Yugoslavia at the end of the First World War, and its recreation after the Second World War, were attempts to solve the puzzle of the Yugoslav national question.

## Genocide

Since this thesis can not provide a comprehensive overview and assessment of the numerous definitions of genocide as it lacks the space for such a momentous task, it can only offer a brief examination of what is a large topic that has engaged many thinkers. Any attempt to discuss the subject in such a limited space can not do justice to the ambiguities, complexities, and problems

[126] That said, Anthony Smith, one of the leading experts on nations and nationalism, has argued that there are key differences between nations and *ethnies,* his preferred name for ethnic groups (Smith (2000)).
[127] Rusinow (2003) p. 12.

that characterise the field. Nonetheless, a brief discussion is far better than none, especially given that the national policy of the Chetnik Movement has been labeled genocidal by some scholars, thus making it a central concept in any discussion of the subject, and because this thesis will examine the question of whether Mihailović and his movement did indeed perpetrate genocide.

The definition of genocide in the United Nations Genocide Convention (UNGC) of 1948 is one of the oldest. Its most important part reads:

> [G]enocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, 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 about 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.[128]

The UNGC definition, however, has been criticised for a number of reasons. Some scholars have argued that it is too narrow since it excludes political and social groups,[129] while others have criticised the need to demonstrate intent since this is not always easy, especially in the absence of documentation.[130] This has led some to argue that intent should be overlooked, and that the focus should be on outcomes. However, this fails to differentiate between deaths that occur as a

[128] *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, GA Res 260, UN GAOR, 3rd sess, UN Doc A/RES/260 (9 December 1948) annex.
[129] Chalk (1994) pp. 47-63; Kuper (1981) pp. 19-25.
[130] Dulić (2005) p. 13.

result of intentional and unintentional actions, although some scholars believe that genocide can be unintentional as well as intentional.[131]

Whilst there is little disagreement over what constitutes a target group, since it is not particularly difficult to identify a "national, ethnical, racial or religious group",[132] problems arise when interpreting the section of the definition related to the size of the target group, the "in whole or in part".[133] What proportion of the target group must be targeted for the acts to constitute genocide? It has been argued that "[p]artial genocide makes sense only in geographic terms"[134] rather than numerical, which is, presumably, the meaning encompassed in the UNGC. The UNGC definition of genocide has been criticised because it "includes both too much and too little".[135] There is more than a little truth in this paradoxical statement.

It is generally accepted that intent is fundamental in defining genocide,[136] with one specialist going so far as to state that "intent defines genocide."[137] Some scholars argue that intent differentiates genocide from other forms of mass killing which, although they may result in many deaths, are unintentional. This is rejected by those who believe that genocide can result from unintentional actions,

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[131] Charny (1994) p. 89.
[132] *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, GA Res 260, UN GAOR, 3rd sess, UN Doc A/RES/260 (9 December 1948) annex.
[133] *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, GA Res 260, UN GAOR, 3rd sess, UN Doc A/RES/260 (9 December 1948) annex.
[134] Mann (2005) p. 17.
[135] Mann (2005) p. 17.
[136] Jones (2006) p. 21.
[137] Jones (2006) p. 21.

such as ecological abuse, that are due to negligence.[138] The issue of intent centres on whether a hard or soft definition of genocide is accepted:

> Does one require that intent be wedded to a high degree of *purposive, coordinated action* against a target group? ... [or] ... regardless of the claimed objective of the actions in question, they are intentional if they are perpetrated with the knowledge *or reasonable expectation* that they will destroy a human group in whole or in part.[139]

Given that genocide is a process that is not always successfully carried out, Helen Fein provided a definition that takes this in to account:

> [G]enocide is a sustained and purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim.[140]

Fein raised an important point, which Dulić saw as the

> distinction between the intent of destroying a collectivity and that of using excessive force to subdue political opposition [which] touches upon some of the most important differences between genocide and state terror. In fact, the mass killing of individuals because they belong to a certain ethnic or national group does not by itself constitute genocide, unless it was done in order to destroy the group to which they belong.[141]

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[138] Charny (1994) p. 89.
[139] Jones (2006) p. 21 (Italics in original).
[140] Fein (1993) p. 24.
[141] Dulić (2005) p. 14.

For Dulić, the mass killing of people because they belong to a certain group does not constitute genocide unless it is part of a wider plan to destroy the entire group.

Defining genocide invariably involves addressing the issue of magnitude. Some scholars have argued that the entire group must be targeted or killed for mass killing to constitute genocide. Stephen Katz, for example, excluded the destruction of the Armenians and Roma as being labeled genocide, because the perpetrators did not intend to kill all of the members of the group.[142] It is, however, exceedingly rare for entire groups to be targeted. Most scholars accept that it is not necessary for the whole group to be targeted, but that targeting a significant or substantial part is sufficient to warrant the label of genocide. The ambiguous UNGC definition with its "in part" can be interpreted to mean that aiming to exterminate any part of group, however small, constitutes genocide. If the targeting of a sub-group can be considered genocide, when is the sub-group large enough to constitute a substantial part, thus qualifying as genocide?[143]

Most definitions of genocide recognise that it is, to a certain extent at least, a question of numbers. The question, however, is whether one is dealing in absolute or relative numbers. The killing of ninety members of a group that numbers one hundred is small in absolute terms but very high in relative, whereas the extermination of one million members of a group that numbers one

[142] Katz (1996) p. 34.
[143] Dulić (2005) p. 18. The manner in which international law has addressed this issue will be examined shortly.

billion is very small in relative terms, but horrendously large in absolute. Which of these two cases, if any, can be defined as genocide? Obviously, defining genocide by magnitude is fraught with difficulties.

The discussion thus far has looked primarily at scholars' efforts to define genocide. It now turns to the legal definition of genocide in international jurisprudence, with a particular emphasis on the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Notwithstanding questions concerning the impartiality and legality of the tribunal,[144] its pronouncements carry great weight in international law. The tribunal's leading statements on genocide are the *Krstić Judgment*[145] and *Krstić Appeal*,[146] in which it made important declarations on intent and what constitutes a target group.[147]

The ICTY and international jurisprudence more generally have addressed the question of the necessary *mens rea* of the crime of genocide. The UNGC clearly states that there must be an intent to commit the various acts that constitute genocide, which is the position of the ICTY, since it adopted the UNGC definition of genocide in Article 4 of its Statute.[148] Furthermore, the ICTY has

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[144] Köchler (1999); Köchler (2003); Laughland (2007).
[145] *Prosecutor v Krstić (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Trial Chamber I, Case No IT-98-33, 2 August 2001) ('*Krstić Judgment*').
[146] *Prosecutor v Krstić (Appeal Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Appeals Chamber, Case No IT-98-33, 19 April 2004) ('*Krstić Appeal*').
[147] Schabas (2001) pp. 23-53.
[148] *Statute of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991*, SC Res 827, UN SCOR, 48th sess, 3217th mtg, UN Doc A/RES/827 (25 May 1993) annex.

cited with approval the view of the United Nations International Law Commission,[149] which held that

> a general intent to commit one of the enumerated acts combined with a general awareness of the probable consequences of such an act with respect to the immediate victim or victims is not sufficient for the crime of genocide. The definition of this crime requires a particular state of mind or a specific intent with respect to the overall consequence of the prohibited act.[150]

The ICTY's sister court, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), has adopted the same standpoint on intent. In the *Kambanda Judgment*,[151] the Trial Chamber stated that

> [t]he crime of genocide is unique because of its element of *dolus specialis* (special intent) which requires that the crime be committed with the intent "to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such".[152]

International jurisprudence has taken a rather strict approach to the necessary *mens rea* of the crime of genocide.

The ICTY has defined what constitutes a target group for the purposes of genocide.[153] The victims "must be targeted *by reason of* their membership in a

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[149] *Krstić Judgment* [571].
[150] International Law Commission, *Draft Code of Crimes Against the Peace and Security of Mankind*, UN GAOR, 51st sess, Supp No 10, UN Doc A/51/10 (5 July 1996) 44.
[151] *Prosecutor v Kambanda (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Trial Chamber I, Case No ICTR-97-23, 4 September 1998).
[152] *Prosecutor v Kambanda (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Trial Chamber I, Case No ICTR-97-23, 4 September 1998) [16].
[153] *Krstić Judgment* [551]-[568].

group",[154] and the perpetrators "must target not only one or several individuals but a group as such."[155] Furthermore, it is not necessary that the entire group be targeted:

> the intent to destroy a group, even if only in part, means seeking to destroy a distinct part of the group as opposed to an accumulation of isolated individuals within it. Although the perpetrators of genocide need not seek to destroy the entire group protected by the Convention, they must view the part of the group they wish to destroy as a distinct entity which must be eliminated as such. A campaign resulting in the killings, in different places spread over a broad geographical area, of a finite number of members of a protected group might not thus qualify as genocide, despite the high total number of casualties, because it would not show an intent by the perpetrators to target the very existence of the group as such. Conversely, the killing of all members of the part of a group located within a small geographical area, although resulting in a lesser number of victims, would qualify as genocide if carried out with the intent to destroy the part of the group as such located in this small geographical area.[156]

The *Krstić Appeal*, which was based, *inter alia*, on the argument that the "definition of the part of the national group he was found to have intended to destroy was unacceptably narrow",[157] forced the ICTY to refine its definition of what constitutes a target group.[158] The court declared that it

> is well established that where a conviction for genocide relies on the intent to destroy a protected group "in part," the part must be a substantial part of that group. The aim of the Genocide Convention is to prevent the intentional destruction of entire human groups,

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[154] *Krstić Judgment* [561] (Italics in original).
[155] *Krstić Judgment* [551].
[156] *Krstić Judgment* [590].
[157] *Krstić Appeal* [5].
[158] *Krstić Appeal* [6]-[23].

> and the part targeted must be significant enough to have an impact on the group as a whole.[159]

The need for the victim group to be substantial echoes previous statements made by the ICTY and other international legal bodies.[160] Whether a group is substantial is for the court to determine, but the following considerations should be taken into account:

> The numeric size of the targeted part of the group is the necessary and important starting point, though not in all cases the ending point of the inquiry. The number of individuals targeted should be evaluated not only in absolute terms, but also in relation to the overall size of the entire group. In addition to the numeric size of the targeted portion, its prominence within the group can be a useful consideration. If a specific part of the group is emblematic of the overall group, or is essential to its survival, that may support a finding that the part qualifies as substantial within the meaning of Article 4.[161]

Although the ICTY and international jurisprudence more generally have taken a hard stance on the question of intent, their position on what constitutes a target group is rather broad.

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[159] *Krstić Appeal* [8].
[160] See, for example, International Law Commission, *Draft Code of Crimes Against the Peace and Security of Mankind*, UN GAOR, 51st sess, Supp No 10, UN Doc A/51/10 (5 July 1996) 45; *Prosecutor v Kayishema (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Case No ICTR-95-1, 21 May 1999) [97]; and *Prosecutor v Jelišić (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Trial Chamber I, Case No IT-95-10, 14 December 1999) [82].
[161] *Krstić Appeal* [12].

The preceding discussion has hopefully addressed the main issues and problems that jurists and scholars have grappled with in their attempts to define what has been aptly termed the "crime of crimes".[162]

## Ethnic Cleansing

The term ethnic cleansing became popular in the last decade of the twentieth century, partly as a result of its usage during the Wars of Yugoslav Succession.[163] According to Norman Naimark, ethnic cleansing and genocide have many similarities, but the key difference is in intent:

> Genocide is the intentional killing off of part or all of an ethnic, religious, or national group; the murder of a people or peoples ... is the objective. The intention of ethnic cleansing is to remove a people and often all traces of them from a concrete territory. The goal, in other words, is to get rid of the "alien" nationality, ethnic, or religious group and to seize control of the territory they had formerly inhabited. At one extreme of its spectrum, ethnic cleansing is closer to forced deportation or what has been called "population transfer"; the idea is to get people to move and the means are meant to be legal and semi-legal. At the other extreme, however, ethnic cleansing and genocide are distinguishable only by the ultimate intent. Here, both literally and figuratively, ethnic cleansing bleeds into genocide, as mass murder is committed in order to rid the land of a people.[164]

Ethnic cleansing, unlike genocide which aims at the physical destruction of a group, is primarily aimed at forcing a group to leave a given territory. This often leads to mass killing, since people refuse to leave and/or resist. Indeed, large scale massacres may characterise ethnic cleansing. However, the difference is in

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[162] *Prosecutor v Kambanda (Sentencing Judgment)* (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Trial Chamber I, Case No ICTR-97-23, 4 September 1998) [16].
[163] Naimark (2001) pp. 2-3.
[164] Naimark (2001) pp. 3-4.

intent; the aim of genocide is to physically destroy a group, whereas the goal of ethnic cleansing is merely its expulsion. Dulić understood the issue as such:

> intent constitutes a core aspect differentiating ethnocide [Dulić's preferred name for ethnic cleansing] and other crimes from genocide. While genocide constitutes a concerted effort at physical destruction of the targeted group, ethnocides aim at forcibly removing a people from a given territory.[165]

Whilst ethnocidal killings may reach large proportions, they are "*instrumental* in the sense that they aim to incite people to flee".[166]

Michael Mann recently proposed a theoretical model for explaining ethnic cleansing and mass killing in *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (2005). Although he is reserved in his use of genocide, the number of which, he claimed, "remain thankfully few",[167] he nonetheless believed "they are flanked by more numerous cases of less severe but nonetheless murderous cleansing."[168] This introduces his preferred term, murderous ethnic cleansing, which describes the more serious cases of mass killing. Mann presented eight theses in the form of preconditions and processes which he believed explain this phenomenon.[169] Perhaps his most interesting one, in the sense that it challenges one of the core defining characteristics of genocide, intent, is the claim that murderous ethnic cleansing "is rarely the initial intent of perpetrators. It is rare to find evil geniuses plotting mass murder from the very beginning. Not even

[165] Dulić (2005) p. 15.
[166] Dulić (2005) p. 15 (Italics in original).
[167] Mann (2005) p. 2.
[168] Mann (2005) p. 2.
[169] Mann (2005) pp. 2-10.

Hitler did so."[170] Murderous ethnic cleansing usually happens when milder attempts to achieve the desired results fail. Mann did not argue "that murderous cleansing is accidental, only that it is far more complex and contingent than blame-centered theories allow. It is eventually perpetrated deliberately, but the route to deliberation is usually a circuitous one."[171] A number of explanations for Chetnik mass killing have presented it as a premeditated plan, plotted almost from the very beginning. This supposition, however, is questionable. Mann's view is probably more accurate:

> The perpetrators may be ideologically determined from quite early on to rid themselves of the ethnic out-group, and when milder methods fail, they almost logically seem to escalate with resolute determination to overcome all obstacles by more and more radical means.[172]

This is an important point; any attempt to demonstrate genocidal intent should be conscious of the contingent nature of genocide, ethnic cleansing (ethnocide), and other forms of mass killing.

## The Ideology of Great Serbism

Given that a number of scholars have declared that the Chetnik Movement's crimes were motivated by the Great Serb ideology that imbued its leadership and rank and file, it is worthwhile to briefly examine the fundamental tenets and history of this creed. It has been argued that Great Serbism emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century to grow and transform

[170] Mann (2005) p. 7.
[171] Mann (2005) p. 8.
[172] Mann (2005) pp. 7-8.

> into not only political doctrine and cultural chauvinism but also dangerous extremism ... Political extremism which includes the ideological conviction of the right of one nation to impose its will onto that of another is a basic tenet of Greater Serbian ambitions.[173]

The most important goal of Great Serbism is the creation of a Great Serbia, a state that encompasses all, or at least most, Serbs and the lands they inhabit. Prior to the ethnic cleansing of the 1990s, Serbs lived throughout much of the former Yugoslavia,[174] intermingled with a number of other nations, and any attempt to unite all Serbs in one state invariably meant incorporating large numbers of non-Serbs as well. It is argued that Great Serbism overrides the national aspirations of these other nations in the interests of the Serbian nation, and is thus chauvinistic.

Other scholars, however, have rejected the notion of Great Serbism as it is commonly understood. The British historian John B. Allcock argued that

> [p]ossibly the most generally cited but completely misunderstood of the uses of space in relation to the imagination of the South Slav nations has been the idea of "Great Serbia". It has become commonplace to present this is if there has been an agreed, explicit and consistent conception of the ideal territorial extension of a Serbian state ... This vision of a consistently conceived ideal space which defines "Serbia" is a severe distortion of history.[175]

If the central aim of nationalism is to ensure the congruence of the national and political unit, as argued by Ernest Gellner,[176] then what is commonly referred to

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[173] Beljo (1993).
[174] See Maps 1, 2 & 4.
[175] Allcock (2000) p. 343.
[176] Gellner (1983) p. 1.

as Great Serbism is the expression of this goal, the realisation of which has been greatly hampered by the complex national mosaic of the lands which Serbs inhabit. Every attempt to unite the Serbian nation in one political body has inevitably challenged other nations' national objectives, with conflict almost always being the outcome.

As mentioned earlier, the problem with any explanation for Chetnik behaviour that presents it as a matter of the implementation of ideology is that it is overly simplistic and straightforward. It ignores, or at best minimises, the contingent and multifaceted nature of human actions; whilst ideology may be the guiding principle, a great number of other, often unrelated, factors shape what eventually happens. This is what the American philosopher James Danaher called the "fallacy of the single real essence",[177] which is the "fallacious tendency to suppose that a concept (like a disease) which human beings construct out of their own judgment would have a single cause, rather than multiple ones."[178] People "imagine a one-to-one relationship between cause and effect for the sake of our understanding and then we conceptualise the world that way."[179] Explaining the Chetnik Movement's national policy as the implementation of ideology (a single cause) is a gross oversimplification and does little to further our understanding.

[177] Danaher (1999).
[178] Danaher (1999).
[179] Danaher (1999).

## The Nature of the Chetnik Movement

Since the end of the Second World War, it has been argued that the Chetnik Movement was a centralised and disciplined organisation headed by Mihailović. An example of this thinking can be found in the indictment presented at the general's trial:

> Between him and the perpetrators of the crimes there existed a relationship of the absolute subordination of the perpetrators of the crimes towards him, a relationship which made possible the application of severe measures on the part of Draža Mihailović against any member of his organisation who dared to refuse to carry out an order issued by him.[180]

More recently, Dizdar declared that by the end of 1941 "all Chetnik organisations were under the single command of Draža Mihailović."[181] Furthermore, Mihailović "clearly defined the methods and aims of the Chetniks and Serb policy during the Second World War",[182] and gave out specific orders to his commanders to forcibly expel and massacre enemy nations as outlined in Order Number 370, a document that "finally rejects"[183] any suspicion that Mihailović did not harbour genocidal aims. Chetnik crimes, according to this view, were a direct result of the implementation of a policy formulated by Mihailović and carried out by the cohesive and disciplined organisation that he controlled.

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[180] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 58.
[181] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 96. See also Dizdar ((2002) p. 77).
[182] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 97.
[183] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 97.

The Chetnik Movement, however, was disorganised and fragmented, and Mihailović's level of control over it was negligible.[184] An expert on the movement described it as being composed of "local self-defense units, marauding bands of Serb villagers, anti-Partisan auxiliaries, forcibly mobilized peasants, and armed refugees, which a small group of uncaptured Yugoslav officers was attempting without success to mold into an organized fighting force."[185] Another specialist described Mihailović's position in the movement:

> With the exception of the flying brigades and later the shock corps, the Chetnik army remained throughout the war a loose agglomeration of forces, a sort of territorial militia, nominally under the command of Mihailović – in some cases various units being under his direct command – but in fact many units often acting quite independently.[186]

Karchmar provided perhaps the best description of Mihailović's role: "his function seems to have more and more degenerated into that of the icon over the church alter, which is worshipped but which does not run the church."[187]

The divided and chaotic character of the Chetnik Movement poses a challenge for those who wish to demonstrate that it pursued a particular policy. How could this loose agglomeration of armed Serb bands, which was far from united, formulate and implement a clear policy or pursue any serious goals? The answer is found, some might argue, in the Chetniks' Great Serb ideology which

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[184] Karchmar (1973) pp. 534-537, 933-935, 936, 939, 942; Milazzo (1975) pp. 140-143, 185-186; Nikolić (2009) p. 42; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 182-183, 185, 467.
[185] Milazzo (1975) p. 186.
[186] Tomasevich (1975) p. 182.
[187] Karchmar (1973) p. 942.

made it unnecessary for the leadership to devise and effect policy since this ideology motivated the Chetniks and directed their behaviour. Great Serbism was, in effect, the glue that held the Chetnik Movement together, steered its thinking and conduct during the war, and would serve as its guiding principles after the war.

It is not with a little apprehension that the term Chetnik Movement is employed in this thesis to refer to the collection of armed units that operated in Yugoslavia during the Second World War and recognised Mihailović as their leader. The use of the word movement is liable to create the impression of a cohesiveness, discipline, and unity that was decidedly lacking. Given the unsuitability of the alternatives,[188] the use of the term is something of a necessary evil. That said, whilst reading the following pages the reader should bear in mind the nature of the Chetnik Movement; whatever glue held it together – anti-communism, Great Serbism, Mihailović, monarchism, Serbian nationalism – was weak indeed.

## Aims

The primary aim of this thesis is to describe and analyse the national policy of the Chetnik Movement, and to focus on Mihailović's role in its formulation, development, and implementation. It will be argued that the

[188] Two of the most commonly employed alternatives are *Ravnogorski Pokret* (Ravna Gora Movement) and *Jugoslovenska Vojska u Otadžbini* (Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland) which do not describe the entire movement, since the former refers to a section of its political wing and the latter to its military arm.

Chetnik national policy was composed of two parts: (1) the *postwar national policy*, which addressed the future of Yugoslavia and its peoples after the war, and dealt with such matters as the borders, national composition, political system, and state arrangement of the Yugoslav lands; and (2) the *wartime national policy*, which refers to the conduct and policies towards the populace during the war. These two components of the national policy will be viewed as separate entities for the purposes of this study. That said, one of the aims of this thesis is to ascertain whether there was a relationship between the two, and how it manifested itself. Another aim is to determine whether either part of the national policy changed during the war, in what ways, and for what reasons. Finally, some conclusions about the national policy of the Chetnik Movement will be made.

Any examination of the Chetnik Movement's national policy must inevitably address the question of whether it was genocidal in nature, and whether the Chetniks committed genocide. This thesis will examine evidence for and against the aforementioned hypothesis of those writers who argue that the Chetniks perpetrated genocide against the Croats and Muslims according to a plan formulated by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership, in an attempt to ascertain its accuracy. Such a task is complicated by the failure of most of these writers to adequately define genocide, as well as the absence of a single, generally accepted definition of genocide amongst experts in the field of genocide studies which would provide a theoretical model against which to test the hypothesis that the Chetniks committed genocide. As such, the national policy of the Chetnik

Movement must be examined against a number of definitions of genocide, some of which vary greatly.

Despite the multitude of definitions of genocide, it appears that Dulić's three dimensional approach encompasses most of them. Genocide must be conceptualised, it must be implemented, and it must result in human deaths. All three dimensions will be examined in this study, although the question of the number of victims will be deferred till the concluding chapter. Given that most genocide scholars place great importance on demonstrating intent, the evidence employed to substantiate the allegation that the Chetniks intended to commit genocide – a number of programmatic documents – will be critically examined and analysed to determine if they indeed reveal genocidal intent. If this evidence is measured against a hard definition of genocide, it is necessary to show that actions were part of a centrally-planned and coordinated purposive plan for the physical elimination of a target group. Demonstrating intent in this manner, however, is notoriously difficult since it is rare for perpetrators to openly announce their plans, or leave documentary evidence lying around.[189] The absence of such proof is undoubtedly one of the appeals of soft definitions, which

[189] As an example, no document has been found produced by the Nazi leadership calling for the wholesale killing of Jews. The minutes of the Wannsee Conference (20 January 1942), commonly viewed as one of the most important meetings in the conceptualisation of the Nazi genocide against the Jews of Europe, speak only of plans for the "emigration" and "evacuation of the Jews to the East" (Minutes of the Wannsee Conference, 20 January 1942). It should be noted that important parts of the conference were omitted from the minutes, as explained by Adolf Eichmann, one of the participants, at his trial in 1962. He explained that towards the end of the meeting, cognac was served and the conversation became less restrained: "The gentlemen were standing together or sitting together and were discussing the subject quite bluntly, quite differently from the language which I had to use later in the record. During the conversation they minced no words about it at all ... they spoke about methods of killing, about liquidation, about extermination". (Quoted in Cesarani (2005) p. 114).

argue that actions constitute genocide if they are "perpetrated with the knowledge *or reasonable expectation* that they will destroy a human group in whole or in part."[190] Another reason why intent is not always easy to establish is that often genocide is not the initial aim of perpetrators, but happens when milder methods of eliminating a target group fail.

The definition of ethnic cleansing is far less contentious and examples of it, insofar as they can be found, will be presented. Given that the aim of ethnic cleansing is to remove rather than exterminate a population, evidence for this would constitute documents ordering or calling for the expulsion of undesirable peoples from a given territory, as well as actions undertaken to achieve this. Although mass killings might take place during ethnic cleansing, they are not the primary aim of perpetrators. It must be remembered that whilst ethnic cleansing may be the initial goal, it may turn in to genocide if it does not succeed in expelling a target population, and perpetrators deem it desirable to adopt harsher methods to attain their goals.

## Methodology

Much of the writing on the national policy of the Chetnik Movement creates the impression that it was rigid and did not alter throughout the war.[191] One of the main aims of this thesis is to ascertain whether it changed over time

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[190] Jones (2006) p. 21 (Italics in original).
[191] In a sense, it echoes the accusation made at Mihailović's trial that "[f]rom beginning to end … Mihailović inspired his organisation with chauvinistic hatred against the other peoples of Yugoslavia, in the first place against the Croatian people and the Muslim population." (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 55).

and what forces precipitated this change if it did indeed occur, and it is for this reason, amongst others, that a narrative methodology has been adopted. Another reason is that most of the aforementioned works on Mihailović and his movement are written in the narrative form.[192] A narrative is, according to the English historian Lawrence Stone, "the organization of material in a chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story, albeit with subplots."[193] A narrative, however, is not merely the compilation of facts in consecutive order in the manner of an annalist; it is, to quote Stone once again, "directed by some "pregnant principle"",[194] it "possesses a theme and an argument."[195] The American historian J. H. Hexter believed that the narrative is the "most common mode of explanation"[196] employed by historians, which suggests that it is particularly suited to the purposes of this thesis. Indeed, it is widely believed that narratives are universal to humanity. Theodore Sarbin, an American psychologist, declared that the use of narratives is "endemic enough to the human condition to propose the narrative principle: that human beings think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices according to narrative structure."[197] The philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre argued that people make sense of their world through story because they are "essentially a story telling animal".[198]

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[192] See "Literature" in this chapter.
[193] Stone (1979) p. 3.
[194] Stone (1979) p. 4.
[195] Stone (1979) p. 4.
[196] Hexter (1971) p. 71.
[197] Sarbin (1986) p. 8.
[198] MacIntyre (1984) p. 216.

It should be noted that the traditional view of the narrative as a record of the past as "how it really was (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*)",[199] to quote the famous words of the nineteenth century German historian Leopold von Ranke, has been widely criticised in the latter half of the twentieth century. The American historian Hayden White argued that

> narrative is not merely a neutral discursive form that may or may not be used to represent real events in their aspect as developmental process but rather entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications.[200]

Roland Barthes, a French linguist, believed that the narrative is a "particular form of fiction"[201] where the historian "tries to give the impression that the referent [the past] is speaking for itself".[202] John Lewis Gaddis described it as "the rearrangement of reality to suit our purposes."[203] None of these statements, however, should be taken to mean that the narrative should be dispensed with as a method of enquiry; rather, they serve as reminders of its nature and ubiquitousness.

Although this thesis is concerned with the postwar plans of the Chetnik Movement and its efforts to address the national question during the war, it was felt that some background information was necessary to place the national policy in its historical context. For this reason, the first chapter looks at the history of

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[199] Carr (1961) p. 3.
[200] White (1987) p. ix.
[201] Barthes (1970) pp. 145-155.
[202] Barthes (1970) pp. 145-155.
[203] Gaddis (2002) p. 20.

Yugoslavia from its creation in 1918 to its destruction in 1941, as well as at the momentous events of 1941 which set the stage for the creation of the Mihailović movement. The formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes at the end of the First World War is taken as the starting point of the narrative since this was the moment when the majority of lands inhabited by the South Slavs[204] were unified in to a single state, and when their elites had it within their power to address the national question, a problem which had hitherto largely been the responsibility of foreign masters.[205] Whilst long-term historical forces, such as the modernisation of the South Slav lands,[206] the appearance and rise of nationalism, the emergence and development of the idea of Yugoslavism, and the weakening of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, were of great importance to subsequent events, they will not be discussed as it was felt that this would render this study too broad and unwieldy.

The narrative focuses on the Second World War since this was the period during which the Chetnik Movement existed and struggled with the national question, which is the focus of this thesis. The periodisation posed something of a challenge, but it was decided to divide the story according to year, so that a chapter is devoted to 1941, 1942, and 1943. The sixth chapter covers events from January 1944 until May 1945, that is, until the conclusion of the war in

[204] The seven largest South Slav nations are the Bosniaks (Muslims), Bulgarians, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes.
[205] Whilst Montenegro and Serbia had existed as independent states since 1878, they were nationally homogenous until the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and did not really have to deal with an internal national question. Both states, however, had to address the question of the fate of the large number of Montenegrins, Serbs, and other South Slavs who lived beyond their borders.
[206] See Allcock (2000), especially pp. 12-26.

Yugoslavia. The advantages of such a periodisation are its neatness and the unambiguous nature of the divisions. Walter R. Roberts segregated his monograph *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies, 1941-1945* (1973) in such a manner, so it is not without precedent. Dividing the story according to Mihailović's location – Serbia from May 1941 to June 1942, Montenegro from June 1942 to May 1943, Serbia from May 1943 to September 1944, Bosnia from September 1944 to May 1945 – was considered, but it was decided that it would have resulted in one chapter (the period in Montenegro) being far too long.

As previously discussed, one of the aims of this thesis is to determine whether the national policy of the Chetnik Movement changed over the course of the war. Regarding the postwar national policy, this study will look not only at programmatic documents specifically addressing this issue, but also at other evidence, such as orders, propaganda, telegrams, and public and private statements by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership. It must, however, be remembered that public statements, such as propaganda, did not always necessarily reveal what the leadership sincerely thought or planned. Regarding the wartime national policy, this thesis will look at documentary material produced for both public and private viewing, as well as at the actual conduct of the Chetnik Movement during the war. Even though the Chetniks did not win the Yugoslav Civil War and were not able to enact any of their postwar plans, the war provided them with the opportunity to implement some of their national policy goals; the extent to which the conflict was exploited will be examined in the following pages.

Whilst the emphasis is on Mihailović's role in the formulation, development, and implementation of the Chetnik Movement's national policy, much will be said about how this process was shaped by a number of important military and political figures who constituted the leadership of the Chetnik Movement. Of particular interest are a number of intellectuals and politicians who became Mihailović's closest advisors, as well as the heads of the regional commands, administrative zones throughout occupied Yugoslavia created by Mihailović and entrusted to a handful of figures. The regional commanders were, in theory at least, the second tier of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland (*Jugoslovenska Vojska u Otadžbini* – JVO) command structure, subservient to Mihailović and the High Command, and in turn masters of the corps – the basic units of the JVO – within their command's jurisdiction.[207] These key players in the drama of the Chetnik Movement's short existence will become familiar in the following pages.

## Sources

This thesis employs materials from a number of sources, all of which will be subjected to critical evaluation, something that is particularly important given the haphazard manner in which some of the documentary evidence has been employed by scholars in the past. Writers on the subject of the Chetnik Movement have typically cited a number of key documents to illustrate its national policy, most of which have been mentioned in the preceding discussion. The most important are undoubtedly (in chronological order) Moljević's

[207] Karchmar (1973) pp. 527-529. See Appendix 3.

*Homogenous Serbia*,[208] the program of the Belgrade Committee,[209] Order Number 370,[210] letters by Stevan Moljević and Dragiša Vasić,[211] the Resolutions of the Šahovići Conference,[212] and the Resolutions of the Ba Congress.[213] Some of these documents, despite their ubiquitous nature, are problematic. The only one bearing Mihailović's signature is actually a forgery,[214] and its widespread use in the historiography serves as a reminder of the need to adequately criticise sources.[215] The remaining documents were produced by other personalities in the Chetnik Movement and may not have even been seen by Mihailović, let alone had his approval. The extent to which they represent official policy is therefore questionable. Another problem with these programmatic documents is that they have not always been adequately analysed. Given that one of the fundamental assumptions in much of the historiography is that a direct relationship exists between programs and policies, it is necessary to examine these documents in detail, and to determine, insofar as it is possible, how they influenced behaviour.

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[208] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 37-39, 93; Dizdar (2002) pp. 71-73; Dulić (2005) pp. 110-111; Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 19-20; Nikolić (1999) Volume II, pp. 385-386; Redžić (2005) pp. 123-124; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 166-169; Tucaković (1995) p. 10; Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 41-44.
[209] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 96-97; Dizdar (2002) pp. 77-79; Dulić (2005) p. 111; Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 20; Karchmar (1973) pp. 570-571; Marjanović (1959) pp. 179-180; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 169-170.
[210] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 40, 97; Dizdar (2002) p. 79; Dulić (2005) p. 112; Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 20-21; Marjanović (1959) pp. 180-181; Milazzo (1975) p. 46; Redžić (2005) pp. 131-132; Tomasevich (1975) p. 170; Tucaković (1995) p. 11; Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 46-47.
[211] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 39, 94; Dizdar (2002) p. 73; Dulić (2005) pp. 112-113; Tucaković (1995) p. 12; Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 47, 48-49.
[212] Dulić (2005) pp. 113-114; Karchmar (1973) pp. 578-580; Redžić (2005) pp. 147-148; Tomasevich (1975) p. 171; Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 48.
[213] Dizdar (2002) pp. 86-87; Dulić (2005) pp. 294-295; Karchmar (1973) pp. 602-603; Milazzo (1975) pp. 166-168; Redžić (2005) pp. 152-153; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 399-404; Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 56-71.
[214] See Appendix 2.
[215] See Howell & Prevenier (2001).

This thesis relies primarily on documentary material produced by the Chetnik Movement. Many of the most important documents can be found in the fourteenth volume of the *Zbornik Dokumenata i Podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom Ratu Jugoslovenskih Naroda* series, which, despite the ideological hostility of the editors towards Mihailović and his movement, is nonetheless quite a good compendium.[216] Even so, a collection of less than 1,000 documents from an archive that contains approximately 75,000 documents[217] can not hope to be as thorough as one would hope. It is for this reason that use was made of the documents in the Chetnik Archive (*Četnička Arhiva*) of the Military Archive (*Vojni Arhiv*)[218] in Belgrade, Serbia. Owing to time constraints, it was not possible to examine all of the material, so the documents produced by the most important sections of the Chetnik Movement were analysed: the High Command, Advance Section of the High Command (*Istaknuti deo Vrhovne Komande*), various Regional Commands, and some NDH units.[219] Archival material held in a number of other institutions was also employed.[220]

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[216] Fifteen volumes were produced in this series, each containing a number of books: Volume I: Serbia (21 books); Volume I: High Command of the National Liberation Army (15 books); Volume III: Montenegro (10 books); Volume IV: Bosnia and Hercegovina (35 books); Volume V: Croatia (38 books); Volume VI; Slovenia (16 books); Volume VII: Macedonia (3 books); Volume VIII: Operations on the Adriatic (3 books); Volume IX: Party-Political (9 books); Volume X: Airforce (2 books); Volume XI: Yugoslav Army (3 books); Volume XII: Germany (4 books); Volume XIII: Italy (3 books); Volume XIV: Chetnik Movement (4 books); Volume XV: Hungary (1 book).
[217] Nikolić (1999) Volume I, p. 17.
[218] Formerly known as the Archive of the Military History Institute (*Arhiv Vojnoistorijskog Instituta*).
[219] See the Bibliography for information on the archival material researched. The structure of the Chetnik Movement is illustrated in Appendix 3.
[220] See Bibliography.

Chapter II

# Historical Background

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (*Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*) was created at the end of the First World War by representatives of Montenegro, the Kingdom of Serbia, and parts of the vanquished Austro-Hungarian Empire inhabited by South Slavs.[1] Although the movement for South Slav unity had appeared in the middle of the nineteenth century, it took on greater importance during the First World War when the circumstances for the founding of such a state emerged. Undoubtedly, the most important question facing the men who sought to erect this common home for the South Slavs was what type of political system should be established, that is, what state organisation would satisfy the national aspirations of the many peoples who lived in this nationally mixed corner of Europe.[2] This challenge is commonly referred

[1] Excellent works on this subject include Banac (1984), Djordjevic (1980), Dragnich (1974), Ekmečić (1989), and Stanković (1984).
[2] See Maps 1, 2 & 4.

to as the Yugoslav national question. Ljubo Boban, a prominent Yugoslav historian, was correct when he wrote that

> [f]rom the first day of the creation of Yugoslavia, the national question became one of the most important questions of the common state of the South Slav nations. It was inseparable from the question of the state's arrangement and it manifested itself in the first place as a question of the organisation of a common state.[3]

In the general euphoria that accompanied the Allied victory, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the liberation and unification of the South Slavs in to a single country, the complexity of the national question and its potential to cause great difficulties was largely overlooked.

## The First Yugoslavia

Astute observers, however, might have noted the difficulties in creating a common South Slav homeland given the important differences between the peoples and regions that comprised the new state.[4] Its inhabitants belonged to a number of Slavic and non-Slavic national groups. They spoke numerous languages, not all of which were related. Confessionally, they were adherents of Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Islam, and Protestantism. Much of the new state was economically backward and poor, a situation exacerbated by the destruction wrought by the war. Perhaps most importantly, the numerous national groups

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[3] Boban (1965) p. 9.

[4] One such individual was Stjepan Radić, the leader of the Croatian People's Peasant Party. At a meeting of the Central Committee of the National Council of the short-lived State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs (29 October 1918 – 1 December 1918) on 24 November, he warned against the decision to send a delegation to Belgrade, describing the other members as "roaming like a goose in the fog" (Dragnich (1983) p. 10).

had divergently different visions on what the country should look like.[5] All of these factors would conspire to frustrate the establishment of a successful South Slav state.

The result of the election held in November 1920 for a constituent assembly was highly revelatory of the mood of the people and their attitude towards the new country.[6] The Serbs, who were the most numerous nation,[7] were divided between the Democratic Party, which garnered most of its support amongst the *prečani* Serbs, and the Radical Party, whose support base was in Serbia. This reflected differences between *prečani* Serbs and *srbijanci*, but also between two views of Yugoslavia; whilst the Radicals wanted a centralised state in the mould of the prewar Kingdom of Serbia, the Democrats were more open to a federal structure. That said, most Serb politicians considered the creation of Yugoslavia as the final stage in the process of the liberation and unification of the Serbian people; the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes appeared to have satisfactorily solved the Serbian national question.[8]

Whilst a number of Croats played a key role in the formation of Yugoslavia, to the surprise of many, the election propelled a hitherto small and

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[5] The Croat historian Ivo Banac argued that "Yugoslavia's national question was the expression of the conflicting national ideologies that have evolved in each of its numerous national and confessional communities, reflecting the community's historical experiences ... Since Yugoslavia's national question was, more than anything, an expression of mutually exclusive national ideologies, the chances for its internal stability were not very good. Worse still, the chances for a workable democratic system in such a polity also were very slim." (Banac (1984) pp. 406, 413).
[6] See Appendix 4.
[7] There were approximately 5,645,000 Serbs in Yugoslavia in 1931, constituting 40.51 per cent of the entire population of the state (Kočović (1990) p. 130).
[8] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 17.

insignificant party,[9] the Croatian People's Peasant Party, to predominance, having won the majority of Croat votes. The party and its leader, Stjepan Radić, believed that the new state was a misfortune for the Croatian nation; at a rally in Zagreb in February 1919, Radić demanded a Croat republic with its own national assembly.[10] To emphasise the party's goal of independence, its name was changed to the Croat Republican Peasant Party immediately after the election. Worse still for the fledgling state, Radić and his party's delegates boycotted the constituent assembly, which enabled the Democrats and Radicals to secure the support of a number of smaller parties and pass a constitution (commonly referred to as the *Vidovdan* Constitution) that created a centralised state and sowed the seeds for the political woes that would bedevil Yugoslavia for the next two decades.

The new state was wracked by numerous difficulties of top of these political problems. Much of the countryside had been devastated by war, and the government experienced difficulties establishing order; banditry was not uncommon, and in Kosovo and Metohija the Albanian population was in rebellion. Great tracts of the best arable land, particularly in the former Austro-Hungarian territories, were held by a small number of landowners, whilst large sections of the peasantry, especially Serbs from the poor mountainous regions of Bosnia and Dalmatia, wanted radical land reforms to solve the related problems

[9] In the last prewar Croatian National Assembly, this party held only three seats in a parliament of eighty-eight delegates (Tomasevich (2001) p. 9 (Footnote 12)). It should be pointed out that this was at least partly due to the restrictive election laws.
[10] Biondich (2000) p. 163.

of rural poverty and severe agrarian overpopulation.[11] Italian troops remained in parts of Dalmatia hoping to secure these territories for Italy, and almost all of the new state's neighbours coveted parts of its dominion.[12]

Throughout the first half of the 1920s, Radić agitated for an independent Croatia. Numerous appeals were sent to the great powers and League of Nations, but when this failed to produce any results, he travelled to the Soviet Union in 1924 where he joined the Peasant International (*Krestintern*) in an effort to gain support for an independent Croatia. Upon his return to Yugoslavia, he was arrested and imprisoned. Conscious of the fruitlessness of his efforts to secure foreign support, Radić took advantage of the split between the Democrats and Radicals to adopt new tactics; the republican was dropped from the party's name, and it was declared that the aim was a federative Croatia within Yugoslavia. Upon his release from prison he shocked almost everyone by forming a coalition government with the Radicals in March 1925. Nonetheless, political chaos, bitter disagreements, and widespread corruption characterised Yugoslav politics during the remainder of the decade. The heated parliamentary debates climaxed on 20 June 1928, when a delegate of the Radical Party shot five Croat Peasant Party deputies, including Radić who died a few weeks later. Parliamentary delegates belonging to the Croat Peasant Party and a number of other parties left the

[11] Allcock (2000) pp. 165-168; Dulić (2005) p. 328; Warriner (1964) pp. 59-81. Wilbert Moore (1945) estimated that in the first half of the 1940s, Yugoslavia had a 'surplus' rural population of 61.5 per cent (pp. 63-64).
[12] Five of Yugoslavia's seven neighbours (Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Italy) coveted Yugoslav lands.

national assembly in protest, and on 6 January 1929, King Alexander instituted a dictatorship.

Alexander adopted a new approach to solving the national question based on the concept of integral Yugoslavism.[13] The country was renamed Yugoslavia, a new authoritarian constitution was enacted, and all South Slavs were declared to belong to a single nation, the Yugoslav nation. The state was divided in to nine administrative units called *Banovine* which bore no relation to the historical regions that comprised Yugoslavia. The aim of this policy was to replace the old national identities with a new Yugoslav one. Although Alexander's dictatorship was widely condemned at the time,[14] especially by Croats for whom it was all the more onerous since it was a 'Serb' dictatorship, with the passage of time, this view has been somewhat ameliorated. Tomislav Dulić's assessment appears balanced: "Considering the overall situation, it seems reasonable to characterise King Alexander's dictatorship – however flawed and undemocratic – as an attempt to control the centrifugal forces that developed with the "ethnification" of democracy and a deepening economic crisis after 1929."[15] It is not known if Alexander's policies would have solved the national question in the long-term; he was felled by an assassin's bullet in Marseilles in October 1934.

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[13] Dimić (2000) pp. 333-349; Troch (2010) pp. 227-244.
[14] One of the king's most vocal critics was a Serb, Svetozar Pribićević, the leader of the Independent Democratic Party, a splinter group of the Democratic Party formed in 1924. Pribićević went in to self imposed exile after the institution of the dictatorship, where he published *La Dictature du roi Alexandre: Contribution à l' étude de la Démocratie* in 1933.
[15] Dulić (2005) p. 329.

Without Alexander's authority and strength, the dictatorship began to weaken under mounting domestic and international pressures. Since the heir to the throne was underage, a three man regency was named, headed by the late king's first cousin, Prince Paul. The regency released the new leader of the Croat Peasant Party, Vladko Maček, from prison, and called an election. Although the election held in May 1935 was neither free nor fair, it did have the important result of leading to the formation of the United Opposition, consisting of the old opposition parties (the Croat Peasant Party and Democratic Party) as well as the Agrarian Union and Yugoslav Muslim Organisation. The new prime minister, Milan Stojadinović, failed to institute any major political reforms, in particular those which might have solved the national question.

International events, however, forced the regime to come to an agreement with its internal opponents. In the latter half of 1938, the question of the German minority within Czechoslovakia was exploited by Hitler's Germany to pressure the Czechoslovak government in to handing over large parts of its territory. This event undoubtedly frightened Prince Paul and the ruling elite to action, and in February 1939, Stojadinović was replaced with Dragiša Cvetković who began talks with Maček about solving the Croatian question. Unlike on previous occasions, Maček was in a much stronger bargaining position since the government feared that Yugoslavia's internal difficulties might be exploited by aggressive nations such as Germany and Italy. Maček encouraged these fears; on 1 August he warned that if Croatia did not receive autonomy, it would secede from Yugoslavia, even though this might lead to civil war and Croatia might

become a German protectorate.[16] This is precisely what had happened in Czechoslovakia. Cvetković came to an agreement with Maček – the famous *Sporazum*[17] – on 26 August 1939, which established the Croat *Banovina*.[18] The first step towards the federalisation of Yugoslavia had been taken.

The new arrangement was not without its opponents. In the immediate aftermath of the signing of the *Sporazum*,[19] there was a flurry of conferences and meetings, and the publication of brochures and leaflets, particularly amongst the *prečani* Serbs. Some 768,000 Serbs found themselves within the new Croat *Banovina*,[20] and they organised meetings throughout the heavily Serb populated regions of Banija, northern Dalmatia, Kordun, Lika, and Slavonia,[21] and sent delegations and petitions to Belgrade requesting that districts with sizeable Serbian populations be removed from the *Banovina*.[22] Similar gatherings took place in Bosnia and Hercegovina, where the majority of the Serb bourgeoisie sought to ensure that these two provinces became part of any future Serb federal unit.[23] The *Sporazum* and the establishment of the Croat *Banovina* had opened up the question of the formation of a Serb territorial unit within Yugoslavia.[24]

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[16] "Matchek is for Croat secession with Reich aid if Serbs stand pat", *The New York Times* (New York), 2 August 1939, p. 10.
[17] See Boban (1965).
[18] See Map 2. The best work on the *Sporazum* is undoubtedly Boban (1965).
[19] The reaction of Serb bourgeois politicians to the *Sporazum* and the question of the reorganisation of the state is examined in Stefanovski ((1988) pp. 33-88).
[20] Pavlowitch (2002) p. 132.
[21] Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 17; Regan (2008) pp. 408-414.
[22] Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 16-17; Regan (2008) pp. 408-414.
[23] Dujmović (2005) p. 62.
[24] Dujmović (2005) p. 55; Stefanovski (1988) p. 34.

## The Serb Cultural Club

Possibly the most important group of Serb intellectuals who debated the future of the Serbian nation and Yugoslavia was assembled in the Serb Cultural Club (*Srpski Kulturni Klub*), an organisation composed of members of the Serbian cultural, economic, intellectual, military, and political elite founded in late 1936 or early 1937.[25] Although it was not a political party, it contained a number of men who were active in politics, as well as a number of academics and intellectuals.[26] The Serb Cultural Club placed great faith in the Serb intelligentsia, which, as one of the society's ideologues argued, was the only group in Serbian society capable of transcending party affiliations and providing the Serbian people with a "single true great program".[27] The society emerged at a time when Serb political forces were fragmented, and it presented itself as a unifying force around which Serbs could congregate to defend and promote Serb interests.[28] Its official publication, *Srpski Glas*, was widely read within Yugoslav intellectual and political circles,[29] and became an important forum in which the national question was discussed.

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[25] Dimić (2001) p. 361; Regan (2008) p. 397.
[26] The Serb Cultural Club had seventy founding members, twenty-two of whom were professors at Belgrade University and other universities. Other members included high ranking state functionaries, representatives of banking and industrial corporations, military officers, and artists and professionals (Popović (2003) p. 212).
[27] Nikola Stojanović, "Srpska inteligencija pred novim zadacima", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 23, 18 April 1940, in Dimić (2001) pp. 361-362.
[28] "Srpski kulturni klub izabrao je sinoć svoju upravu", *Politika* (Belgrade), 5 February 1937, p. 9.
[29] Dragoljub Jovanović, the leader of the leftist People's Agrarian Party, a splinter group of the Agrarian Union, although he disliked the content of the journal, was forced to concede that it had "instant and great success" (Quoted in Milovanović (1986) p. 221).

The Serb Cultural Club vehemently opposed the *Sporazum*;[30] one of its ideologues described it as the "Serb Munich".[31] Whilst the society was not against an agreement with the Croats, it sought one in which "purely Serb"[32] districts did not remain within the Croat *Banovina*:

> We want an agreement, but according to certain principles. Either ethnic, or historic, or economic-geographic. And for the entire territory upon which Serbs and Croats live. We do not think to ever leave the districts which are purely Serb in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Slavonia in the Croat *Banovina*.[33]

The Croat political leadership was criticised for seeking to "mark its national territory, that is, to receive a separate territory within the widest ethnic and historic borders, and with the widest sphere of authority".[34] Furthermore, it was claimed that the Croats were possessed of a "spirit of bargaining",[35] which "instead of an affirmative and healthy, creative and reasonable attitude towards the state, brought a negative and unhealthy, destructive and irrational attitude".[36]

The club's ideologues wrote about the national character of the various regions of Yugoslavia, especially those they deemed to be Serbian. Vojvodina was

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[30] Stefanovski (1988) pp. 49-51.
[31] Regan (2008) p. 404.
[32] "Sporazum ili nesporazum", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 12, 1 February 1940, in Dimić (2001) p. 373.
[33] "Sporazum ili nesporazum", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 12, 1 February 1940, in Dimić (2001) p. 373.
[34] "Sporazum ili nesporazum", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade) Issue 12, 1 February 1940, in Dimić (2001) p. 373.
[35] *Duh nagodbaštva*. Dragoslav Stranjakaović, "Hrvati i sporazum od 26.08.1939 godine", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 7, 28 December 1939, in Dimić (2001) p. 365.
[36] Dragoslav Stranjakaović, "Hrvati i sporazum od 26.08.1939 godine", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 7, 28 December 1939, in Dimić (2001) p. 365.

described as possessing a "Serbian character",[37] and any suggestion that Macedonia be granted autonomy was rejected, as was the idea that the Macedonians constituted a separate nation; "It is entirely funny when the inhabitants of South Serbia call themselves 'Macedonians' or when others call them that. Since there is no Macedonia, there can not be any Macedonians."[38] The territorial aspirations of the Serb *Banovina* were hinted at:

> Today when from certain quarters the Serbian character of Vojvodina is questioned, when autonomy is sought for South Serbia, when there is talk of a separate Bosnian *Banovina*, it is more important than ever for all Serbs in the Kingdom to unite in one camp, and to single-mindedly and unified defend Serb interests and the interests of our common state.[39]

The Serb Cultural Club sought to ensure that Yugoslavia was federalised along national lines to ensure the unification of all Serbs in one political unit, a position perhaps best summed up by the title of an article in the fifth issue of *Srpski Glas*: "Wherever there are Serbs – there is Serbia."[40] It argued for the division of Yugoslavia in to three *Banovine*, a Croat, Serb, and Slovene, and rejected the existence of any other South Slav nations. Grand plans for the expulsion of undesirable populations were canvassed; one of its members, the academic Vaso Čubrilović, formulated a plan for the expulsion of the Albanian population which he presented as a public lecture in Belgrade on 7 March 1937.[41] As shall be seen,

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[37] D. D., "U znaku pokreta", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 15, 22 February 1940.
[38] Nikola Vulić, "Južna Srbija ili Makedonija", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 1, 16 November 1939.
[39] D. D., "U znaku pokreta", *Srpski Glas* (Belgrade), Issue 15, 22 February 1940.
[40] "Gde god je Srba – tu je Srbija", *Glas Srpski* (Belgrade), Issue 5, 14 December 1940, in Regan (2008) p. 405 (Footnote 35).
[41] Vaso Čubrilović, *Iseljavanje Arnauta,* 7 March 1937, Military Archive, Archive of the Royal Yugoslav Army, Box 69, Folder 4, Document 2.

some of the ideas discussed within the Serb Cultural Club – the predominance of Serb national interests, the recognition of only three South Slav nations, the creation of political units along national lines, and forced expulsion of entire populations as a tool for solving the national question – would reemerge during the Second World War as key components of the national policy of the Chetnik Movement.

## The New Order

Following his military victories in western Europe in the summer of 1940, Hitler turned his attention eastward. As part of the preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union, he sought to secure his southern flank by neutralising the only two states left in that part of Europe which were not allied to Germany: Greece and Yugoslavia.[42] Under German pressure, the Yugoslav government signed the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941, but two days later a group of officers launched a *coup d'état* in Belgrade, seized power, formed a new government headed by the leader of the coup, General Dušan Simović, and declared the seventeen year old heir to the throne, Peter, to be of age.[43] Germany and its allies attacked without warning on 6 April and overwhelmed the Royal Yugoslav Army, which was forced to capitulate eleven days later.[44] The young king and most of the government fled abroad.

[42] See Van Creveld (1973).
[43] See Čulinović (1956) and Milovanović (1960).
[44] The best study of the April War, as this conflict became known, can be found in Terzić (1982).

After the defeat of the Yugoslav armed forces, the country was carved up.[45] Large parts of it went to Germany and its allies – Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Italy[46] – and the remainder was divided in to three units: a reduced Serbia was placed under German military administration with a puppet regime headed by General Milan Nedić;[47] Montenegro was occupied by the Italians;[48] and a greatly enlarged Croatia was created and given to Ante Pavelić and his Ustaša Movement.[49] Within a short period of time, those Serbs outside of the borders of occupied Serbia found themselves facing discrimination, denationalisation, exploitation, forced resettlement, and, worst of all, extermination.

**The Independent State of Croatia**

The Ustaša Movement (*Ustaški Pokret*) was a small ultra-nationalistic terrorist organisation dedicated to the destruction of Yugoslavia and the creation of an independent Croatian state.[50] It was formed in 1930 by Ante Pavelić, a Zagreb lawyer and parliamentary delegate of the Croat Party of Rights who had left Yugoslavia in 1929 after the institution of the dictatorship.[51] In September 1932, the Ustaše staged an unsuccessful uprising in Lika,[52] but had greater success two years later when they helped coordinate the assassination of King

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[45] Descriptions of the partition of Yugoslavia can be found in Karchmar (1973) pp. 26-68; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 91-95; and Tomasevich (2001) pp. 47-82. See Maps 3 & 4.
[46] Karchmar (1973) pp. 43-54; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 83-174.
[47] Karchmar (1973) pp. 26-33; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 64-82, 175-232.
[48] Karchmar (1973) pp. 40-43; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 138-148.
[49] See Map 5.
[50] The Ustaša Movement and NDH are examined in Hory & Broszat (1964); Krizman (1978); Krizman (1980); Krizman (1983); Tomasevich (2001); and Trifković (2011).
[51] Tomasevich (2001) p. 30.
[52] Čulinović (1961) Volume II, pp. 58-59; Stojkov (1970) pp. 167-180; Tomasevich (2001) p. 33.

Alexander.[53] The movement's ideology was ultra-nationalistic, fascist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Serb.[54] Following the Axis decision to create a Croatian state, and Maček's rejection of German overtures to head this new state, the Germans threw their support behind Pavelić and the Ustaše,[55] enabling them to gain power and set about creating a new Croatia.

Although the Ustaša Movement was a fringe group with only a few hundred members in April 1941,[56] the two most influential Croatian leaders at the time, Maček and Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac of Zagreb, in separate speeches urged the Croatian people to support the new regime. On 10 April, following the declaration of independence by Pavelić's close associate Slavko Kvaternik,[57] Maček issued the following proclamation:

> Croatian People!
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> General [*sic*] Slavko Kvaternik, the leader of the nationalistic movement in the country, today declared a free and independent Croatian state on the entire historical territory of Croatia, and assumed power.
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> I call upon all Croats to submit to the new regime; I call upon all followers of the Croat Peasant Party who are in administrative positions, all district committee members, municipality heads and committee members etc., to sincerely collaborate with the new regime.[58]

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[53] Hory & Broszat (1964) pp. 24, 27; Jelić-Butić (1977) p. 31.
[54] Bartulin (2006) pp. 155-243; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 337-340.
[55] Tomasevich (2001) pp. 47-53.
[56] Karchmar (1973) p. 435.
[57] The proclamation can be found in Tomasevich (2001) p. 53.
[58] "Proglas Dra Vlatka Mačeka", *Hrvatski Dnevnik* (Split), 13 April 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, p. 650. It should be noted that Maček made this statement "before the Jugoslav capitulation, and, indeed, while the legal government, of which Maček had been the Vice-premier, was still on Jugoslav soil" (Karchmar (1973) p. 163).

Similarly, Stepinac appealed to Croats to "[h]eed my call to the high task of defending and advancing the Independent State of Croatia."[59] These entreaties undoubtedly assisted the Ustaše to legitimise their position and gain the support of many Croats.[60] Even though it seems that Pavelić and the Ustaše enjoyed only marginal backing,[61] they did nonetheless have the widespread acquiescence of most Croats, at least initially.[62]

The general euphoria that greeted the establishment of the NDH, and Maček's and Stepinac's calls, led to the Ustaša Movement being flooded by a wave of new recruits, especially from the Croat Peasant Party.[63] When the unelected Croatian national assembly was convened in January 1942, almost half of its delegates were members of the party.[64] A large number of members of the party's paramilitary organisations, the Civic Defence (*Građanska Zaštita*) and Peasant Defence (*Seljačka Zaštita*), which numbered 142,000 in 1940,[65] joined the Ustaše.[66] Stepinac and most of the Catholic Church supported the new regime,[67] and many clergymen joined the Ustaša Movement where they held important positions.[68] Church publications also carried Ustaša propaganda.[69]

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[59] Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac, "Okružnica katoličkom svećenstvu zagrebačke nadbiskupije", *Nedelja* (Zagreb), Issue 17, 27 April 1941, in Čulinović (1959) p. 40.
[60] Antonić (1973) p. 54; Radić (2003) p. 203; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 356, 370.
[61] Hoare (2004) p. 31; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 351-356.
[62] Karchmar (1973) wrote: "It can be safely asserted ... that in its early days [the] NDH had the allegiance, or at least acquiescence, of the large majority of the Croat nation." (p. 126).
[63] The Kotor Varoš Croat Peasant Party branch, for example, which numbered approximately 500 members, joined the Ustaša Movement in its entirety (Lukač (1967) p. 52 (Footnote 21)).
[64] The Croatian National Assembly had 204 members, 93 of whom were members of the Croat Peasant Party (Perić (2003) pp. 259-260).
[65] Tomasevich (2001) p. 57 (Footnote 24).
[66] Tomasevich (2001) p. 56.
[67] Paris (1961) pp. 51-58; Tomasevich (2001) p. 369-370.
[68] Steinberg (1994). Viktor Novak's (1948) enormous work contains the names of many Catholic clergymen who participated in the Ustaša Movement (pp. 527-1,100). Lukač (1967) named a

## The Ustaša National Utopia

Having thus gained power and a measure of public support, Pavelić and the Ustaša leadership embarked on their revolution. Although they took over the administrative organs of the Croat *Banovina* and the number of new recruits was large, they nonetheless needed to outline the movement's ideology to those members who may not have been adequately familiar with it, and to the Croatian masses who were to either participate in the revolution or at least not oppose it. Ustaša ideology was articulated and explained through radio, written publications, and, especially important in a society of mostly illiterate peasants, through speeches at assemblies.

Only a few weeks after the establishment of the NDH, the Ustaša leadership began to outline its plans for the new Croatia, and especially for those groups it deemed to be enemies of the Croatian people and state. At a meeting in Nova Gradiška in early June, Milovan Žanić, the President of the Legislative Committee,[70] declared:

> Ustaše! I want you to know that I speak openly. This state, our homeland, must be Croatian and nobody else's. That is why those who came here must go. Events throughout the centuries, but especially in the last two decades, demonstrate that any

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number from Bosanska Krajina: Branko Bandić (Hrvaćani, near Kotor Varoš), Alojzije Ćosić (Banja Luka), Bosiljko Gubić (Volar, near Prijedor), Dragutin Kamber (Doboj), Josip Kaurinović (Prijedor), Emanual Rajić (Gornji Vakuf), Božo Šimleša (Lištani, near Livno), Franjo Udović (Koričani, near Kotor Varoš), Branimir Zupančić (Bosanska Gradiška) (pp. 55-56). Tomasevich (2001) wrote that "most official propagandists for both the state and the party … and many other leading figures in journalism, radio, and film … came from Catholic Clericalist or Frankist backgrounds or were connected with such forces" (p. 370).

[69] Novak (1948) pp. 543-597; Tomasevich (2001) p. 370.

[70] "Odredba o imenovanju prve hrvatske državne vlade", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 6, 16 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 77.

> compromise is excluded. This will be the land of the Croats and nobody else's, and the method does not exist which we Ustaše would not employ to make this land truly Croatian and cleanse it of the Serbs who have threatened us for centuries and would threaten us again at the first opportunity.[71]

On 27 July, Mladen Lorković, the Minister of Foreign Affairs,[72] stated that the Croatian nation

> must be cleansed of all those elements which are a misfortune for that nation, which are alien and foreign, which dilute the healthy strength of that nation, which for decades and centuries have pushed that nation from one disaster to another. These [elements] are our Serbs and Jews.[73]

Mile Budak, the Minister of Religion and Education,[74] had a clear message for the Serbs: "Let them know that our watchword is: give in or get out."[75] At a meeting in Karlovac in the middle of August, he declared that "our greatest enemies ... are the Orthodox of all classes, and Bolsheviks."[76] Although the highest figures in the government did not openly call for the killing of Serbs and others, it would seem that on one occasion Budak did just this; on 22 June, he apparently stated: "We shall kill one part of the Serbs, we shall transport another, and the rest of them will be forced to embrace the Roman Catholic religion. This last part will be absorbed by the Croat elements."[77] Whilst the ministers were careful to limit their

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[71] *Novi List* (Zagreb), 3 June 1941, in Novak (1948) p. 606.
[72] "Odredba o imenovanju prve hrvatske državne vlade", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 6, 16 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 77.
[73] *Hrvatski Narod,* 28 July 1941, in Novak (1948) pp. 607-608.
[74] "Odredba o imenovanju prve hrvatske državne vlade", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 6, 16 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 77.
[75] *Hrvatski Narod* (Zagreb), 9 July 1941, in Novak (1948) p. 605.
[76] *Katolički Tjednik* (Zagreb), 17 August 1941, in Novak (1948) p. 605.
[77] Statement made in Gospić, in Novak (1948) p. 605. It is necessary to point out that there is some conjecture as to the veracity of this statement (Dulić (2005) pp. 100-101).

threats to expulsion, a number of lower ranking Ustaša leaders were less restrained. Viktor Gutić, the chief of Bosanska Krajina, declared on 27 May at an assembly in Sanski Most:

> The Serbian Army is no more! Serbia is no more! Our bloodsuckers, the *gedža* [a derogatory term for Serbs], are no more; the Gypsy Karađorđević dynasty has vanished and here the roads will soon wish for Serbs, but the Serbs will be no more. I have ordered drastic measures for their complete economic destruction, and new [orders] will follow for their complete extermination. Do not be weak towards any of them. Keep in mind that they were our gravediggers. Destroy them wherever you can, and you will not fall short of our *Poglavnik's* and my praise.[78]

The following day, Gutić declared that he would

> begin the grandiose work of cleansing Bosanska Krajina of undesired elements ... [and that] [a]ll undesired elements will soon be destroyed in our Krajina, so that soon all trace of them will be wiped out and only a bad memory of them will remain.[79]

When Herman Tonogal, an Ustaša organiser, arrived in Gacko in early June, he gave a speech to the assembled local Muslims which ended with: "We can not be satisfied and will not stop until the total extermination of the last Serb from our Independent State of Croatia. The last bullet for the last Serb."[80] Pavelić and the Ustaša leadership envisioned a Croatia free of those elements they deemed harmful to its security and national interests, and explained their vision to the Ustaša rank and file and Croatian masses who were to help them implement their plans.

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[78] *Hrvatska Krajina* (Banja Luka), 30 May 1941, in Novak (1948) p. 608.
[79] *Hrvatska Krajina* (Banja Luka), Issue 18, 28 May 1941, in Dulić (2005) p. 219.
[80] Statement by K. Bumbić, in Dulić (2005) p. 127.

A key part of the Ustaša plan to solve the 'Serbian problem' was the legislation that created the legal framework for the destruction of the Serbian community in the NDH.[81] One of the first laws enacted was the sufficiently broad and vague *Legal Decree for the Protection of the People and State* (1941) of 17 April:[82]

> Whoever insults or has insulted the honour and life interests of the Croatian people, or whoever threatens the existence of the Independent State of Croatia or state authority in any way, even if it is only an attempt to do so, is guilty of committing the crime of treason.[83]

The law foresaw the creation of "extraordinary people's courts"[84] with no right of appeal and the obligation to pronounce the death sentence on all transgressors.[85] Laws forbidding the use of the Cyrillic script,[86] forcing Serbs to wear armbands,[87] and banning any reference to the Serbian Orthodox religion,[88] were also enacted. Elaborate race laws targeting Jews were also passed.[89]

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[81] Tomasevich (2001) pp. 380-387.
[82] It was the thirteenth law enacted by Pavelić (*Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 78).
[83] "Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 4, 17 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 78.
[84] "Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 4, 17 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 78.
[85] "Zakonska odredba o prijekim sudovima", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 24, 17 May 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 106-107.
[86] "Zakonska odredba o zabrani ćirilice", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 11, 25 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 97-98.
[87] Order by the Ustaša head of the Požega District for the head of the Velika Municipality (Požega District), 13 May 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 99.
[88] "Ministarska odredba o nazivu "grčko-istočne vjere"", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 80, 18 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 103.
[89] "Zakonska odredba o rasnoj pripadnosti", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 16, 30 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 87-89; "Zakonska odredba o zaštiti arijske krvi i časti Hrvatskog naroda", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 16, 30 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 89-90; "Naredba o utvrđivanju rasne pripadnosti državnih i samoupravnih službenika i vršitelja slobodnih akademskih zvanja", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 44, 4 June 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 91-96; "Naredba o promjeni židovskih

## The Elimination of the Serbs

Pavelić and the Ustaša leadership were determined to eliminate a community that numbered almost two million persons, that is, approximately a third of the population of the NDH.[90] It must be said that the Ustaše lacked a clear plan to achieve this goal, so different methods were employed in different areas at different times, but all with the same intention; to eliminate the Serbs of the NDH as a national community. The three methods employed were denationalisation through conversion to Catholicism, expulsion, and killing. In regions bordering Montenegro and Serbia, such as eastern Bosnia, Hercegovina, and Srem, the principal method of dealing with the Serbs was deportation.[91] In central regions of the NDH, such as Bosanska Krajina, physical extermination was more common.[92] Even though the Ustaše did not have a clear plan, they did nonetheless follow a general design, as described by Lucien Karchmar:

> The Ustaša plan of operation against the Serbs envisioned three stages, of which the first was the decapitation of the Serbian community through the arrest of all politicians, functionaries, priests, intelligentsia, and other potential leaders, and the suppression of all Serbian political, cultural, and other organizations, as well as the paralysis of the Orthodox Church in Croatia. As part of this stage, a large proportion of adult male Serbs would be arrested, and most of those arrested, quietly liquidated. In the second stage, the families of those arrested in the first stage would be arrested and deported to Serbia under agreement with the Germans. At the same time, the population of

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prezimena i označivanju Židova i židovskih tvrtki", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb), Issue 43, 4 June 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* pp. 155-157

[90] The population of the NDH in April 1941 was composed of 3,300,000 Croats, 1,925,000 Serbs, 700,000 Muslims, 150,000 Germans, 65,000 Czechs and Slovaks, 40,000 Jews, 30,000 Slovenes, and 75,000 others (Hoare (2006) p. 19).

[91] Deroc (1988) p. 43; Karchmar (1973) 157-158; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 86-90, 178, 217-221, 392-397, 711, 741, 749.

[92] See Bokan (1996).

> selected Serb villages would also be deported; the villages were chosen for their strategic location to enable the Ustaše to destroy the territorial continuity of Serbian settlement in [the] NDH and block off major Serbian areas from each other. In the third stage, the remaining Serbian population would be effaced, partly through massacre and partly through conversion to Catholicism.[93]

The massacres were characterised by terrible brutality in which women and children were not spared.[94] The Ustaše also established a number of concentration camps, the largest and most notorious being Jasenovac.[95]

The number of Serb victims of the Ustaša terror has been the subject of controversy and disagreement from the beginning of the massacres in the summer of 1941 to the present day.[96] The most scholarly figures for the total number of Serbs who died from *all* causes on the territory of the NDH range from 295,000[97] to 334,000.[98] Of these, some 46,000 perished within the Jasenovac camp system,[99] and perhaps another 100,000 were killed in local massacres and other concentration camps throughout the Ustaša state.[100] Another contentious issue is the question of whether the Ustaša mass killings constitute genocide, a question that hinges on whether one prefers a hard or soft definition of the term.[101] Evidence exists that Pavelić and the Ustaša leadership desired the elimination of the Serbs from the territory of the NDH, and that they were

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[93] Karchmar (1973) p. 436.
[94] See Bulajić (1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1988d), Dakina (1995), Dedijer & Miletić (1989), Kurdulija (1993), and Paris (1961).
[95] See Miletić (1986a, 1986b, 1987, 2007), and Mirković (2000).
[96] Tomasevich (2001) pp. 718-750; Žerjavić (1992) pp. 11-74, 87-101.
[97] Žerjavić (1992) p. 168 (Bosnia and Hercegovina: 164,000; Croatia: 131,000).
[98] Kočović (1990) p. 172 (Bosnia and Hercegovina: 209,000; Croatia: 125,000).
[99] See Appendix 5.
[100] Dulić (2005) p. 313.
[101] See Chapter I, "Key Issues".

prepared to employ mass killing to attain this goal. In 1934, Pavelić told Ante Brkan, one of his associates at the time, that "all enemies, all Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies, should be slaughtered".[102] When Brkan disagreed with him, saying that this was "impossible when there are 25 per cent Serbs in the Croatian lands",[103] Pavelić maintained his stance. On 24 June 1941, when Pavelić met the Italian ambassador to the NDH, he informed him of his decision to cleanse Croatia of its Jews and Serbs.[104] One of the most powerful figures in the Ustaša state machinery, Eugen Kvaternik, told Branko Pešelj, a member of the Croat Peasant Party and Maček's aide, on 22 July of his aim to remove all Serbs from the NDH:

> I know that you believe and expect that the English will win the war. I agree with you. I also maintain that the English will win the war in the end, but there will be no Serbs in Croatia. Therefore, whoever wins the war will have to accept the situation as it is.[105]

During a private meeting on 27 April with a representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Banja Luka, Gutić explained his plan for the removal of the Serbs from Bosanska Krajina and the reasons:

> This is God's punishment for you Serbs. You have to admit that you have done much wrong. It is our as well as your misfortune that you Serbs constitute an absolute majority right in the heart of Croatia – in the Croatian Krajina. And when the heart is ill, the whole organism suffers. It is our duty first to treat and heal the heart. It would have been best if we had separated nicely a long time ago. For instance, if we had taken the Bosna River as a border

[102] Goldstein (1999/2000) p. 9.
[103] Goldstein (1999/2000) p. 9.
[104] Dulić (2005) p. 148.
[105] Pešelj (1962) p. 277. Pešelj made this claim in a Croat émigré journal (*Hrvatska Revija*) in 1962. In the same issue, Kvaternik denied ever making this statement. Given what is known about Kvaternik's role in the massacres, Pešelj's version is the more credible.

> and [moved] our people on the other side of the Bosna here, and you from here to there. But what can we do, it is too late now. Now, all that will be much harder and more painful for you.[106]

Although it is probable that the Ustaša leadership would have preferred methods such as conversions and deportations to solve the Serbian problem, a combination of factors – Serb opposition, overzealous local officials, German orders to halt the deportations[107] – led to an explosion of mass killing throughout the NDH.

**The Serbs**

The Serb uprisings throughout the NDH during the summer of 1941[108] are generally recognised as being rooted in the Ustaša policy of persecution.[109] Although the rebellion was an unplanned and uncoordinated event composed of independent groups of poorly-armed peasants whose primary aim was self-defence, it rapidly inflicted a number of military victories over the NDH armed forces, captured numerous towns, wrested large swathes of the countryside from

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[106] Statement by Dušan Mačkić, in Dulić (2005) p. 217.
[107] Dulić (2005) pp. 167-168.
[108] "The uprisings which occurred among the Serbian population of NDH in the summer of 1941 were not simultaneous. The first to revolt, in June, were the Serbs of Herzegovina. Next, at the end of June and beginning of July, were the Serbs of East Bosnia. Finally, in western NDH, rebellion began among the Serbs of the Bosanska Krajina and Dalmatia on the 27th of July, and quickly spread, throughout the first half of August, into central Bosnia, the Kozara, Kordun, Banija, and Lika." (Karchmar (1973) p. 440).
[109] Antonić (1973); Karchmar (1973) pp. 40, 127, 435-447, 457-459, 929; Lukač (1967); Milazzo (1975) pp. 48-49, 184; Redžić (2005) pp. 75, 122, 202; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 106, 132-133, 155-156; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 402, 407-408, 412-413; Trew (1998) pp. 12-13. Perhaps the most convincing evidence that the Ustaša massacres were the main cause of the Serb uprising can be found in a report from early July written by General Vladimir Laksa, the *Poglavnik's* special representative. Laksa wrote: "The disturbances in Hercegovina, the dissatisfaction and dejection of the populace were, according to statements by all classes of the population, primarily caused by the wild and inhuman behaviour of the SO-CALLED USTAŠE" (Report by General Vladimir Laksa, 5 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 172 (Capitalisation in original)).

government control, and caused great concern amongst the Croat, German, and Italian military and political leadership.

By the end of June, the German occupation officials were sufficiently concerned about the possibility of a general Serb uprising that they complained to the Ustaše. On 25 June, the head of the German administration of Serbia, Harald Turner, wrote to the German embassy in Zagreb warning that the Ustaša atrocities were a threat to stability.[110] This German pressure induced Pavelić to issue an extraordinary decree on 26 June[111] which was to be publicised by print and radio within three days. The decree read:

> Regarding the rumours that on the 28th of this month there would be alleged persecutions of one part of the population of Croatia, I order that everyone who spreads such rumours be placed before a court-martial.
>
> At the same time, everyone will be placed before a court-martial who carries out any kind of violent acts against the lives and property of any citizen or subject of the Independent State of Croatia ... Any member of the Ustaša organisation or corps who himself carries out such unlawful acts will be shot at once by the Ustaša court.[112]

Following this proclamation, there was an immediate change in the behaviour of Ustaša units, and the mass killing of Serbs ceased,[113] albeit temporarily.

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[110] Letter by Harald Turner for the German Embassy in Zagreb, 25 June 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 177.
[111] Dulić (2005) pp. 146-147; Tomasevich (2001) p. 401.
[112] Dulić (2005) p. 147.
[113] Dulić (2005) pp. 145-146, 152-153.

It seems that the extraordinary decree was something of a tactical retreat made under the pressure produced by the massacres and subsequent uprisings. Colonel Petar Blašković, a Croat army officer, following a meeting with representatives of the German Army on 20 June at which Ustaša policy was sharply criticised, recommended to Pavelić that "strict instructions be given regarding a more tactical approach towards the Serbs. They [the Ustaše] work too 'openly' and attract resentment from the population and vigilance from foreigners".[114] It is questionable whether Pavelić had abandoned his goal of eliminating the Serbian population within the NDH since a mere two days before issuing the decree, he informed the Italian ambassador of his decision to cleanse all regions of the NDH inhabited by Jews and Serbs.[115] Finally, it is fair to assume that Pavelić feared that the Serb uprising which had begun in eastern Hercegovina in early June[116] would spread to other parts of his state.[117] Pavelić's efforts to appease the Germans and Serbs were too little and came too late; the rebellion spread throughout the NDH during the rest of the summer.

Those Serbs who found themselves in other parts of occupied Yugoslavia were similarly persecuted, expelled, and massacred. This was especially true for the Serbian population of the parts of Kosovo and Metohija annexed by Albania. In the immediate aftermath of the April War, a number of massacres of Serbs

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[114] Report by Colonel Petar Blašković, 20 June 1941, in Dulić (2005) p. 147.
[115] Dulić (2005) p. 148.
[116] Karchmar (1973) pp. 446-447.
[117] Pavelić's concern with the rebellion in Hercegovina is illustrated by his decision to send General Vladimir Laksa there with the title of "Special Authorised Agent of the *Poglavnik*" (Report by General Vladimir Laksa, 5 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 172).

took place, accompanied by looting, rape, and torture.[118] It has been estimated that approximately 10,000 Montenegrins and Serbs died in this region during the Second World War, most of them victims of Albanian terror.[119] Tens of thousands were expelled or forced to flee. Within the Bulgarian occupation zone, the new authorities expelled some 26,000 Serbs from Macedonia,[120] and ruled southeastern Serbia with a heavy hand, ruthlessly punishing any resistance. The Hungarians expelled between 57,000[121] and 60,000[122] Montenegrin and Serb settlers from Bačka and Baranja when these territories were annexed by Hungary,[123] and although the remaining Serbian population was generally left in peace, a massacre of Jews, Serbs, and others did occur in January 1942 near Novi Sad.[124] The New Order brought death and destruction to many Serbs throughout occupied Yugoslavia.

**The Croats**

Following the establishment of the NDH, Maček described the mood in the Croatian capital:

> A wave of enthusiasm pervaded Zagreb at this time, not unlike that which had swept through the town in 1918 when the ties with Hungary were severed. Many people thought it a great advantage to be freed from Serbian domination. The fact that the Germans had

[118] Antonijević (2003) pp. 355-369; Antonijević (2009); Đelević (2004) pp. 26-27, 37-38; Šoškić (1958) pp. 38-39.
[119] Antonijević (2001) pp. 478-479.
[120] Tomasevich (2001) p. 165.
[121] Tomasevich (2001) p. 170.
[122] Karchmar (1973) p. 54.
[123] Karchmar (1973) p. 54.
[124] See Golubović (1992). The victims included 2,842 Serbs, 1,250 Jews, 64 Roma, 31 Rusyns, 13 Russians, and 11 Hungarians (Yahil (1990) p. 503).

> gift-wrapped their occupation under the euphemistic title of "Independent State of Croatia" blinded and intoxicated many.[125]

This enthusiasm, however, was short lived. The institution of a dictatorship, elimination of political parties, and severe curtailing of civil liberties undoubtedly chaffed many Croats, and it rapidly became obvious that the NDH was far from independent, but was in a subservient position to Germany and Italy, who split the country in half and established their occuaption zones. Under Italian pressure, the Croats signed the Rome Treaties, which handed over large parts of Dalmatia to Italy and angered many Croats,[126] particularly those from Dalmatia.[127] Although certain measures taken against Jews and Serbs, such as the loss of their civic rights and property, may have been viewed as just punishment for those who had 'exploited and oppressed' the Croatian nation, when the persecution escalated to the mass killing of innocent men, women, and children, many Croats were appalled at this barbarity. Finally, the government demonstrated its incompetance by failing to adequately deal with the uprising and the resultant anarchy, death, and destruction.

Opposition by Croats to the Ustaše and their policies manifested itself in numerous ways and focused primarily on two groups: officers of the regular army[128] and common people. The most vocal opponents were the former, who were concerned by the destruction and instability caused by the massacres.

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[125] Maček (1957) pp. 230-231.
[126] Protests demanding the return of the parts of Dalmatia annexed by Italy took place in Zagreb on 25 December 1941 (Report by General Vittorio Ambrosio for the General Staff of the Italian Army, 3 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 13, Book 2, p. 11).
[127] Tomasevich (2001) p. 133.
[128] The regular NDH army is adequately examined in Barić (2003).

General Vladimir Laksa, who was sent by Pavelić to Hercegovina in late June to quell the uprising, wrote a scathing report in which he blamed the Ustaše for the problems: "The disturbances in Hercegovina, the dissatisfaction and dejection of the populace were, according to statements by all classes of the population, primarily caused by the wild and inhuman behaviour of the SO-CALLED USTAŠE."[129] Laksa ordered Ustaša units to be disarmed and to remain in their barracks.[130] A month later, two Croat officers compiled a memorandum, possibly for the Germans, in which they drew a number of conclusions:

> 1. Conditions in Croatia are untenable ...
> 3. The Orthodox population in Croatia is being murdered on a large scale – without sense, reason, order, legal motive, or a feeling of responsibility. It is not the Chetniks or the Partisans who are being killed, but the peaceful population, women and children in villages ...
> 5. The carriers of this system are the Ustaše.
> 6. Now is the time to undertake decisive measures against the Ustaše ...
> 7. The liquidation of the Ustaše cannot be undertaken with half measures, but as was said, word for word, by the principal German speaker, by "disarming and shooting."[131]

It should be pointed out that, generally speaking, the officers did not oppose the Ustaša plan to eliminate the Serbs; rather, their gripe was with the tactless and indiscriminate manner in which it was carried out, and the anarchy that it generated which the army had to deal with.

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[129] Report by General Vladimir Laksa, 5 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 172 (Capitalisation in original).
[130] Report by General Vladimir Laksa, 5 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 172.
[131] Memorandum by Colonel Ladislav Medved and Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Babić, 7 August 1941, in Tomasevich (2001) pp. 435-436.

A number of Croats opposed the Ustaše on humanitarian grounds. The killings in Banja Luka and Travnik, according to the Germans, had "grown into brutality of the worst kind, creating a horrible impression on the inhabitants [and] horrifying many conscious Croats"[132] by the middle of June. *Domobran* recruits who accompanied Laksa to Hercegovina were so angered upon seeing the mutilated corpses of Serbs in the basement of the Nevesinje prison that they had to be convinced not to attack the local Ustaše; Laksa wrote: "It was not an easy thing to influence our young soldiers [so] that they themselves do not use force against these bloodthirsty people".[133] Another officer reported that the massacres in northwestern Bosnia had "caused resentment among honest Croats with firm character, who would whisper: "This is a shame for the Croatian people, its culture, and faith"."[134] The United States' envoy to Hungary, after spending three weeks during November touring Zagreb, Lika, and Dalmatia and speaking with Croats, reported that there was strong disapproval for the Ustaša regime because of its subservience to the Germans and Italians, and its brutal treatment of Jews, Roma, and Serbs.[135] The massacre of Serbs in Drakulić, Ivanjska, Motike, Piskavica, and Šargovac near Banja Luka in February 1942[136] "caused deep anger and resentment within all groups of society regardless of faith",[137] according to another report. Not a small number of Croats who were loyal to the monarchy and strong supporters of Yugoslavism and the Yugoslav state moved to Belgrade

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[132] Report by Colonel Petar Blašković, 20 June 1941, in Dulić (2005) p. 146.
[133] Report by General Vladimir Laksa for Ante Pavelić, 5 July 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 173.
[134] Dulić (2005) p. 224.
[135] Tomasevich (2001) p. 402.
[136] Lukajić (2005). German and Ustaša reports cite figures of between 1,300 and 2,250 victims for the massacre in Drakulić, Motike, and Šargovac alone (Dulić (2005) p. 268; Lukajić (2005) p. 5).
[137] Dulić (2005) p. 268.

immediately following the formation of the NDH for fear of being persecuted by the new regime.[138] Although the vast majority of the Catholic clergy either supported the Ustaše's policies or remained silent, at least one clergyman openly condemned them; Josip Lončar, the Zagreb canon, criticised the mass killing of innocent Serbs during a service for which he was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death, although he was ultimately amnestied.[139]

**The Slovenes**

With the destruction of Yugoslavia, Slovenia was divided between Germany, Italy, and Hungary.[140] The Germans initially planned to expel some 260,000 Slovenes from the region they had annexed and replace them with Germans from other parts of Yugoslavia and Europe,[141] and although they did not implement this grand plan, they did nonethless expel some 80,000 people.[142] The remaining Slovenian population was subjected to a ruthless Germanisation program, described by Karchmar:

> German was proclaimed as the only official language, all Slovene signs were removed and replaced by German ones, and even names and surnames had to be Germanized. German teachers were put in charge of Slovene schools, and Slovene books were destroyed whenever possible. German commissioners were appointed to liquidate all Slovene clubs and organizations. Financial controls were used to destroy Slovene cooperatives, and to apply political pressure on individuals.[143]

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[138] Đelević (1956) p. 177; Đelević (2004) p. 41.
[139] Novak (1948) p. 607.
[140] Karchmar (1973) p. 43; Tomasevich (2001) p. 83.
[141] Karchmar (1973) p. 44; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 85-87.
[142] Karchmar (1973) p. 44; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 89-90.
[143] Karchmar (1973) p. 44. See also Tomasevich (2001) pp.

The Italians, on the other hand, adopted milder policies on the territory they annexed: an advisory body consisting of Slovenes was formed to advise the Italian high commissioner, the Slovenian language was retained on an equal basis with Italian, a Slovene named Leon Rupnik was appointed mayor of Ljubljana, and the Catholic Church was unmolested.[144] Even so, during the summer a number of resistance groups, both communist and nationalist, formed in Italian occupied Slovenia where they carried out numerous attacks, and grew in strength as the war progressed.[145] A similar resistance movement failed to emerge in the German zone because of the expulsion of many politically active Slovenes, the mobilisation of many others in to German organisations where their movements were controlled, the efficiency of German security measures, and brutal reprisals in response to any resistance.[146]

**The Muslims**

Unlike the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes, the Muslims did not possess the status of a constituent people of Yugoslavia. Like the Croats, a single political party, the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation, garnered the vast majority of Muslim votes.[147] In the struggles between the Croat and Serb politicians, the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation played something of a balancing role and, exploiting the situation, sought to secure the best deal for the Muslims.[148] The *Vidovdan*

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[144] Karchmar (1973) p. 46; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 95-96.
[145] Tomasevich (2001) pp. 96-102.
[146] Karchmar (1973) p. 141; Tomasevich (2001) p. 93.
[147] The best study of the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation is Purivatra (1974).
[148] Bougarel (2003) argued that "[a]llegiance to central power and frequent shifting between Serb and Croat political parties remained central to the Bosnian Muslim strategies during the interwar years." (p. 102).

Constitution was passed because the Democrats and Radicals gained the support of the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation by promising to preserve the borders of Bosnia and Hercegovina within the new administrative divisions,[149] maintain the autonomy of Islamic religious institutions, and guarantee financial compensation for those Muslim landowners affected by the land reforms.[150] Differences between the Croats and Serbs were mirrored amongst the Muslims, perhaps best reflected in the existence of two rival Muslim cultural societies: *Gajret* (pro-Serb) and *Narodna Uzdanica* (pro-Croat). The Muslim political leadership was disappointed at the creation of the Croat *Banovina*, as it had hoped to see Bosnia and Hercegovina constituted as another federal unit; instead, it was partitioned between the Croats and Serbs. At the beginning of the Second World War, the Muslims were divided in to at least five groups: the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation, a rival Muslim political party called the Muslim Organisation, Bosniaks, pan-Islamists, and communists.[151]

Although the leadership of the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation made a number of efforts to convince Italy and Germany to establish Bosnia and Hercegovina as a political unit under Axis protection,[152] these two territories and their Muslim inhabitants found themselves in the newly-created NDH. Pavelić and the Ustaše expended great energy to gain the support of the Muslims whom they considered to be Croats of the Islamic faith, as had been theorised by the

[149] Constitution of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, 28 June 1921, Article 134.
[150] Bougarel (2003) p. 102.
[151] Bougarel (2003) p. 102.
[152] Dizdar (1999) p. 87.

important nineteenth century Croat nationalist thinker, Ante Starčević.[153] When the first Ustaša government was formed on 16 April, Osman Kulenović, a Muslim lawyer from Bihać, was named deputy prime minister,[154] only to be replaced in November by his brother Džafer-beg,[155] the head of the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation. Such overtures to the established Muslim leadership paid off, and a considerable part of the party leadership adapted to the annexation of Bosnia and Hercegovina and joined the state structure of the NDH.[156] Islamic religious leaders lent their support as well. On 10 April, Ismet Muftić, the *imam* of Zagreb, publicly described the creation of the NDH as a "happy hour for all Croats, Catholic and Muslim".[157] Fehim Spaho, the Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Hercegovina, gave the new Ustaša regime a boost on 4 May when he made a public proclamation in which he stated that the Muslim population of the NDH would be respected, and that its rights would be guaranteed.[158] Ustaša organisers and recruiters found many Muslims willing to participate in the persecution and killing of Serbs.[159]

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[153] Bartulin (2006) pp. 110-111.
[154] "Odredba o imenovanju prve hrvatske državne vlade", *Narodne Novine* (Zagreb) Issue 6, 16 April 1941, in *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj,* p. 77.
[155] Tomasevich (2001) p. 489.
[156] Redžić (2005) p. 165. Lukač (1967) argued that most of the branch heads of the party supported and cooperated with the new regime (p. 53).
[157] Announcement by Ismet Muftić, 10 April 1941, in Nikolić (2009) p. 21.
[158] *Hrvatski Narod* (Zagreb), 4 May 1941, in Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. 5.
[159] Statement by Kojo Ćosović (Olovo), 12 January 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) pp. 199-200; Statement by Pero Rajak, Gojko Pijetlović, and Luka Pijetlović (Jajce), 13 January 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 203, 204, 207-208; Statement by Vladimir Čović (Dobrljan, Bosanski Novi), 2 February 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 229; Statement by Ivica Stanoje (Donji Vakuf), 10 February 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 234; Statement by Nada Mikić and Simo Tepavčević (Zavidovići), 17 February 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 245; Statement by Zdravko Hamović (Konjic), 25 February 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 272; Statement by Radmila Jačimović (Karanovac, Gračanica), 6 March 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 294; Dulić (2005) pp. 127-128, 136; Karchmar (1973) pp. 445, 459.

Even so, the Muslims had cause for dissatisfaction. Instead of the recognition of a separate Muslim identity, they were subsumed in to the Croatian national body. Bosnia and Hercegovina were divided administratively in to Great Counties which cut across its historical borders. Instead of the much hoped for autonomy, Muslims found themselves in a highly centralised state,[160] in which very few of them held important positions in the state administration and army.[161] However, it was the anarchy, destruction, and death associated with the Serb rebellion that engulfed areas of the NDH with a large Muslim population such as eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina, and the failure of the regime to adequately deal with the uprising and protect the lives and property of Muslims, that was the greatest source of discontent. By November, German intelligence reported that Muslims considered "conditions existing at that time much worse than those prevailing in the old Yugoslavia".[162]

Muslim opposition to the Ustaše took a number of forms. There were numerous individual acts of kindness towards persecuted Jews, Roma, and Serbs during the Ustaša terror, and a number of Muslims participated as communists in the uprisings of the summer of 1941. The most vocal criticism of the Ustaše appeared in the autumn when groups of leading Muslims from the largest Bosnian and Hercegovinian cities and towns penned a number of resolutions for

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[160] Tomasevich (2001) p. 490.
[161] There were only two Muslim ministers in government until April 1944 when a third was added. Similarly, there were only two Muslim generals in an army of some two hundred generals. Only three Great Counties out of the entire twenty-two were headed by a Muslim in 1941 (Tomasevich (2001) pp. 489-490).
[162] Report by Edmund Glaise von Horstenau, 5 December 1941, in Tomasevich (2001) p. 493.

the government in Zagreb,[163] pleading for the reestablishment of law and order, and for a cessation of the killing of innocent people. Like the Croat officers, the formulators of the Muslim resolutions were not motivated primarily by humanitarian concerns for the persecuted Jews, Roma, and Serbs, but by concerns for the interests of the Muslims, which can be summarised in to four areas: (1) Muslims were being discriminated against in the allocation of administrative positions and the subsequent distribution of 'nationalised' Jewish and Serb property; (2) the forced conversions favoured Catholicism at the expense of Islam; (3) the Ustaša massacres were being blamed on the Muslim community; and (4) the government was not adequately protecting Muslims from Serb counter massacres.[164] None of the resolutions called for the discriminatory laws to be revoked, for property to be returned, or for the non-lethal forms of persecution to end.

**The Montenegrins**

The destruction of Yugoslavia in 1941 provided the Montenegrin separatists with an opportunity to reestablish Montenegro as an independent state. As early as 17 April, the leaders of the separatists in Cetinje, the old capital of the Kingdom of Montenegro and main power base of the separatists, set up a

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[163] Seven Muslim resolutions have been found: "Rezolucija muslimana grada Mostara", 22 September 1941, in Konjhodžić (1965) pp. 57-58; "Rezolucija muslimana grada Prijedora", 23 September 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, pp. 697-699; "Rezolucija muslimana grada Sarajeva", 12 October 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, pp. 699-701; "Rezolucija muslimana grada Banja Luke", 12 November 1941, in Konjhodžić (1965) pp. 53-54; "Rezolucija muslimana grada Banja Luke", 22 November 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, pp. 701-703; Sarajevo Muslim National Committee, "Braći Muslimanima", 1 December 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, pp. 703-707; "Rezolucija muslimana grada i kotara Bijeljine", 2 December 1941, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, pp. 707-708.
[164] Dulić (2005) pp. 229-233.

body called the Committee for the Liberation of Montenegro,[165] which claimed for itself the right to temporarily administer the land.[166] Hoping to gain the favour of Italy, it greeted Italian troops when they arrived in Cetinje.[167] On 24 April, Mussolini ordered the establishment of a civil commissariat for Montenegro,[168] a task entrusted to Count Serafino Mazzolini, who created such a body, named the Advisory Council of Montenegro, in May.[169] On 22 May, Mazzolini's title was changed to High Civil Commissioner,[170] and a month later he was made independent of the army and placed under the Foreign Ministry.[171] Throughout May and June, the Italians and separatists strengthened their control over the administration,[172] reestablished the old gendarmerie,[173] and waged an intense propaganda campaign in favour of Montenegrin independence.[174]

By July, the Italians and separatists deemed the time ripe to declare Montenegro an independent state. An assembly, presided over by the leader of the Montenegrin Federalist Party, Sekula Drljević, and composed of a number of separatists and nationalists, was convened in Cetinje where it passed a resolution on 12 July declaring Montenegro an independent constitutional monarchy.[175] The

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[165] Karchmar (1973) p. 41; Tomasevich (2001) p. 139.
[166] Karchmar (1973) p. 41.
[167] Tomasevich (2001) p. 139.
[168] Karchmar (1973) p. 41.
[169] Karchmar (1973) called this body the Administrative Council and dated its founding on 5 May (p. 41), whereas Tomasevich (2001) called it the Advisory Council of Montenegro and dated its founding on 18 May (p. 139).
[170] Karchmar (1973) p. 41; Tomasevich (2001) p. 138.
[171] Karchmar (1973) p. 41; Tomasevich (2001) p. 138.
[172] Karchmar (1973) p. 41; Tomasevich (2001) p. 139.
[173] Karchmar (1973) p. 41.
[174] Karchmar (1973) p. 42.
[175] Declaration of the Montenegrin National Assembly, 12 July 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 3, Book 4, pp. 389-390.

following day, however, an armed rebellion broke out in the villages surrounding Cetinje and spread rapidly so that by 15 July practically all of rural Montenegro was in revolt.[176] Although the uprising was undoubtedly triggered by the declaration of independence, demonstrating how little support the separatists really had amongst the populace, it was also motivated by Montenegrin anger at the loss of territory to Albania,[177] and news of the terror being committed by the Albanians and Ustaše against their Orthodox brethren in Hercegovina, Kosovo, and Metohija[178] brought by the 25,000 or so refugees who had found sanctuary in Montenegro.[179] By the time the Italians suppressed the rebellion, they had come to the realisation that the separatists did not command the support of the majority of Montenegrins, and decided to exploit the conflict that had emerged between the communist and pro-Serb nationalist factions of the uprising to come to an arrangement with the latter. The Italians recognised the leader of the nationalists, General Blažo Đukanović, as the spokesman of Montenegro, and signed an agreement with him in July 1942 which created a National Council of Montenegro, and permitted the creation of volunteer forces to police the countryside and fight the Partisans.[180] In this way, most of Montenegro passed in to the hands of the pro-Serb faction; the separatists were left with Cetinje, its surrounds, and a small section of the coast.[181]

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[176] Karchmar (1973) p. 374.
[177] Tomasevich (2001) p. 139.
[178] Popović (1959) pp. 43-46; Radonjić (1961) pp. 75-77; Šoškić (1958) pp. 38-46.
[179] Milošević (1981) pp. 105-106.
[180] Karchmar (1973) p. 407.
[181] Montenegro was divided between three of Đukanović's lieutenants: General Krsto Popović, a separatist, and Colonel Bajo Stanišić and Captain Pavle Đurišić, who both belonged to the pro-Serb faction. Đurišić was assigned the Andrijevica, Berane, Bijelo Polje, Kolašin, and Šavnik districts; Popović, the Bar and Cetinje districts; and Stanišić, the Danilov Grad, Nikšić, and Podgorica districts (Karchmar (1973) pp. 433 (Endnote 3), 458).

# Chapter III

# 1941

## The April War and Arrival on Ravna Gora

The German attack on Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941 set in motion the chain of events that led to Mihailović's rise from a simple Royal Yugoslav Army officer to the leader of Yugoslav resistance whose task it was to unite the divided Yugoslav peoples. Yet the relationship between Mihailović and the non-Serbs got off to a bad start. On the second day of the April War, he expressed his doubt as to whether all Croat military personnel would remain loyal to the army;[1] the mutiny of the predominantly Croat 108th Infantry Regiment and 40th Artillery Regiment of the 40th (Slavonian) Infantry Division,[2] known as the Bjelovar Mutiny, as well as a number of cases in which Croat reservists failed to report for duty, and Croat troops surrendered without fighting, or deserted and went

[1] Milosavljević (1956) p. 50.
[2] Dizdar (2008) pp. 581-609; Tomasevich (2001) pp. 51, 55.

home,[3] appeared to confirm this prediction. Within a matter of days, Mihailović found himself fighting not only the Germans, but also his fellow Yugoslavs; the Fast *Odred*, which he created from the mostly Serb remnants of the Second Army,[4] captured Derventa in northern Bosnia on 14 April from Ustaše who had earlier seized the town.[5] The retreat of Mihailović and his men through Bosnia was accompanied by constant skirmishes; Croats from the village of Kamensko opened fire on them on 23 April,[6] and two days later, they were attacked by armed Muslims from Olovo whilst bivouacking in the nearby hamlet of Solun.[7] Serbs from villages surrounding Žepa complained to Mihailović that Muslims from the town had begun committing atrocities against Serb civilians, killing them and burning their homes.[8] In response, a group of soldiers was dispatched to Žepa with the task of bringing the two most eminent Muslims to Mihailović. When they arrived, he spoke with them and made the following, almost prophetic, warning:

> Protect Serbian villages as your own! Do not be fooled by German lies, because the Germans are your enemies as much as they are the enemies of the Serbs. They have come and they will go, but you will remain. So, wisen up and take heed of what you do. If a Serbian village disappears today, tomorrow a Muslim one will disappear and in that way you will be destroyed in this region.[9]

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[3] Hory & Broszat (1964) p. 51; Karchmar (1973) p. 4; Terzić (1963) pp. 592-598; Živanović (1962a) pp. 41-43, 61-64.
[4] Knežević (1956) p. 8.
[5] Knežević (1956) p. 8.
[6] Stanković (1956) p. 25.
[7] Stanković (1956) p. 25.
[8] Stanković (1956) p. 25.
[9] Stanković (1956) p. 25.

Mihailović was cognisant of the likelihood of great loss of life amongst the Muslims if conflict between them and the Serbs in eastern Bosnia degenerated in to ethnic cleansing; subsequent events demonstrated the prescience of his statement. After these clashes, it is little wonder that the men felt a sense of relief upon crossing in to Serbia.[10]

When Mihailović reached Ravna Gora in western Serbia on 11 May[11] with his small band of officers and soldiers,[12] he probably did not have any clear or detailed goals. What aims he did have at the time were of a military nature, namely, the continuation of the struggle against the German invader.[13] Something of the confusion and uncertainty of the period was later recalled by one of the men:

> [Mihailović] did not immediately think about staying on Ravna Gora, since nobody knew the nature of the occupation or the strength of the enemy in the country. The immediate aims were: to stay out of the way, to organise, and to elevate belief in the final success of the Allies.[14]

Mihailović was just one of many Yugoslav officers who had avoided capture during the chaos of the April War and its immediate aftermath.

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[10] Mešković (1956) p. 29.
[11] Karchmar (1973) p. 80; Živanović (1962a) pp. 68-69.
[12] Six officers and twenty non-commissioned officers and soldiers (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 724).
[13] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 724.
[14] Mešković (1956) p. 32.

## Early Ideas

Possibly the earliest event at which Mihailović presented his wartime plans was a three-day meeting held from 14 to 16 May in Struganik in the home of Major Aleksandar Mišić, the son of the famous First World War Serb general Živojin Mišić.[15] Mihailović declared his intention to create a resistance organisation throughout Yugoslavia to continue fighting the invader,[16] which suggests that he believed he would find patriots in all regions of the country, and possibly amongst all of the nations, willing to join this resistance organisation. Nevertheless, he was convinced that the Serbian nation would play the leading role, declaring at the Struganik Conference his faith in the "strength and fighting spirit of the Serbian people, which has manifested itself throughout the centuries".[17] Mihailović thus planned for his movement to be a Serb-led one because of certain attributes the Serbian people supposedly possessed and which the other Yugoslav nations did not. Although the program outlined at the Struganik Conference was primarily of a military character, it did have a number of important political components; the position of the king and monarchy could not be questioned, nor the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.[18] The men "came to the unanimous conclusion that the entire previous Yugoslav leadership,

[15] Pantić (1948a) p. 1. In attendance were Mihailović, Colonel Branislav Pantić, Lieutenant Colonel Dragoslav Pavlović, Major Mišić, and Major Miodrag Palošević (Pantić (1948a) p. 1). Details of the Struganik Conference are based on the recollections of Pantić, the only participant who survived the war. His account is neither contentious nor uncompelling, and as such is probably more accurate than not.
[16] Pantić (1948a) p. 1.
[17] Živanović (1962a) p. 71.
[18] Pantić (1948a) p. 1.

especially the Croat [leadership], had committed treason",[19] as recalled by one of the participants.

Even if Mihailović did not annunciate any political goals at the time, he and the men around him nonetheless had some implicit political ideas and aims. Since they refused to surrender, they obviously did not agree with the invasion, dismemberment, and occupation of Yugoslavia. They saw themselves as the continuation of the Royal Yugoslav Army, which meant that they recognised the legitimacy of the Yugoslav state and its armed forces.[20] They believed that the military and political leadership would have to be punished for the shameful April debacle, as would those sections of the army that had not fulfilled their obligations, such as certain Croat officers and units.[21] The Yugoslav government-in-exile was viewed with not a little contempt; it had, after all, been quick to abandon Yugoslavia and save its skin.[22] Mihailović's national policy at the time was limited to the liberation of Yugoslavia, the maintenance of its territorial integrity, the punishment of those deemed responsible for the April disaster, and the return of King Peter. As such, it did not foresee any great changes to Yugoslavia after the war.

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[19] Pantić (1948b) p. 3.
[20] Karchmar (1973) p. 569.
[21] Karchmar (1973) pp. 82-83. This is not to say that the Croats bear responsibility for the April debacle, but rather that Mihailović and the officers believed this to be true (Pantelić (1956) p. 158). Mihailović was already inclined to this view even in the first days of the April War (See "The April War and Arrival on Ravna Gora" in this chapter). Later in the war, the NDH government reinforced this claim by asserting that the Croatian people had paralysed the Royal Yugoslav Army in the April War (Kovačić (1942b) Chapter V; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 78-79).
[22] Marjanović (1959) p. 196; Marjanović (1963) pp. 194-195.

At the end of May, a new factor entered Mihailović's equations. Waves of Serb refugees began streaming over the Drina River from the NDH,[23] bringing with them tales of the atrocities being committed against the Serbian population in eastern Bosnia.[24] Reports also began arriving on Ravna Gora about the Ustaša massacres.[25] Mihailović was greatly concerned by the killings in the NDH,[26] and in response organised and outfitted units composed of officers, refugees, and volunteers, and transferred them across the Drina to protect the Serbian populace from the terror of the Ustaše.[27] The massacres added a new dimension to the Yugoslav wartime drama, and thereafter concern for the fate of the Serbian people, and the desire to punish those who had persecuted and killed them, was an important factor in Mihailović's thinking and actions, and influenced his national policy.

## The Belgrade Committee

During the first few months of his movement's existence, Mihailović established it as a military organisation with primarily military goals, and made no effort to produce any political body or program.[28] This was due to a number of

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[23] Within the first three months following the establishment of the NDH, at least 150,000 refugees had arrived in Serbia (Karchmar (1973) p. 459). A great many of them were undoubtedly from eastern Bosnia, given its proximity to Serbia.
[24] Karchmar (1973) p. 90, Žujović (1948) p. 8.
[25] Kordić (1998) p. 30.
[26] Pantelić (1956) p. 158; Žujović (1948) p. 8. When Mihailović sent Vojislav Pantelić to eastern Bosnia he told him that his task was to "protect the Serbian populace from the Ustaše" (Pantelić (1956) p. 158).
[27] Karchmar (1973) p. 91; Pantelić (1956) pp. 158-159; Živanović (1962a) pp. 79-81, 136; Žujović (1948) p. 8.
[28] When Radovan "Raša" Ivanović, a journalist and writer, came to Ravna Gora in the summer and offered his services as propaganda chief, he was disappointed to learn that Mihailović "had no policy" (Lawrence (1947) p. 158).

factors, including Mihailović's disinterest in politics,[29] his consciousness of his lack of political acumen,[30] and a desire to present himself and his organisation as purely military and apolitical.[31] This changed when politics came to him, so to speak, in the form of a number of political figures from the Agrarian Union,[32] Democratic Party,[33] and Republican Party,[34] who came to Ravna Gora to join the resistance movement. Amongst them were his friends Lazar Trklja of the Agrarian Union,[35] and Mladen Žujović of the Republican Party.[36] Trklja returned to Belgrade, and in August[37] began to organise a committee to help Mihailović,[38] which subsequently became known as the Belgrade Committee (*Beogradski Komitet*).

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[29] Mihailović stated at his trial that "[p]olitics never interested me" (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 131).
[30] Captain Zvonimir Vučković wrote that Mihailović "made no pretense of being well versed in politics" (Vuckovich (2004) p. 59), and that he "did not claim to be thoroughly acquainted with the Croatian problem" (Vuckovich (2004) p. 136).
[31] On 30 June 1942, for example, Mihailović sent a telegram to a certain Captain Stevanović in which he wrote: "I forbid all politics" (Telegram (Number 40) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Captain Stevanović, 30 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 493). The following day he sent another telegram in which he declared: "This is not a political party" (Telegram (Number 47) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Captain Stevanović, 1 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 493). Major Žarko Todorović was similarly warned: "I forbid all politics. Work is to be purely military." (Telegram (Number 61) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Žarko Todorović, 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 495). See also Milovanović (1984) Volume I, pp. 328-330.
[32] Lazar Trklja, the party's general secretary, Vlasta Petković, Jovo Popović, Mate Rusković, Miloš Sekulić, Života Todorović, and others (Karchmar (1973) p. 570; Marjanović (1963) p. 187).
[33] Lazitch (1946) pp. 56-58; Marjanović (1959) p. 178.
[34] Pero Slijepčević, Dragiša Vasić, Vojislav Vujanac, and Mladen Žujović (Lazitch (1946) pp. 56-58; Marjanović (1959) p. 178).
[35] *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 117 (Footnote 6).
[36] Karchmar (1973) p. 572.
[37] Karchmar (1973) p. 570.
[38] Report for the Ministerial Cabinet of the Government-in-Exile, 26 January 1942, in Marjanović (1959) p. 179.

One of the first tasks that the Belgrade Committee[39] undertook was the formulation of a program of wartime and postwar aims, which was smuggled out of Yugoslavia in late September.[40] Divided in to four parts, the first section of the program outlined the wartime aims: a commitment to maintain a hostile attitude towards the occupier and its servants; fight only in self-defence; support Serbs in the NDH; prevent a civil war amongst Serbs; recognise the government-in-exile; and spread the resistance organisation throughout Yugoslavia.[41] Although this first part contains nothing particularly unexpected or controversial, the second and third sections are an entirely different matter. The second part outlines the actions to be undertaken in the days of the Axis collapse:

> a. punish all those who served the occupier in a criminal fashion and who consciously worked on the extermination of the Serbian people;
> b. delineate *de facto* Serbian lands and ensure that only Serbs remain in them;
> c. swiftly and radically cleanse cities and populate them with fresh Serb elements;
> d. create a plan for the cleansing or movement of the rural population with the aim of homogenising the Serbian national community;
> e. within the Serb unit an especially difficult problem is the question of the Muslims, which should be solved during this phase, if possible ...[42]

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[39] The members of the Belgrade Committee and their respective political affiliations were: Vladimir Belajčić (*Sokol* Association), Vidan Blagojević (Radical Party), Dimnik (Teachers' Association), Milija Janičijević (Youth Front for the Defence of the Fatherland), Milivoje Matić (Belgrade Commercial Youth Organisation), Jovo Popović (Agrarian Union), Stevan Stanković (Serb Cultural Club), and Miodrag Živanović (Democratic Party) (Karchmar (1973) p. 624 (Endnote 6)).
[40] Report by Miloš Sekulić, United Kingdom National Archives, FO 371/30221, R 10232/162/92.
[41] Program of the Belgrade Committee, undated, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 26-28.
[42] Program of the Belgrade Committee, undated, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 28.

The ultimate aim, according to the authors of the document, was the establishment of a "strong and homogenous Serb state unit, politically and economically capable of existing".[43] This was to be achieved through the forced expulsion of non-Serbs from what the authors considered to be Serbian lands, which are not possible to ascertain given the absence of any map or discussion of the regions that would be included in this postwar Serbia.

A number of scholars have sought to demonstrate a link between Mihailović and the Belgrade Committee's program. Tomislav Dulić called it "Mihajlović's [*sic*] September program",[44] and claimed that he sent it to the government-in-exile's military cabinet.[45] Jozo Tomasevich argued that "[w]e can assume that Mihailović endorsed all or most of the above proposals having to do with the territory of a Great Serbia"[46] because he "alludes to them"[47] in two documents authored by him in December. Such arguments, however, are baseless. No evidence exists that Mihailović participated in the formulation of this program or that he approved of it; most probably he did not even see it.[48] At the time of its formulation, he was on Ravna Gora and in limited contact with his organisation in Belgrade. Nor is it a sustainable argument based on the

[43] Program of the Belgrade Committee, undated, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 29.
[44] Dulić (2005) p. 107.
[45] Dulić (2005) p. 111.
[46] Tomasevich (1975) p. 170.
[47] Tomasevich (1975) p. 170.
[48] Karchmar (1973) wrote that it "is not known whether this particular program had the approval of Mihailović or even whether he ever saw it" (p. 571).

documents supposedly penned by him in December, as both of them are forgeries.[49]

The Belgrade Committee enjoyed only a short life; the Gestapo arrested some of its members, others slid in to inactivity, and the remainder were absorbed in to the military work of the organisation, so that by the autumn no more was heard of it.[50]

## Dragiša Vasić and the Central National Committee

In August, two significant events in the political life of the Chetnik Movement took place. The first was the arrival of Dragiša Vasić, a lawyer and member of the Serb Cultural Club. Born in 1885 in Gornji Milanovac,[51] Vasić participated in both Balkan Wars and the First World War, after which he began his writing and editorial career, publishing his first book in 1919 and launching the short-lived (19 May to 31 August) daily newspaper *Progres* the following year.[52] As punishment for his anti-government articles, he was sent to Albania in the autumn of 1920 to participate in the suppression of an uprising, and upon his return joined the Republican Party. He was friends with the famous Croat writers August Cesarac and Miroslav Krleža, and in 1922 defended a communist charged

[49] One of the documents is the forged Order Number 370, whilst the other – a proclamation to the Serbian people – is another forgery from the same time (Proclamation by Colonel Draža Mihailović for the Serbian people, end of December 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 1, Book 2, pp. 377-379). The document is dated "the end of December 1941" and signed "Colonel Draža Mihailović", but Mihailović had been promoted to the rank of Brigade General on 7 December (Karchmar (1973) p. 279). Furthermore, it gives the location as Ravna Gora, but Mihailović had abandoned Ravna Gora in early December (Karchmar (1973) p. 273) and did not return to it until 1943.
[50] Karchmar (1973) p. 571.
[51] Milovanović (1986) p. 163.
[52] The following is based on a biography of Vasić written by Milovanović (1986) as well as some supplementary details provided by Žujović (1948).

with attempting to assassinate King Alexander. An author of some note, Vasić was a critic of the regime and respected in leftist circles.

All of this changed abruptly following a visit to the Soviet Union in the autumn of 1927, where he was greatly disappointed by what he observed. When King Alexander instituted his personal dictatorship in 1929, Vasić greeted this move, believing that a strong government would solve Yugoslavia's woes. He largely abandoned politics and writing, and instead devoted himself to the practice of law. In 1937, however, he returned to politics, this time participating in the creation of the Serb Cultural Club and becoming one of its deputy presidents. The April War found him in Prijepolje with his colleague Žujović,[53] and the two of them decided to remove themselves to Gornji Milanovac for fear that they would be targeted by the invader because of their known anti-German sentiments. In Gornji Milanovac, Vasić came in to conflict with the local Partisans, and when two of Mihailović's officers visited him in August and offered him refuge on Ravna Gora, he accepted.[54]

Despite not having met prior to the war,[55] Vasić rose to become Mihailović's chief political advisor and hold an important position in the organisation[56] within a short period of time following his arrival.[57] The two men

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[53] Žujović (1948) pp. 11-12.
[54] Vučković (1980) pp. 93-94.
[55] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 377-378.
[56] Đelević (2004) p. 105; Karchmar (1973) p. 181; Vuckovich (2004) pp. 112, 122; Žujović (1948) p. 6. Karchmar (1973) described him as "one of its [the Mihailović organisation's] ruling triumvirate, of which the apex was Mihailović and the third member was Col. Dragoslav Pavlović, Mihailović's

formed a close working relationship, which Vasić described in the following words:

> After numerous conversations and discussions, our views, on both fundamental and various different issues, were unified. He led military affairs, and I those of a political nature. We informed one another about everything, but did not interfere in one another's work.[58]

This is rather odd given Vasić's personality, which Žujović described as "sensitive … [and] … quarrelsome".[59] Mihailović described him as "too much of a martinet for others to dare oppose him."[60] Vasić's rise was probably a result of the ideas he held, as they were similar to those of the officers on Ravna Gora. His unflattering views of politicians and politics in general[61] were not entirely unlike those held by a number of officers,[62] and his vehement anti-communism[63] found its milder counterpart in the general hostility towards communism felt by many officers.[64] Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Vasić was a Serb nationalist of rather extreme and even chauvinistic sentiments;[65] one officer recalled his "emphatic

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chief of staff." (p. 181). All three signed the first telegram of greetings to the government-in-exile when radio contact was established in September (Đelević (1956) p. 183).

[57] Reflective of Vasić's rapid rise was his presence at a meeting around 20 August between Mihailović and Pavlović, and two Partisan representatives (Karchmar (1973) p. 185). Interestingly, one of the Partisan emissaries, Miloš Minić, was the prosecutor at Mihailović's postwar trial.

[58] Milovanović (1986) pp. 256-257.

[59] Žujović (1948) p. 2.

[60] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 319.

[61] Karchmar (1973) p. 573; Topalović (1967) p. 9.

[62] Vučković (1980) pp. 92-93. Palošević explained that the Serb Cultural Club "assembled the "flower" of Serbian society so that the question of who should lead became self-evident" (Vuckovich (2004) p. 58) and that "democracy is a sound concept for social structure provided it is led by an elite" (Vuckovich (2004) pp. 57-58.

[63] Đelević (2004) p. 106; Vučković (1980) p. 94.

[64] Vučković (1980) p. 93.

[65] Karchmar (1973) p. 594; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 185-186; Wheeler (1980) p. 73.

nationalistic views".[66] Mihailović had chosen a political advisor who viewed the national question through the eyes of a Serb nationalist, and this played an important role in shaping his organisation's national policy in the first year of its existence.

The second important event that took place in August was the decision by Mihailović to create a political body, which he did, as he explained at his trial, because he "wanted to share the responsibility, and to prove that I did not want to establish a dictatorship".[67] A proposal was formulated for the creation of an organ of civil and political authority upon which the military side of the Mihailović movement could rely.[68] According to Žujović, this organ's

> [c]entral body was to be composed of the most representative members of political parties, of representatives of cultural and patriotic organisations well known amongst the people, of prominent individuals and intellectuals known domestically and internationally, and one member of the High Command.[69]

According to Mihailović, the first member of this new political body, named the Central National Committee (*Centralni Nacionalni Komitet*), was Vojislav Vujanac,[70] a Belgrade professor and member of the Serb Cultural Club, who was named its general secretary.[71] Other members included Mihailović, Lieutenant

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[66] Vuckovich (2004) p. 59.
[67] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 316. The decision to form a political organ may have been partly based on a growing alarm at the political dimension of the Partisans' National Liberation Movement (Wheeler (1980) p. 73).
[68] Živanović (1962a) pp. 124-125.
[69] Živanović (1962a) p. 125. The High Command was actually in Cairo at the time.
[70] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 317.
[71] Živanović (1962a) p. 126. Žujović (1948), however, claimed that he was only the secretary (p. 6).

Colonel Dragoslav Pavlović (his chief of staff), Vlasta Petković, Pero Slijepčević, Nikola Stojanović, Dragoslav Stranjaković, Vasić, and Žujović,[72] all of whom were Serbs. Vasić stayed on Ravna Gora, while Žujović went to Belgrade to enlist men for the Central National Committee.[73] Vujanac also returned to Belgrade and was given the task of proposing regional heads for various territories: two for Serbia (one was to be Vujanac), and one each for Bosnia, Hercegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Vojvodina.[74] The Central National Committee was thus to operate in provinces viewed by Serb nationalists as traditional Serbian lands. No mention is made of the predominantly Croat and Slovene regions of Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, and Slovenia. It was, as such, conceived as a Serb rather than Yugoslav organisation, although Mihailović and his collaborators did not explicitly state as much.

## Mihailović's Early Vision of Postwar Yugoslavia

Throughout the summer and autumn, Mihailović and his closest associates held discussions in which they formulated a postwar national policy.[75] Unfortunately, no contemporary record of the talks exists, but one of the participants survived the war and recalled their substance.[76] The discussions were conducted primarily by Mihailović, Pavlović, and Vasić, that is, by the three

[72] Marjanović (1959) p. 179; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 317.
[73] Živanović (1962a) pp. 125-126.
[74] Živanović (1962a) p. 126.
[75] Pantić (1960a) p. 1.
[76] The following is taken from two articles written in 1960 by Colonel Branislav Pantić, who knew Mihailović before the war (Pantić (1960a) p. 1) and was one of the first officers to join his movement (Karchmar (1973) p. 81), in which he played a prominent role. He was present at the Struganik meeting with the Partisans (Karchmar (1973) p. 81) and at the meeting with the Germans in Divci on 11 November 1941 (Marjanović & Stanišić (1976) p. 21). It must be remembered that the articles were written a decade and a half after the events, something that Pantić freely admitted prevented him from faithfully reconstructing the conversations.

most important figures in the organisation,[77] with Mišić and Colonel Branislav Pantić occasionally being present.[78] Given that these men trusted one another and spoke in private, the talks are particularly important since they represent what Mihailović and his most intimate associates planned for the postwar period.

Mihailović and his collaborators had some radical views on what the postwar Yugoslav state should look like.[79] The most prominent theme in their plans was the inclusion of Bulgaria in to a South Slav union which would retain the name Yugoslavia. It would revert to its original name, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, in the event that Bulgaria did not join, but this was something that Mihailović did not favour. Territorial claims against Albania, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Romania were formulated.[80] The new Yugoslavia was to be a union of four "national units"[81] – a Bulgarian, Croat, Serb, and Slovene – whose relations with one another would be worked out by "democratically elected people's representatives".[82] It was envisioned as a constitutional and parliamentary democratic monarchy, headed by the Karađorđević dynasty, and based on the "principles of justice, freedom, and equality".[83] The legislative branch would be bicameral; one house was to be elected from the entire state, and the other from the national units. Each unit

[77] Karchmar (1973) p. 181.
[78] Pantić (1960a) p. 1.
[79] See Maps 6 & 7.
[80] Pantić (1960a) p. 2. See Maps 6 & 7.
[81] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.
[82] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.
[83] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.

would have the right to organise its internal life according to the will of the people, through their democratically elected representatives.

Regarding the internal divisions, the national units would be based on the principle that all people who belonged to a single nation would reside in their national unit. Conscious of the nationally heterogeneous nature of much of Yugoslavia, Mihailović foresaw a five-year period in which population exchanges between the units on a voluntary basis would occur. The future of the heavily mixed areas of Banija and Lika would be decided by a plebiscite, as would Bosnia if external and internal forces made their unification with the Serb national unit difficult. In the event that the inhabitants of Bosnia chose not to join Serbia, it would form a fifth national unit. In either case, Dalmatia was to be added to Bosnia. The Serb national unit was to be divided in to a number of "autonomous regions":[84] Montenegro (including Hercegovina), North Serbia, South Serbia, Vojvodina, and possibly Bosnia. Furthermore, if Albania north of the Shkumbini River was annexed – which was the maximum territorial claim against Albania – it would be enlarged by the incorporation of parts of Yugoslavia with a large Albanian population (northwestern Macedonia, Metohija, and Kosovo) to become another autonomous region of the Serb national unit.[85] The drawing of borders would be undertaken only after an extensive study of demographics. For a period of between two and five years following the conclusion of the war, Yugoslavia would be under "temporary military administration"[86] to allow for

[84] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.
[85] See Map 7.
[86] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.

passions to settle, agrarian reforms to take place, population exchanges to occur, war criminals to be punished, and the German and Hungarian minorities to be expelled.

The core theme of Mihailović's plan is a commitment to Yugoslavia, which would be expanded to include the Bulgarians, and quite possibly the Albanians as well, depending on circumstances. It is flexible, especially regarding Bosnia. There is a commitment to federalism, as well as references to democracy, plebiscites, and the people's will. Collective punishment was foreseen only for the Germans and Hungarians, who were to be expelled. While Mihailović did not advocate collective punishment for the Croats and other Yugoslavs, he was aware that the desire for vengeance was strong amongst many Serbs and foresaw a temporary military dictatorship at the end of the war to prevent vengeance, anarchy, banditry, and other calamities that would surely accompany the withdrawal of the occupying powers. Admittedly, the postwar borders would have been drawn in the interests of the Serbs, but the Serb national unit would have been subdivided in recognition of the historical antecedents of some of the regions and, presumably, to appease demands for autonomy by the minorities who would remain in the Serb unit. The will of the people, as expressed through plebiscites, would determine the future of a number of nationally mixed regions. Whilst it recognised the Albanians, Bulgarians, Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs as constituent nations of the new Yugoslavia, it failed to recognise the Macedonians, Muslims, and Montenegrins as separate peoples.

## The Leader of Yugoslav Resistance

The first news about Mihailović that the outside world received was on 19 June when a Chetnik courier reached Istanbul and informed "royalist Yugoslavs"[87] that Mihailović was organising resistance in Yugoslavia.[88] Over the next few months, a steady stream of information from various sources flowed to the British and Yugoslav exiles about Mihailović and the situation in the country.[89] Mihailović and his government established radio contact on 26 September,[90] but the first message of any significance was probably sent on 6 October.[91] This first message reported that the "Ustaše have done terrible things to Serbs"[92] and that they were worse than "wild animals",[93] whereas regular Croat soldiers were reported as "fleeing".[94]

Eager to establish contact with the insurgents and their leader, a joint British-Yugoslav mission composed of Captain Duane Hudson, a mining engineer who had lived and worked in Yugoslavia before the war and spoke Serbo-Croatian,[95] and three Yugoslav officers (Major Mirko Lalatović, Major Zaharije

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[87] Roberts (1973) p. 22.
[88] Roberts (1973) p. 22.
[89] Trew (1998) pp. 31-47.
[90] Đelević (1956) pp. 182-183.
[91] Trew (1998) p. 56. These messages can be found in *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 32-36. See also Ilić (1995) p. 235.
[92] Telegram from Lieutenant Colonel Dragoslav Pavlović to the Government-on-Exile, 6 October 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 33.
[93] Telegram from Lieutenant Colonel Dragoslav Pavlović to the Government-on-Exile, 6 October 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 33.
[94] Telegram from Lieutenant Colonel Dragoslav Pavlović to the Government-on-Exile, 6 October 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 33. Whilst the telegram was signed by Pavlović, it is difficult to imagine that Mihailović would not have participated in its composition, or at least authorised it, given its importance.
[95] Biographical information on Hudson can be found in Pavlowitch (1995).

Ostojić, and Sergeant Veljko Dragičević) was sent to Yugoslavia.[96] Hudson and Ostojić reached Ravna Gora around 23 October.[97] If Mihailović anticipated useful information and instructions from these men, he was disappointed. The messages that Lalatović and Ostojić carried from the Minister of War, General Bogoljub Ilić, were "rather obscure";[98] far more useful were the codes they brought.[99] Hudson's message was vastly more important, if not a little cryptic: the British government "regarded the fight in Yugoslavia as being one by Yugoslavia against the invader and not primarily on behalf of any big power, either Russia or great Britain."[100] Mihailović later recalled that it was a message "to the effect that in Yugoslavia a rebellion would not be tolerated, but that the struggle should be waged for Yugoslavia and not become a struggle of the communists for the Soviet Union."[101] Three men had arrived who would play important roles in Mihailović's fate and that of his movement: Hudson would be the link with the British, and Lalatović and Ostojić would rise to positions of great authority and influence in the High Command.[102]

Mihailović was catapulted to national importance on 15 November when the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) transmitted a speech by General Dušan Simović in which he named Mihailović the "commander of all Yugoslav

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[96] Deroc (1998) provided the best study of this mission (codenamed "Operation Bull's Eye") (pp. 63-92).
[97] Trew (1998) p. 57.
[98] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 123.
[99] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 130.
[100] Minutes of conversation between J. R. Colville and Captain Duane Hudson, 13 June 1946, in Trew (1998) p. 59.
[101] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 124.
[102] Karchmar (1973) pp. 526-527. Lawrence (1947) described Ostojić as "an impressive man" (p. 164). Brief biographies of Lalatović and Ostojić can be found in Đelević (1956) p. 186.

armed forces that are fighting in the country",[103] and urged all patriotic forces to rally to his banner. The following day, the British sent a telegram to Hudson, who was in turn to relay it to Mihailović, which emphasised the Yugoslav character of resistance: "His Majesty's government now consider fight should be Yugoslavs for Yugoslavia, and not revolt led by Communists for Russia, if it is to prosper."[104] Receiving the recognition of the British and Yugoslav government-in-exile posed an important challenge to Mihailović; he was no longer merely the head of a rebellion centred on western Serbia, he was technically the leader of resistance in the whole of Yugoslavia, and this necessitated that he adopt a broad Yugoslav rather than narrow Serb view of the situation. He had to transform himself from a Serb to a Yugoslav leader. No longer could he appeal only to the Serbs; he had to, in principle at least, appeal to all citizens of Yugoslavia. So the following day Mihailović made a proclamation to the "Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes",[105] in which he informed them that the "free Yugoslav Government in London … [had placed all] … armed movements in the entire country"[106] under his command. Full of references to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the fatherland, the proclamation was an appeal to all patriotic Yugoslavs. It made direct reference to Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia, and outlined the aims of the struggle:

> To liberate the fatherland from the brutal tyrant, to return honour to our flags, to take them to the farthest borders where our people live, and to unite them in a Great Yugoslavia, arranged on the basis of a brotherly agreement between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes,

[103] Broadcast by Prime Minister General Dušan Simović, 15 November 1941, in Tomasevich (1975) p. 152.
[104] Telegram from London to Captain Duane Hudson, 16 November 1941, in Deakin (1971) p. 140.
[105] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 76.
[106] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 76.

> based on the respect of national rights and social order, in the interests of all national classes.[107]

Mihailović's declaration concluded with the promise of "a free life, greatness for the people, and prosperity for all South Slavs united under the protection of our common mother, Great Yugoslavia!"[108] In an effort to unite all patriotic elements in the country, Mihailović was employing the concept of a Great Yugoslavia, a state that would encompass all Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes, and respect their national rights. No mention was made of the other South Slav nations or the non-Slavs.

Mihailović, however, was named leader of Yugoslav resistance at the moment when his organisation was suffering a devastating blow at the hands of the Germans in Serbia, and when the two strains of resistance – communist and nationalist – were in the midst of a civil war. The German advance was sweeping through Serbia and crushing all opposition in its path.[109] Tito and the remnants of his Partisans – some 2,000 strong – escaped to the Italian occupation zone.[110] Mihailović's organisation was similarly hard hit, although quite a number of his units managed to survive by joining the Nedić regime's armed forces.[111] By the end of the year, Mihailović was hiding in the villages at the base of Mount Vujan with his small staff.[112] German pressure forced him to separate from his staff and

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[107] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 77
[108] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 77-78.
[109] Karchmar (1973) pp. 243-275.
[110] Karchmar (1973) p. 272.
[111] Karchmar (1973) estimated that between 3,000 and 3,500 Chetniks managed to 'legalise' themselves (p. 365 (Endnote 155)).
[112] Živanović (1966c) pp. 173-174.

adopt the life of a fugitive to avoid capture; he and a tiny group of trusted men moved about the snow-laden mountains of Serbia during that cold, miserable winter in an effort to avoid the German and Nedić patrols.[113]

## Mihailović and the Serb Nationalists of the NDH

The cycle of uprisings throughout the NDH during the summer of 1941[114] exploded independently of Mihailović and seems to have caught him somewhat by surprise.[115] Throughout July, he organised and outfitted units numbering between forty and fifty men, composed partly of Bosnian Serb refugees, and infiltrated them across the Drina River to assist their embattled brethren in eastern Bosnia.[116] These groups do not appear to have been sent with the task of organising the rebels, but rather to help them. Mihailović took an important step towards establishing his authority over the numerous insurgent groups in eastern Bosnia[117] some time in the second half of August when he dispatched a group of officers from Ravna Gora, headed by Major Boško Todorović.[118] The officers, however, were not the first on the scene; on 16 August, Major Jezdimir Dangić

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[113] With Mihailović were Nikola Kordić (bodyguard), Blagoje Kovačević (bodyguard), Slobodan Likić (wireless transmitter operator), Franjo Seničar (wireless transmitter operator and guide), and Zvonimir Vučković (Vuckovich (2004) p. 132). Seničar and Vučković were Croats. Kordić and Vučković survived the war and wrote about this period (Kordić (1998) pp. 63-73; Vuckovich (2004) pp. 132-135, 139-161).
[114] See Chapter II, "The New Order".
[115] Karchmar (1973) p. 90.
[116] Karchmar (1973) pp. 91, 464; Pantelić (1956) pp. 158-159.
[117] The most important rebel leaders in eastern Bosnia, their occupation, and area of operation included: Aćim Babić, a merchant, in the Han Pijesak region; Savo Božić, a priest, on Mount Trebava; the Čelonja brothers, Miloš and Rajko, near Vlasenica; Captain Aleksandar Damjanović in Semberija; Pero Đukanović, a wealthy peasant, near Srebrenica; Radivoje Kerović, another wealthy peasant, on Mount Majevica; Radivoje Kosorić on Mount Romanija; and Cvijetin Todić, a peasant, on Mount Ozren (Karchmar (1973) p. 461; Voinović (2001) pp. 47-51).
[118] The group comprised Major Boško Todorović, Captain Dušan Ilić, Captain Sergije Mihajlović, Captain Milorad Momčilović, Captain Nenad Nešić, Lieutenant Čeda Jovanović, Lieutenant Naum Zafirović, Second Lieutenant Vojin Miljković, and Second Lieutenant Stevo Voinović. The group was accompanied by Captain Sergije Mihajlović's sister, Milena (Voinović (2001) p. 45).

and a group of about thirty gendarmes and some Bosnian Serb refugees had crossed in to eastern Bosnia[119] independently of Mihailović and secured the allegiance of a number of rebel commanders in the region.[120] Nonetheless, Dangić and Todorović came to an agreement whereby Dangić was named commander of the nationalist forces and Todorović his chief of staff.[121]

As the Serb rebellions erupted in the different parts of the NDH, they were often accompanied by the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians by the insurgents.[122] The Muslims of eastern and southeastern Bosnia in particular suffered a great deal, although, it would seem not initially.[123] The capture of a number of towns in eastern and northeastern Bosnia during August[124] does not appear to have been followed by the mass killing of Muslims, although wholesale looting and individual killings did occur.[125] It was only in early September[126] that large scale killings of Muslim civilians began, although it was limited to the Višegrad District,[127] which can be partly explained by the fact that the Serbs of

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[119] The Interrogation of Major Jezdimir Dangić, 24 April 1947, in Đurić (2001) p. 80; Živanović (1962a) p. 136. Živanović incorrectly dated this as late July.
[120] Karchmar (1973) p. 464; Order by Major Jezdimir Dangić for *odred* commanders, 18 August 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 1, Document 4.
[121] Karchmar (1973) p. 465.
[122] Dizdar (2002) pp. 168-182; Karchmar (1973) pp. 447, 448-449, 449, 473, 481, 484; Lukač (1967) pp. 189-201, 269, 297-298; Tucaković (1995) pp. 14, 21-34, 194-197.
[123] Karchmar (1973) p. 462.
[124] These included Han Pijesak (10 August), Vlasenica (11 August), Drinjača (11 and 23 August), Bratunac (18 August), Srebrenica (18 August), Gračanica (23 August), and Maglaj (23 August) (Karchmar (1973) pp. 465-466).
[125] Dizdar (2002) pp. 178, 191; Karchmar (1973) p. 462. When Srebrenica fell to the rebels on 18 August, they limited themselves to looting (Dulić (2005) p. 190).
[126] Dulić (2005) p. 180.
[127] A rebel unit commanded by Milan Šaula, a peasant, killed seventy Muslims near Višegrad in the middle of September (Dulić (2005) p. 180).

this region had suffered a great deal during the reign of the Ustaše.[128] By October, the number of Muslim victims in individual massacres was in the hundreds.[129]

Although it is commonly asserted that the nationalist commanders instigated or at least encouraged the atrocities,[130] evidence exists that some of them attempted to halt these horrors. Dangić, for example, issued orders on 6 September to all *odred* commanders against "drunkenness, arguing, brawling, and the profanation of other religions".[131] Furthermore, he ordered the establishment of administrative councils on liberated territory which could contain members of any faith.[132] Finally, officials and military commanders were ordered to inspect villages weekly to ensure that "everyone, regardless of faith, should be better off under Chetnik administration than [under] the Ustaše".[133] During the siege of Višegrad in late October, Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić, the commander of the Višegrad Chetnik *Odred*, assured Todorović that "[n]ot a single Croat soldier or officer will be harmed following the taking of Višegrad".[134] In an effort to prevent plundering and the killing of non-combatants following the capture of the town, Jevtić issued specific orders on 1 November:

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[128] Dulić (2005) p. 179.
[129] Some 400 Muslims from Žepa and Žlijeb were massacred some time in October (Dulić (2005) p. 180).
[130] Dizdar (2002) p. 89; Dulić (2005) pp. 179-180, 191-192, 199-201, 203, 205, 207, 208; Tucaković (1995) p. 21.
[131] Authorisation and instructions by Major Jezdimir Dangić for *odred* commanders, 6 September 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 1, Document 16.
[132] Authorisation and instructions by Major Jezdimir Dangić for *odred* commanders, 6 September 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 1, Document 16.
[133] Authorisation and instructions by Major Jezdimir Dangić for the commander of the Han Pijesak *Odred,* 6 September 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 1, Document 16.
[134] Report by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for Major Boško Todorović, 1 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 58.

> The looting and burning of anybody's homes (except those which [give] any form of resistance) and the killing of people without a judicial resolution from the staff to which you are subject is most sternly forbidden, and whoever acts against this order will be immediately punished on the spot with execution.[135]

Another commander ordered the president of the Borike Municipality (Rogatica District) on 18 December to bring order to the zone under his jurisdiction, and to undertake measures to halt the killing of Muslim women and children, which, the commander argued, was a terrible sin in the eyes of God.[136] Despite these orders, the atrocities increased in size and intensity; when the Italians handed over the towns of Čajniče, Foča, and Goražde in southeastern Bosnia to the nationalist forces in early December, a large scale massacre of the Muslim populace ensued.[137]

To understand the mass killings in eastern and southeastern Bosnia during the autumn and winter, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the indigenous rebel leaders, officers, and armed peasant bands. Many of the insurgent chiefs had belonged to prewar nationalistic organisations and were imbued with chauvinistic ideas and hostility towards the Muslims,[138] ideas which permeated the populace of this region even before the war,[139] and in turn

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[135] Order by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for subordinate commanders, 1 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 58.
[136] Letter by the commander of the third company of the Rogatica Chetnik *Odred* for the president of the Borike Municipality (Rogatica District), 18 December 1941, in Kovačić (1942b) Chapter XI.
[137] Dizdar (2002) pp. 182-184; Dulić (2005) pp. 199-205; Karchmar (1973) p. 481; Tucaković (1995) pp. 35-59.
[138] Karchmar (1973) pp. 462, 479; Milazzo (1975) p. 63. According to Karchmar (1973), many of the rebel leaders had been members of the various prewar Chetnik associations and *Narodna Odbrana* (p. 462). See Šehić (1971) for an examination of the interwar Chetnik groups.
[139] Karchmar (1973) pp. 457-459, 481, 492; Milazzo (1975) p. 62.

influenced the rebel leaders.[140] The conduct of the Ustaše during their brief rule heightened such feelings; when the Serb masses revolted, they avenged themselves as violently and indiscriminately as they had been targeted by the Ustaše. Jevtić assessed the mood of the Serbian peasantry as such: "The people want and ask that all Muslims be annihilated from all regions where Serbs live."[141] The peasant leaders, being locals and thus highly influenced by the rebel masses, were more often than not all too happy to encourage, instigate, and participate in the massacres. The officers, on the other hand, were usually outsiders, and as such more moderate in their views; Jevtić, for example, wrote a letter on 20 December to the Provisional Administration of East Bosnia (*Privremena Uprava Istočne Bosne*), the political body in charge of the territory controlled by the nationalists, in which he advocated that it adopt a conciliatory attitude towards "honest Croats",[142] and Muslims who "defined themselves as Serbs",[143] warning that "[t]he Great Orthodox chauvinism may cost us dearly".[144] Although they had come to aid their fellow Serbs, the officers were often appalled by the rebels' behaviour; Dangić was so disgusted with the Serbian peasantry that he apparently once declared that he was ashamed to call himself a Serb.[145] Not all

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[140] Milazzo (1975) wrote: "The formation leaders were often civilian local notables, in many instances Orthodox clergymen, former politicians, civil servants, or village elders, who put regional interests above everything else and were highly influenced by the mood of the rank and file." (p. 59).
[141] Letter by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for Dragiša Vasić, 29 October 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 165, Folder 2, Document 32.
[142] Letter by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for the Temporary Administration of East Bosnia, 20 December 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 10.
[143] Letter by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for the Temporary Administration of East Bosnia, 20 December 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 10.
[144] Letter by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for the Temporary Administration of East Bosnia, 20 December 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 10.
[145] Karchmar (1973) p. 517 (Endnote 41). The source is an article in the Ustaša newspaper *Neue Ordnung* (Uzelinac, "Die Geheimnisse der Ravnagora", *Neue Ordnung* (Zagreb), Issue 145, 14 May 1944, p. 7), so it should be taken with a grain of salt.

of the officers, however, held such moderate views; Todorović, for example, argued that the willingness of the Italians to cooperate with the Chetniks should be exploited to achieve the "evacuation, extermination, and forcible expulsion of a significant number of Catholics and Muslims"[146] from eastern Bosnia.

Even though the officers issued orders against drunkenness, the killing of civilians, plundering, and the other deplorable manifestations of the rebellion, such orders were simply ignored, since the leaders, officer and civilian alike, failed to establish control over the armed units. Worse still, commanders were threatened and even killed by the unruly, violent peasant mobs, as detailed in a Chetnik intelligence report from 1942:

> One of the best unit commanders was murdered by his own men when he halted looting in Rogatica, and the late Major Todorović was threatened with a knife when he stood in the doorway of a shop to prevent theft.[147]

When the rebel leader Rajko Čelonja and his armed followers descended upon Srebrenica in late December to pillage, they targeted both Muslim and Serb houses, and forced the officer in charge of the Srebrenica District to hide for fear of his life.[148] The absence of discipline and order in the rebel ranks is illustrated in the testimony of a young Muslim woman who survived the terror in Foča:

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[146] Report by Major Boško Todorović for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 January 1942, in Hoare (2006) p. 152.
[147] Report by Captain Milorad Momčilović for Major Petar Baćović, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 323.
[148] Report by Captain Milorad Momčilović for Major Petar Baćović, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 322.

> Five to six days in to the Chetnik rule of Foča, a Chetnik and an Orthodox woman, who had been sent by my father, came to get me and take me home along with three other Muslim women ... We immediately came upon twenty-five Chetniks who ordered us to come with them even after our escort pleaded with them not to harm us. On this occasion, our female escort abused the Chetniks, telling them that their behaviour was inhuman ... After this, the Chetniks wanted to slaughter her with their knives.[149]

Even Dangić, who was supposedly the commander of the nationalist forces, never succeeded in establishing anything that even vaguely resembled authority over the indigenous commanders and their units. In March 1942, his position was described in the following words:

> Truly, when I arrived in Bratunac where Dangić was located I was disappointed, as I believed that the whole thing represented at least some vaguely organised machine. Unfortunately, in the staff, if it can be called that, there is no responsibility whatsoever ... Even the word command can not be employed, since in each sector (except in Han Pijesak, where [Captain Dragoslav] Račić was) commanders are largely independent and rarely implement orders ... [Dangić] has no authority over his subordinates, nor any popularity ...[150]

The failure to enforce discipline meant that the nationalist units remained little more than armed mobs bent on loot that would flee at the first sign of danger.[151]

Although it has been argued that Mihailović played a crucial role in instigating the massacres through the officers he sent to eastern Bosnia and

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[149] Statement by Sevda Hadžić to the NDH authorities, 31 December 1941, in Kovačić (1942b).
[150] Report by Major Radoslav Đurić for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 March 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 174-175.
[151] "By late fall of 1941, the Četnik units of East Bosnia were beginning to show a considerable decline of fighting spirit. They were easily demoralized by minor reverses, and repeatedly panicked or showed themselves unable to make headway against even comparatively small forces. Their weak point was discipline." (Karchmar (1973) p. 472).

Hercegovina,[152] this is wide of the mark. His links with the nationalist leadership were tenuous as best.[153] Dangić, although he visited Ravna Gora on at least two occasions,[154] acted independently, most notably in early November when he disregarded a desperate plea by Mihailović[155] to come to the rescue during a Partisan offensive that threatened to overrun Ravna Gora.[156] Furthermore, he sabotaged Todorović's work by failing to pass on the latter's reports to Mihailović.[157] Although Todorović was indeed Mihailović's man, he similarly failed to establish authority over the rebels and was only in very irregular contact with Mihailović,[158] and thus conducted policy as he saw fit. Despite Mihailović's weak links to the Serb nationalists in Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Hercegovina, he was shouldered with the burden of their crimes in the eyes of many Croats and Muslims.[159] Given the role that he assumed in the upcoming months, this is perhaps not particularly surprising.

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[152] Dizdar (2002) p. 89; Tucaković (1995) p. 21.
[153] Karchmar (1973) pp. 473-474.
[154] The first took place at the end of September (Karchmar (1973) p. 471), and the second on 20 October when he attended a conference of Chetnik commanders in Brajići (Karchmar (1973) p. 517 (Endnote 35)).
[155] Order by Colonel Draža Mihailović for Major Jezdimir Dangić, 9 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 72-75.
[156] Karchmar (1973) pp. 254-256, 477-478.
[157] In late November 1941, Captain Manojlo Pejić discovered that Dangić had not sent any of Todorović's reports to Mihailović, which Dangić admitted when Pejić confronted him (Report by Captain Manojlo Pejić, June 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 771).
[158] The first wireless transmitter was brought to eastern Bosnia in early March 1942 by Major Radoslav Đurić (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 173 (Footnotes 2 & 3)). Todorović was killed on 19 February 1942 (Announcement by the Partisan Operational Staff for Hercegovina, 23 February 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 4, Book 3, p. 230; Djilas (1977) p. 145; Tomasevich (1975) p. 158).
[159] Karchmar (1973) p. 129.

## Chapter IV

# 1942

The new year dawned with Mihailović in a most unenviable position. The uprising in Serbia of the previous year had been ruthlessly crushed, leaving his organisation in ruins, whilst he was reduced to the life of a fugitive, evading German pursuers by moving about western and southwestern Serbia with a handful of his most trusted men.[1] Indeed, Mihailović spent the first half of 1942 in almost constant movement in an effort to avoid capture by the German and Serb quisling forces. He celebrated Orthodox Christmas (7 January) in Gornji Pranjani,[2] after which he relocated to Mount Suvobor, where he spent the remainder of January and the following month.[3] On 18 March, he reported that he was near Takovo,[4] and at the end of the month, German pressure forced him

[1] Karchmar (1973) p. 281-283; Kordić (1998) pp. 63-73; Vuckovich (2004) pp. 132-135, 139-161; Žujović (1948) pp. 8-9.
[2] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[3] Trew (1998) p. 106.
[4] Trew (1998) p. 250 (Endnote 38).

to move south.[5] On 5 April, he was on Mount Čemerno with his staff,[6] but a German attack forced them to separate. He was, however, reunited with his staff on 21 May on Mount Zlatar.[7] Mihailović was thus detached from his staff for most of the first half of 1942, and only in irregular contact with it via courier, which, although it increased his safety, was hardly an efficient form of correspondence and led to extended delays in the communication of commands and information between Mihailović and his organisation.[8] Naturally, all of this hampered his work.

## Military Organisation

Despite the almost continual movement, some important tasks were accomplished in the first six months of 1942, mostly on the military side of Mihailović's movement. The period of relative peace on Mount Suvobor (most of January and February) enabled Mihailović to reestablish courier contact with his staff[9] and begin the process of reorganisation. On 11 January, he was named Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce (*Ministar Vojske, Mornarice i Vazduhoplovstva*) in the new Yugoslav government in London, a position which he could anticipate would give him additional weight in his dealings with the various political and resistance groups within Yugoslavia, since he could now speak in the name of the king and government.[10] On 14 February, he penned his Order Number 5 on the organisation of his army, by now officially known as the

[5] Trew (1998) p. 107.
[6] Trew (1998) p. 250 (Endnote 38).
[7] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[8] Karchmar (1973) p. 283; Žujović (1948) pp. 8-9.
[9] Karchmar (1973) p. 283.
[10] Karchmar (1973) p. 658.

Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland,[11] which established it as a territorial armed force.[12] By the beginning of spring, he once again had organisers in all of the districts of central and western Serbia.[13] Following the death of Major Boško Todorović on 19 February,[14] Major Radoslav Đurić and Lazar Trklja were ordered to eastern Bosnia to report on the situation, the former with a precious wireless transmitter.[15] Some time in the spring, Mihailović resumed radio contact with the British.[16] Whilst he possessed only a single wireless transmitter in 1941, Mihailović procured more of them the following year, and established a web of transmitters throughout Yugoslavia,[17] enabling him to maintain contact with the various armed units that recognised his leadership.[18] From all appearances, Mihailović seemed well along the path to rebuilding his organisation in Serbia in the first months of 1942.

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[11] Tomasevich (1975) p. 125 (Footnote 24).
[12] Order Number 5 by Division General Draža Mihailović for subordinate commanders, 14 February 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, pp. 106-113.
[13] Karchmar (1973) p. 282.
[14] Announcement by the Partisan Operational Staff for Hercegovina, 23 February 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 4, Book 3, p. 230; Djilas (1977) p. 145; Tomasevich (1975) p. 158. It is not entirely clear how Todorović perished. A contemporary Partisan report merely states that he was "destroyed" (Announcement by the Partisan Operational Staff for Hercegovina, 23 February 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 4, Book 3, p. 230). Tomasevich wrote that the Partisans found him "in possession of compromising documents having to do with collaboration with the Italians, [and] executed him after a quick trial" (Tomasevich (1975) p. 158), but did not quote his source. According to Djilas (1977), Todorović died in a gunfight with Partisans (p. 145).
[15] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 173 (Footnotes 2 & 3).
[16] Karchmar (1973) p. 284. Communication had ceased in December 1941 as a result of the German offensive.
[17] Bailey (1975) p. 71; Karchmar (1973) pp. 539-540. The main supplier of wireless transmitters was Rade Tomašević, an engineer in the employ of the Postal Ministry in the Nedić government (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 191 (Footnote 10)). He was later killed by the Germans at the mass execution site of Jajinci just outside of Belgrade (Žujović (1948) p. 8).
[18] By May, Mihailović could boast of his wireless transmitters to Christie Lawrence, a British officer who had escaped German captivity and was with Mihailović's staff (Lawrence (1947) p. 231).

## National Policy in the Spring

Although Mihailović's efforts in the first half of the year were devoted primarily to military matters, a fair amount of political work was nonetheless undertaken.[19] The political figures in Belgrade resumed their work;[20] a lively propaganda campaign was waged for the hearts and minds of the Croatian people; a number of leading Croats were approached; and a policy towards the Muslims began to take shape. Perhaps most importantly, Mihailović was introduced to the ideas of a man who would rise to become one of his closest political advisors.

The BBC greatly assisted Mihailović in his political work during this period. In almost daily broadcasts, Yugoslavs were reminded that he had been anointed leader of resistance by the British and Yugoslav governments, and that all patriots should rally to him.[21] The government-in-exile produced propaganda in the form of the daily Military Broadcast (*Vojna Emisija*), the contents of which were "written according to the explicit instructions of Army General Draža Mihailović, and under the supervision of the President of the Ministerial Cabinet,

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[19] One document supposedly penned by Mihailović in January 1942, titled *Polazno Stanovište*, was included in the collection of documents edited by Milan Vesović, Kosta Nikolić, and Bojan B. Dimitrijević (*Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 7-9). The date ascribed to this document (January 1942) is incorrect, since it mentions the agreements signed between some Bosnian Chetniks and the NDH which occurred in April, May, and June 1942 (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 216 (Footnote 4)). The document was probably written in early June, since it speaks of the High Command being outside of Yugoslavia at the time (it was transferred to Yugoslavia on 10 June 1942). It is not entirely certain whether Mihailović was the author, since he is referred to in the third person. I have chosen not to employ it.
[20] Milovanović (1986) p. 257.
[21] Trew (1998) p. 123.

Slobodan Jovanović."[22] On 19 March, the "Young Croat officers of the Yugoslav Army"[23] were asked over the radio:

> - do you still tolerate the bandits Pavelić and his Ustaše, who surrendered Dalmatia to the Italians, imprisoned the leader of the Croatian people, Dr. Maček, introduced a terrorist regime throughout Croatia under which not only Serbs are suffering, of which hundreds of thousands have been killed, but also Croats;
> - do you still allow these evil-doers to sit and speak in the name of the Croatian people, who have nothing in common with them;
> - will you permit these bandits to send Croats to the front against our Russian brothers, against their own freedom;
> - will you go in to battle against your Serb brothers and the Minister of the entire Yugoslav Army, the celebrated General Draža?
>
> Strike down these killers sooner rather than later.
>
> Establish contact with General Mihailović for a common struggle for freedom and the resurrection of our beautiful fatherland, Yugoslavia.[24]

Similar broadcasts were made on 26 March, 28 March, 2 April, and 23 April.[25] King Peter, on the anniversary of the 27 March *coup d'état*, called upon the Yugoslav people to

> recover after [the] enemy attacks and … get together and … organize under the supreme leadership of General Mihailović. Beware of too early actions which could cause great sacrifices completely out of proportion with possible results. In the struggle against the enemy,

[22] Military Broadcast, various dates, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5.
[23] Military Broadcast, 19 March 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5.
[24] Military Broadcast, 19 March 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5.
[25] Military Broadcast, 28 March 1942, 2 April 1942, 23 April 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5.

> everyone – Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes – will join when the right time comes and when the signal is given.[26]

On 17 May, the leader of the Croats in the London government, Deputy Prime Minister Juraj Krnjević, called upon Croats to join the Mihailović organisation.[27]

Within Yugoslavia, Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership undertook a number of initiatives to establish contact with leading Croats. These efforts centred on attempts to contact Vladko Maček, important figures in the Croat Peasant Party, prominent Croat public figures, and pro-Yugoslav Croat groups. By March, Mihailović had contacted Doctor Pinterović (Maček's secretary), and Gustav Krklec (a well-known Croat poet),[28] with whom he communicated through Mate Rusković,[29] a Croat member of the Agrarian Union who had come to Ravna Gora the previous summer.[30] Pinterović was given instructions by Mihailović,[31] but it is not known whether he was in contact with his political chief, given that Maček was under house arrest. Mihailović described these two men as his "link with Croatia".[32] On 10 May, his staff sent a telegram to Major Žarko Todorović, the chief of the Command on Belgrade (*Komanda Beograda*), which was responsible not only for the capital city but also for Croatia, informing him that a number of Croats sought to establish contact with Mihailović and

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[26] Broadcast by King Peter II, 27 March 1942, in Tomasevich (1975) p. 164.
[27] Đuretić (1983) pp. 210-211.
[28] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 5. Although the entry is undated, it is possible to date it approximately since the next entry is dated 25 March (p. 6).
[29] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 5.
[30] See Chapter III, "The Belgrade Committee".
[31] Telegram (Number 157) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 10 September 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 183.
[32] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 5.

requesting that a delegate be sent to Zagreb.[33] Not having received a response from Todorović, another telegram was sent on 25 May, in which it was reported that:

> We have information that large numbers of people in Croatia support us. The Muslims are very unhappy in the NDH. You should convince the Croats to liquidate the communists, and provoke quarrels between the Croats and Muslims. The defeat of Germany should be illustrated to the Croats as well as their obligation to liquidate their traitors if they desire a future community with us.[34]

Chetnik intelligence was accurate; at least two groups existed in Croatia that opposed the Ustaša regime and sought the liberation of Yugoslavia. One was the Yugoslav Revolutionary Movement (*Jugoslovenski Revolucionarni Pokret* – JRP), an organisation formed in Zagreb in early 1942 composed of Yugoslav orientated Croats.[35] The other, known by the acronym REKA, was composed of Croat political figures and officers in the NDH armed forces, and was headed by Captain Janko Dobnikar of the NDH airforce.[36] Todorović held a meeting with representatives of the JRP in Zemun on 31 May,[37] where the possibility of cooperation between the JRP the JVO was discussed, and it was agreed that regular contact would be maintained between the two organisations.[38]

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[33] Telegram (Number 17) from Major Mirko Lalatović to Major Žarko Todorović, 10 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 385-386.
[34] Telegram (Number 62b) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Major Žarko Todorović and Captain Aleksandar Mihailović, 25 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 387-388.
[35] Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 166-167; Milošević (2005) p. 215.
[36] Milošević (2005) p. 216.
[37] Milošević (2005) p. 215.
[38] Milošević (2005) p. 215.

A national policy towards the Muslims also began to take shape during the spring. Mihailović hoped that his government would assist him to gain the support of the Muslims, and on 22 April, he sent it the following telegram:

> To the President of the Yugoslav Government,
>
> In relation to Turkey's position, it is necessary to conduct propaganda amongst our Muslims to win them over and prepare them for the struggle against the occupying powers and Ustaše. Until now, the Muslims have been collaborating, and still are collaborating, with the occupying powers and Ustaše in the struggle against the Serbs.[39]

Two weeks later, another telegram was dispatched:

> The Muslims have thus far been exploited by the Ustaše and occupiers. Our population is preparing and exacting vengeance. By involving Turkey, the moment of Muslim reorientation is possible. I am engaged in that direction in the Sandžak so that the communists do not seize them. I plead for immediate propaganda via radio and leaflets for the Muslims regarding cooperation, and for the Serbs regarding accepting this cooperation.[40]

Mihailović believed that Turkey had influence with the Yugoslav Muslims and he hoped that his government would persuade its Turkish counterpart to employ this influence for his benefit. Whilst he presumed that the Muslims were collaborating with the Ustaše, he believed that they had been exploited and could be convinced to cooperate with the Serbs, probably meaning his Chetniks. At the time the telegram was composed Mihailović was aware of the mass killing of

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[39] Telegram (Number 145) from Division General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 22 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 353.
[40] Telegram from Division General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 6 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 248.

Muslims, but this was understood as the Serbs "exacting vengeance"[41] for the Ustaša massacres. His desire to cooperate with the Muslims was based, amongst other things, on the fear that his Partisan rivals might mobilise them. From his *communiqués* with his government, it appeared that Mihailović had adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the Muslims.

A diary entry from the period, however, shows that Mihailović had designs for the Muslims that were far less amiable:

> The question of the Muslim population must be resolved by the government.
> The Muslim population, with its behaviour, has brought itself to the situation in which our people do not wish to, or will, have them in their midst. It is presently necessary to begin preparations for their emigration to Turkey or anywhere outside of our territory. On the day of the uprising, they will all be moved from their communities, which nobody will be able to prevent.
> In the given moment, all Muslims will be moved from their homes. Those closer to Croatian regions, there – the main thing is to move them.[42]

Given that this is a personal diary entry, it is presumably indicative of what Mihailović sincerely thought, and is thus an important source for understanding his postwar plans for the Muslims, at least at the time of its writing. Despite stating that the government would determine the future of the Muslims, Mihailović outlined his views on the matter, which are quite clear: all Muslims would be forcibly expelled from lands inhabited by Serbs on the day of the great

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[41] Telegram from Division General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 6 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 248.
[42] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 34. The entry was written some time between 8 March (p. 31) and 5 April (p. 37).

uprising since Mihailović believed that the Serbian people no longer wished to live with them. Furthermore, the Muslims were to blame for the state of affairs, since their behaviour – presumably the participation of some Muslims in the Ustaša massacres – had earned them the enmity of the Serbs. Perhaps most interesting is Mihailović's justification for advocating such a policy; since the expulsion of the Muslims was the desire of the Serbian people, he could defend such a morally uncomfortable act by arguing that he was merely executing the will of his beloved Serbian nation.

Nonetheless, Mihailović deemed it prudent to seek cooperation with individual Muslim leaders during the spring. In late April, he ordered Major Zaharije Ostojić to contact Hasan Zvizdić, a Muslim trader from Sjenica who had formed a local militia composed of Muslims and Serbs.[43] A powerful warlord, Zvizdić was generally on good terms with the local Serbian populace, despite the anti-Serb sentiment of the Sandžak Muslims[44] who had been subjected to the terror of local Serb nationalist units.[45] On 1 May, Ostojić informed his commander that he had organised a meeting with Zvizdić for 5 May.[46] At this meeting, Ostojić and Zvizdić discussed the possibility of mobilising local Muslims for Mihailović's army,[47] and a letter written by Mihailović was delivered to the Muslim chieftain.[48] Although a meeting between Mihailović and Zvizdić was

[43] Karchmar (1973) p. 634.
[44] Milazzo (1975) p. 48.
[45] Milazzo (1975) p. 47.
[46] Telegram from Major Zaharije Ostojić for Division General Draža Mihailović, 1 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 250.
[47] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 390.
[48] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 390.

planned, it failed to eventuate and nothing more came of these efforts.[49] A number of months would pass before a new phase in Mihailović's relations with the Muslims commenced.

## Stevan Moljević

Some time in early 1942, a letter penned by a Serb lawyer from Banja Luka named Stevan Moljević reached Mihailović.[50] Moljević told Mihailović, Dragiša Vasić, and their colleagues and collaborators that Serbdom would be "eternally grateful"[51] to them for "saving its honour",[52] and although he recognised that their situation was difficult, he was "convinced that Serbia will not and can not abandon us,"[53] meaning the *prečani* Serbs under Ustaša rule. Moljević hoped that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership would take an interest in the fate of the Serbian people on the western side of the Drina River, which, as shall be seen, was one of Moljević's foremost concerns. Along with the letter, he sent a *mémoire* containing his proposed solution to the national question, and a map illustrating his suggested "delineation with the Croats".[54] Referring to the external and internal borders of his imagined postwar Serbia, Moljević wrote in the letter:

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[49] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 390.
[50] It is not entirely clear when this letter reached Mihailović. It was most probably penned in the second half of December 1941, given the reference to the upcoming Orthodox Christmas (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 101, (Footnote 1)).
[51] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 101.
[52] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 101.
[53] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.
[54] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.

> (1) Regarding the borders with our neighbours, this question will be resolved through peace agreements, although here too it would be best to present a *fait accompli* even before negotiations begin; but for this we lack the necessary military strength, which was foolishly squandered.
> (2) Regarding our internal question, the delineation with the Croats, we believe that it is necessary to immediately, as soon as the opportunity presents itself, collect all forces and present a *fait accompli*:
> (a) occupy the marked territory on the map;
> (b) cleanse it before anyone can compose themselves.[55]

Despite the absence of the map, it is possible to approximate where Moljević believed the border between Croatia and Serbia should be, because he named the cities and towns that the army should seize, and because he discussed the subject in another programmatic document written half a year earlier, which will be discussed shortly. The securing of the border of the proposed Serbia was to be followed by the "cleansing of the land of all non-Serb elements";[56] Croats would be expelled to Croatia, and Muslims to Turkey.[57]

Moljević's letter was accompanied by a *mémoire* titled *Homogenous Serbia*, which he had penned in June 1941.[58] It is quite possibly the most famous and oft-cited programmatic document associated with the Chetnik Movement,[59] and any discussion of the movement invariably cites it, seeking to demonstrate

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[55] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.
[56] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.
[57] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.
[58] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 1-10. Although the *Zbornik* editors wrote that they could not locate the *mémoire* sent along with the letter (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102, (Footnote 15)), it is safe to assume that it was *Homogenous Serbia*.
[59] *Homogenous Serbia* has the dubious honour of being the first document in the *Zbornik* series devoted to the Mihailović movement (Volume 14).

that it was the most comprehensive account of the Chetniks' political goals.[60] Moljević unambiguously outlined his primary goal in *Homogenous Serbia*:

> *to create and organise a homogeneous Serbia encompassing the entire ethnic territory upon which Serbs live*, and to ensure the necessary strategic and transportation lines and hubs, as well as economic areas so as to enable a free economic, political, and cultural life and growth for all times.[61]

This would be achieved through "[p]opulation shifts and exchanges, especially of Croats from Serbian regions and of Serbs from Croatian regions".[62] Much of the program deals with the borders of the future Serbia, which would "capture the entire ethnic territory upon which Serbs live with free passage to the sea for all Serbian regions which are near the sea."[63] The territory of Moljević's Serbia would have been greatly enlarged to include not only those regions with a sizeable Serbian population, but also a number with a negligible Serbian populace.[64] A great deal of space is devoted to naming the territories that the imagined postwar Serbia would encompass; particular attention is given to listing the districts and municipalities that would be incorporated in to what Moljević termed the Western Serb Province (*Zapadna Srpska Oblast*),[65] demonstrating

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[60] Tomasevich (1975) described it as the document that "contains the most complete statement of Chetnik territorial aspirations for a Great Serbia" (p. 166).
[61] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2 (Italics in original).
[62] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2. Tomasevich (1975) presented a slanted interpretation of Moljević's views on the issue of population exchanges, suggesting that it was only non-Serbs who would be subject to large scale population movements (p. 169). Conveniently, he failed to mention that Moljević envisioned such large population movements for Serbs as well.
[63] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2.
[64] See Map 8.
[65] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 3.

his extensive knowledge of these regions (Banija, Bosanska Krajina, northern Dalmatia, Kordun, and Lika).

An examination of *Homogenous Serbia* provides an insight in to why Moljević proposed such a radical program, and how he justified it. The "experience of the Serbian people in this war",[66] argued Moljević, made it clear that "the strength of a state"[67] is dependent upon its "internal unity and the spiritual closeness of its people in the moment of external threat".[68] Comparing Yugoslavia's experience in the Second World War to that of Greece, and to that of Montenegro and Serbia in the First World War, Moljević interpreted the April defeat as the result of the heterogeneous nature of the Yugoslav state, whereas Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia had been nationally homogenous; hence the need for a state free of dangerous and unreliable national elements. The Serbia envisaged by Moljević would not only be far more capable of defending itself against foreign aggression, but would also be able "to prevent a repetition of the heavy suffering that is inflicted upon Serbs by their neighbours as soon as the opportunity presents itself."[69] Another aim was to establish good long-term relations with the Croats:

> The movement and exchange of inhabitants, especially of Croats from Serbian regions and Serbs from Croatian regions, is the only way to effect delineation and to create better relations between them, and also to remove the possibility for the repetition of the frightening crimes which occurred even in the last war, but

[66] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 1.
[67] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2.
[68] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2.
[69] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2.

> especially in the present, on all territories upon which Serbs and Croats were mixed, and where Croats and Muslims exterminated Serbs according to plan.[70]

Despite the call for a Serbian state, Moljević believed that it should be part of a Yugoslav federation composed of three national units: Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia. The projected borders of Croatia would have somewhat approximated the ones established by the *Sporazum*, minus those districts with a large Serbian population in Banija, northern Dalmatia, Kordun, Lika, and eastern Slavonia, as well as quite a few with a negligible Serbian population in central Bosnia and central Dalmatia. Slovenia, on the other hand, would have been greatly enlarged. Southern Dalmatia and western Hercegovina, whose population is almost exclusively Croatian, would have enjoyed a "special autonomous position".[71] Whilst Moljević mentioned only the fate of the Croats and Serbs in *Homogenous Serbia*, the destiny of the Muslims was described in his letter from December 1941; they were to be expelled from the future Serbia.[72]

Another of Moljević's programs, written in February 1942, and titled *The Contemporary Position and Role of Individual Serbian Regions in the Creation of a Homogenous Serbian State*,[73] provides more information about his views on how best to solve the national question. Postwar Serbia would comprise five provinces – Bosnia (all lands west of the Drina River inhabited by Serbs),

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[70] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 2.
[71] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 4.
[72] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 102.
[73] Stevan Moljević, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1.

Montenegro, Serbia, South Serbia, and Vojvodina – which would be "cleansed"[74] of their non-Serbian population, preferably during the war. Croats would be expelled to Croatia and Muslims to Turkey, because "room no longer exists for us and them in these regions."[75] Moljević wrote at least another three tracts during the war:[76] *The Significance of the Yugoslav-Greek Union for Serbs and Serbia*,[77] *State Continuity after the War*,[78] and *The Muslims and the Creation of the Serbian State*.[79] Unfortunately, only the first of these survived.

The aforementioned writings provide a comprehensive view of Moljević's ideas and how he believed the national question should be solved. His primary goal was the unification of all Serbs in to one state, which would encompass Banija, Kordun, Kosovo, Macedonia, Metohija, Montenegro, Serbia, Vojvodina, most of Bosnia and Hercegovina, as well as parts of Dalmatia, Lika and Slavonia. Whilst such a state would have embraced most of the Serbian nation, it would also have contained large numbers of non-Serbs, primarily Albanians, Croats, Germans, Hungarians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims. It is known that Moljević foresaw the expulsion of the Croats and Muslims, but it can not be said with any certainty what plans he had for the other peoples. It can be

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[74] Stevan Moljević, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1.
[75] Stevan Moljević, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1.
[76] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Division General Draža Mihailović, 23 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 196-197.
[77] *Značaj Jugoslovenske-Grčke Unije po Srbe i Srbiju*. This was later published in the Ravna Gora Library series (Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 16, Folder 3, Document 1).
[78] *Državni Kontinuitet Poslije Rata*.
[79] *Muslimani i Stvaranje Srpske Države*.

conjectured that the larger non-Slav nations – the Albanians, Germans, and Hungarians – would also have been expelled given Moljević's obsession with national homogeneity. Regarding the expulsion of the Muslims to Turkey, he argued that the government-in-exile should come to an agreement with Turkey to accept the Muslims, since he was convinced that "the English will support us".[80] He believed that his policies would create a better Yugoslavia, stating at his trial that his "main aim was to renew Yugoslavia on new and healthy foundations."[81] The receipt of Moljević's letter by Mihailović was the first opportunity he had to acquaint himself with Moljević's wartime concepts.

**Biography**[82]

Moljević was born in the town of Rudo in eastern Bosnia in 1888 in to a family of peasant farmers.[83] He completed a law degree in Zagreb and established himself as a lawyer in Banja Luka where he married and had two children.[84] He was politically active in Yugoslavia, first becoming a member of the Democratic Party, and then of the Independent Democratic Party,[85] a splinter faction of the former created in 1924. Following the formation of the Serb Cultural Club in Belgrade, he organised a branch in Banja Luka and became its head.[86] His most important prewar writing was *The Role and Significance of the Vrbas Banovina*,

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[80] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 103.
[81] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 310.
[82] The only biography on Moljević is Dragoje Todorović's *Dr Stevan Moljević: Rečju, Perom, Delom i Životom za Ujedinjeno Srpstvo* (2000). Additional biographical information can be found in *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 18-19; Oblaković (1960) pp. 162-166; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 13; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 1 (Footnote 2).
[83] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 18-19; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 13.
[84] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 18-19; *The Trail of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 13.
[85] Oblaković (1960) p. 164.
[86] Milovanović (1986) p. 261; Oblaković (1960) p. 164.

first given as a lecture in Belgrade on 30 January 1939.[87] In the introduction, Moljević wrote:

> Serbs can not and will not allow, nor should Croats desire, the solution to the Croatian question to open up a Serbian question. It would be opened if the Serbs who live on the territory that contains Bosanska Krajina, Banija, Kordun, Lika, and northern Dalmatia, which forms a compact entirety of 1,200,000 souls, were to be placed in a subservient position towards Zagreb or Sarajevo.[88]

Expressing the apprehension of many *prečani* Serbs, he wrote that "Krajina fears that it will be sacrificed"[89] by Belgrade; indeed, the fate of Bosanska Krajina was one of his foremost concerns.[90] A wartime political opponent described him as "a tall, dry, grey, thin man with blue eyes and a snake-like stare. In everything he was extraordinarily simple, a real ascetic. He gives the impression of being a fanatic, a monk."[91] Lucien Karchmar described him as a "man not really liked but highly respected for his intelligence, his uprightness, and his personal asceticism ... [who] ... despite his personal virtues, was a fanatic, a rabid Pan-Serb of narrow views and great tenacity of purpose."[92] This purpose was clear; the creation of a nationally homogenous Serbia encompassing all Serb inhabited lands.

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[87] Moljević (1939).
[88] Stevan Moljević, *Uloga i Značaj Vrbaske Banovine,* in Oblaković (1960) p. 165.
[89] Stevan Moljević, *Uloga i Značaj Vrbaske Banovine,* in Oblaković (1960) p. 165.
[90] Oblaković (1960) p. 165. During his trial, Mihailović said that Moljević was "absorbed by the question of Bosnia, and the working out of statistics. That kept him very busy. I don't know if he was interested in military questions. But I know that he was chiefly interested in Bosnia, especially in Bosnian Krajina, because he lived in that region and was well acquainted with its statistics concerning nationalities. Even before the war, he published a book on Vrbaska Banovina and its backwardness." (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 317-318).
[91] Topalović (1967) p. 103.
[92] Karchmar (1973) pp. 580-581.

With the establishment of the NDH, Moljević abandoned Banja Luka and made his way to Montenegro.[93] In June, whilst in Nikšić, he penned *Homogenous Serbia*. After receiving a wound to the head while travelling from Šavnik to Lever Tara, he convalesced in Pljevlja,[94] where he wrote his first letter to Vasić some time before Orthodox Christmas.[95] On 13 January, he left for Serbia,[96] presumably in search of the already famous Mihailović, first stopping in Užička Požega and then Užice itself, where he wrote *The Contemporary Position and Role of Individual Serbian Regions in the Creation of a Homogenous Serbian State* on 26 February. A month later (23 April), he still had not located Mihailović,[97] although he found Vasić in Gornja Dobrinja at the end of April,[98] where they held discussions.[99] Moljević, however, was not entirely pleased with the meeting; he noted that Mihailović and Vasić had discussed his proposal, and that certain "explanations"[100] had taken place. Perhaps concerned that Vasić had misrepresented his views, he decided to find the general to, as he stated at his trial, "clear things up, to come to an arrangement with General Mihailović, and if he accepted my views on the rearrangement of the state and society, then to enter

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[93] The Interrogation of Stevan Moljević by OZNA (Bosnia and Hercegovina), 20 September 1945 (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence).
[94] The Interrogation of Stevan Moljević by OZNA (Bosnia and Hercegovina), 20 September 1945 (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence).
[95] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Dragiša Vasić, undated (probably from the end of December 1941), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 101-103.
[96] Milovanović (1986) p. 261.
[97] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Division General Draža Mihailović, 23 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 196.
[98] At his trial, Moljević erroneously stated that he met Vasić "in the middle of April 1942" (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 301). From his letter to Mihailović dated 23 April 1942 (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 196-199) it can be seen that he had not met either of them at that time.
[99] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 301.
[100] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 301.

the organisation".[101] By 13 May, he had located Mihailović's staff and given Major Mirko Lalatović a letter for Mihailović.[102] Mihailović was telegrammed with this news, and informed that Moljević's letter and a memorandum written by Vasić would be sent to him shortly.[103] These two documents probably reached Mihailović before his staff (21 May), allowing him time to read and contemplate their contents. On 16 May, Ostojić informed Mihailović that he and Moljević were "discussing very interesting and important questions",[104] and advised Mihailović to grant Moljević an audience.[105]

On 21 May, Mihailović arrived on Mount Zlatar with only three men.[106] Later in the day, Ostojić, Lalatović, and the staff arrived, along with the Mountain Royal Guard (*Gorska Kraljeva Garda*) under the command of Lieutenant Nikola Kalabić.[107] Whilst on Zlatar[108] Mihailović and Moljević, who probably came with

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[101] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 301-302.
[102] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Division General Draža Mihailović, 23 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 196-199.
[103] Telegram from Major Mirko Lalatović to Division General Draža Mihailović, 13 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 251.
[104] Telegram from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Division General Draža Mihailović, 16 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 254.
[105] Telegram from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Division General Draža Mihailović, 16 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 254.
[106] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[107] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[108] According to Mihailović's statement at his trial, he stayed on Zlatar for at least ten days (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 727-728).

the staff,[109] held a number of discussions.[110] Moljević claimed after the war that Mihailović accepted his views "in the main".[111] Mihailović recalled the meeting:

> Moljević was determined to learn from me my thoughts on the future arrangement of the country and I know that he wrote down everything we discussed. He was particularly interested to know if the region of Banja Luka would belong to Serbia or Croatia.[112]

Mihailović stated during his interrogation that Moljević "exclusively supported the Vrbas *Banovina* unreservedly becoming part of Serbia",[113] and that Mihailović "accepted the idea because of the crimes committed against the Serbian population in Bosnia by Pavelić."[114]

It is obvious that Mihailović took a liking to Moljević and his ideas, since they spent quite some time in conversation, and since Mihailović accepted Moljević's main aim, the unification of his beloved Bosanska Krajina with Serbia. Moljević possessed a number of characteristics that would have impressed and flattered Mihailović: he was intelligent, Spartan in lifestyle, a rabid Serb nationalist, and a sycophant.[115] Furthermore, he came highly recommended by men whose judgment Mihailović valued and trusted; Ostojić advised Mihailović

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[109] Mihailović confirmed during his interrogation that the meeting took place in May 1942 but did not give a precise date (The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499).
[110] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 301-302; The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499. Moljević stated that discussions were held between 23 and 26 May (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 302).
[111] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 301-302.
[112] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[113] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[114] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[115] Letter by Stevan Moljević for Division General Draža Mihailović, 23 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 196-199.

to grant Moljević an audience,[116] and Vasić had nothing but praise for the man and his concepts, describing *Homogenous Serbia* as having "left a good impression on me".[117] Finally, Mihailović was already inclined to accept the idea that Serb populated regions outside of Serbia should form part of any postwar Serbia.

Following the discussions on Zlatar, Moljević, rather surprisingly, returned to Serbia. At his postwar trial, he stated that Mihailović had invited him to Montenegro, but that he had declined the offer because he had promised Vasić that he would return.[118] Mihailović, on the other hand, stated at his interrogation that he had sent Moljević to help Vasić organise the Ravna Gora Movement (*Ravnogorski Pokret*).[119] Given Moljević's efforts to locate Mihailović, it is unlikely that he would have parted with him because of something as trivial as a promise, and it is for this reason that Mihailović's explanation is the more plausible. Irrespective, it is highly informative and true to character that Mihailović had no interest in taking any political figure with him on his further journeys. It would be almost half a year before the two of them would meet again.

## Ilija Trifunović Birčanin and the Croats of Dalmatia

Some time in the spring, Mihailović named Ilija Trifunović Birčanin his delegate for western Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika, and sent him a written

[116] Telegram from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Division General Draža Mihailović, 16 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 254.
[117] Letter by Dragiša Vasić for Division General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from early Spring 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 256.
[118] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 302.
[119] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.

authorisation to direct military and political activities in these regions.[120] Trifunović Birčanin had been the prewar head of *Narodna Odbrana* (National Defence), a nationalistic society, and it was largely due to the respect associated with such a position that he had established himself as one of the most important nationalist leaders in Dalmatia by the time Mihailović established contact with him.[121] Following his arrival in Split in early October 1941,[122] Trifunović Birčanin became chairperson of the Committee for the Assistance of Refugees (*Odbor za Pomoć Izbjeglicama*),[123] an organisation formed in Split in May 1941[124] to assist the large number of Serb refugees in the city and throughout the Italian annexations.[125] Although the committee was composed primarily of Serbs, it did have a number of Croat members.[126] Trifunović Birčanin contacted a group of Croat patriots who had formed a clandestine organisation in the autumn, headed by the well-known Croat writer Niko Bartulović,[127] which was committed to the liberation of Split and the parts of Dalmatia annexed by Italy.[128] It seems that the Committee for the Assistance of Refugees joined with this underground Croat body to form a new organisation called the National Committee (*Nacionalni*

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[120] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 40; Grđić (1956) p. 264.
[121] Milazzo (1975) p. 71; Plećaš (1983) p. 144; Tomasevich (1975) p. 158.
[122] Gizdić (1959a) p. 295 (Footnote 1); Tomasevich (1975) p. 158 (Footnote 121). He arrived before 10 October (Gizdić (1959a) p. 337).
[123] Barčot (2007) p. 702.
[124] Gizdić (1959a) p. 165.
[125] Martin (1990) p. 72.
[126] Some of the original members of the committee were Silvije Alfirević (the former head of the Split secondary school), Dr Avelin (from Zagreb), Dr Bubalo, Kulišić (the former head of the Vrlika District), Ćiro Madiraca (a judge), Marko Mikačić, Dr Ivo Miović (from Drniš), Dr Otmar Nonveiller (a lawyer), Dr Milko Stanković (from Dubrovnik), Pera Stoisavljević (an Orthodox priest and former parliamentarian from Sinj), Dr Ucović (a former prosecutor in Belgrade), Sergije Urukalo (an Orthodox priest from Split), and Duško Zafrank (Gizdić (1959a) p. 165 (Footnote 1); Gizdić (1959b) p. 64).
[127] See Žutić (2010).
[128] Martin (1946) p. 135.

*Komitet*).[129] Its head was Trifunović Birčanin, and some of its leading members were Silvije Alfirević (the former head of the Split secondary school), Bartulović, Radmilo Grđić (a journalist and Chetnik organiser in Dalmatia and Hercegovina),[130] Captain Radovan Ivanišević, Marko Mikačić, Tomo Mimica, Ivo Čičin-Šain, and Sergije Urukalo (an Orthodox priest from Split).[131]

Trifunović Birčanin was committed to working with the Croats for a new Yugoslavia. In a letter to Mihailović written in April 1942, he spoke of his faith in the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes: "The Serbian people, together with Yugoslav orientated Croats and Slovenes who believe in the state-building role of the Serbs, can not vanish in this bloody global cataclysm."[132] Whilst inspecting Chetnik units in the Bileća, Gacko, and Nevesinje Districts, he told them that "[t]oday the main battle is directed against communism, in which participate not only all the peoples of Europe but all South Slavs: Serbs, Croats and Slovenes".[133]

Armed with Mihailović's authorisation, Trifunović Birčanin worked to draw Croats from the territory under his jurisdiction in to the Chetnik Movement. One of his closest collaborators, the Croat writer Đuro Vilović,[134] claimed that Trifunović Birčanin "doggedly, patiently, and tirelessly endeavoured to connect [with] Croats who had not participated in Ustaša policy, as well as those who

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[129] Gizdić (1959b) pp. 64-65; Karchmar (1973) p. 596.
[130] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 109 (Footnote 9).
[131] Gizdić (1959b) p. 65.
[132] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Division General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the second half of April 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 223.
[133] Speech given by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin to Chetniks in Bileća, early July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 418 (Footnote 6).
[134] Biographical information about Vilović can be found in Bošković (2006).

expressed Yugoslav nationalism".[135] Propaganda was produced; in late May, a flyer attacking the Partisans was distributed,[136] and the National Committee began publishing a newspaper, *Krik iz Jama*, some time in the second half of the year.[137] Trifunović Birčanin also succeeded in attracting a number of Croat officers, including Major Marin Stude, Captain Vojimir Alfirević, Captain Krešimir Boraš, Captain Drago Laurić, Lieutenant Mate Amat, and Lieutenant Branko Šušlić.[138] By July they were organising JVO units along the Dalmatian littoral from Dubrovnik to Šibenik, and on the Adriatic islands.[139] Trifunović Birčanin instructed them to establish contact with the commanders of various *Domobran* units "so that in the given moment, when I order it, they go to the forest with their entire units as the Yugoslav Army, and immediately commence hostilities against German, Italian, Ustaša, and communist units."[140] Propaganda and the formation of JVO units on the Dalmatian islands were the responsibility of a Croat lawyer from the island of Korčula, Juraj Arnerić, described as a "much respected national worker and great patriot."[141] Trifunović Birčanin informed

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[135] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[136] Gizdić (1959b) pp. 254-255.
[137] *Krik iz Jama,* Issue 2, 4 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 33; *Krik iz Jama,* Issue 6, 6 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 1; Gizdić (1959b) pp. 763-764.
[138] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 424.
[139] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 424.
[140] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 425.
[141] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 424-425. Information on Arneri can be found in Barčot (2007).

Mihailović that he had given these men important tasks, "deeply convinced that I will not be disappointed."[142]

As well as busily organising the Chetnik Movement in Dalmatia, Trifunović Birčanin made efforts to collaborate with the Croat Peasant Party. Following talks in the summer with Šime Poduje, the former secretary of the party's Split branch, Poduje travelled to Zagreb to establish a link between the party's leadership and Trifunović Birčanin.[143] Trifunović Birčanin's cooperative attitude was reflected in the efforts of the Serb nationalists in the vicinity of Split to similarly collaborate with the Croats. The Serb National Committee for Bosnia (*Srpski Nacionalni Komitet za Bosnu*), most likely an offshoot of the one in Split, printed a leaflet titled "A Message to the Nationalists of Split and Dalmatia" around Easter,[144] which urged "Croat nationalists"[145] to form their own organisation so as to "cleanse the country of communists and reckon with the Ustaše."[146] In the region of the Bay of Kotor and Dubrovnik, Captain Đorđe Radmilović, the commander of the Bay of Kotor-Dubrovnik Chetnik Brigade, held discussions with the prewar Croat Peasant Party representative for Dubrovnik, Tomo Jančiković,[147] during the

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[142] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 424.
[143] Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 174.
[144] Serb National Committee for Bosnia, "Poruka nacionalistima Splita i Dalmacije", Easter 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 9.
[145] Serb National Committee for Bosnia, "Poruka nacionalistima Splita i Dalmacije", Easter 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 9.
[146] Serb National Committee for Bosnia, "Poruka nacionalistima Splita i Dalmacije", Easter 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 9.
[147] Jančiković was one of Maček's "staunchest supporters" (Tomasevich (2001) p. 357) and an opponent of the Ustaše; in early 1943, he produced a report in which he described them as "foreign, namely schooled, hirelings and scoundrels, terrorist Ustashas" (Tomasevich (2001) p. 357).

summer.[148] Mihailović had appointed a man as his delegate for western Yugoslavia who was working hard to draw Croats in to the Chetnik Movement.

## Mihailović's Arrival in Montenegro

Mihailović's arrival on Mount Zlatar on 21 May[149] heralded a new phase in the tumultuous life of the Chetnik Movement and its leader. In addition to being reunited with his staff and Captain Duane Hudson, he met and spoke with Moljević. Mihailović's meagre retinue – he had arrived on Zlatar with only three men[150] – thus increased to about seventy officers and soldiers.[151] This group was soon joined by Major Petar Baćović and his retinue.[152] Cheery tidings reached Mihailović whilst on Zlatar; he was informed about the fighting against the Partisans in Montenegro and the Sandžak, which was going in the nationalists' favour.[153] The Germans, however, had not given up the chase, and after only a few days on the mountain,[154] the group was forced further south to the desolate Mount Golija.[155] Their patience finally at an end, the Germans launched a full scale operation against Mihailović (Operation *Forstrat*) between 31 May and 4 June.[156] German pressure, Montenegro's proximity with its promise of life under the far more benign Italian occupier, and the news of the successes of the

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[148] Report by Captain Đorđe Radmilović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 17 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 619-622.
[149] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[150] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727.
[151] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 390. This figure probably does not include Baćović's men.
[152] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[153] Kordić (1998) p. 73.
[154] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 727-728.
[155] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 727; Trew (1998) p. 107.
[156] Trew (1998) p. 107.

Montenegrin Chetniks against the Partisans, undoubtedly influenced Mihailović's decision to abandon his beloved Serbia.

When Mihailović left Serbia, he came to lands with indigenous nationalist commanders, and armed with his titles and personal skills, he set about establishing himself as their leader. He had already named Trifunović Birčanin as his delegate for western Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika. General Blažo Đukanović, the leader of the Montenegrin nationalists,[157] declared his loyalty to Mihailović in April,[158] and in June, Baćović was given eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina.[159] Major Borivoje Mitranović was ordered to Mount Romanija to organise the Sarajevo District, whilst Major Miladin Đukić and Major Slavoljub Vranješević were sent to Bosanska Krajina.[160] At the beginning of summer Mihailović was visited by Major Karlo Novak, who he named his delegate for Slovenia.[161] Mihailović was working to create a nationwide movement and to cement his position as leader. While in northern Montenegro in the middle of July, he received a report from Baćović informing him that Trifunović Birčanin was in Hercegovina, and urging him to cross the border and hold a meeting with his delegate for western Yugoslavia.[162] Mihailović agreed.

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[157] Karchmar (1973) pp. 401-402.
[158] Karchmar (1973) p. 402.
[159] On the appointment of Baćović as commander of Chetnik units in eastern Bosnia (Čajniče, Foča, Rogatica, Sarajevo, and Višegrad districts) and Hercegovina, see Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 229, Folder 5, Document 55. His chief of staff was Captain Danilo Salatić.
[160] Telegram (Number 49) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Lazar Trklja, 1 July 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 119.
[161] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 516.
[162] Report by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 428; The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 391.

The conference held on 22 and 23 July[163] in Avtovac, near Gacko, was one of the most notable in wartime Yugoslavia, if for no other reason than the important figures in attendance. Assembled were many of the most important nationalist leaders: Mihailović, Trifunović Birčanin, Ostojić, Baćović, Captain Pavle Đurišić, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, Radojica Perišić and Captain Milorad Popović (two commanders from Hercegovina), three unknown men (Captain Kostić, Marko Vujačić, and Jefta Pavić), and Dobroslav Jevđević, one of Trifunović Birčanin's closest political collaborators.[164] Details of what happened are sketchy,[165] but it is known that Yugoslavia was carved up and various territories allotted to some of the men present.[166] Essentially, Mihailović reaffirmed his earlier appointments. According to statements made by Trifunović Birčanin and Jevđević to the Italians after the event, one of Mihailović's main concerns and motives for organising the meeting was his wish

> to gain insight in to the position of the Orthodox population in the area which the Italian troops had been obliged to abandon and which had been occupied by the Croatian troops. Mihailović also wanted to discuss the measures which should be taken in order to prevent a repetition of the persecution of the Orthodox population by the "Wild Ustaše" (the resettlement of part of the Serbian population to Montenegro and the assignment of Montenegrin

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[163] Report by Vittorio Castellani (Consul of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attached to the Staff of the Second Army) for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-821,* Roll 252, Frame 297.
[164] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 391; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 31.
[165] It seems that the only wartime document about this meeting is a German translation of an Italian intelligence report based on what Jevđević and Trifunović Birčanin told the Italians when the two Serbs were questioned about the meeting (United States National Archive, Record Group 242, *T-821,* Roll 252, Frames 297-303).
[166] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 391-392. Mihailović parceled out the following territories: Dalmatia, Lika, and western Bosnia to Trifunović Birčanin (with Ivanišević as his chief of staff), eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina to Baćović, eastern Montenegro and the Sandžak to Đurišić, and the rest of Montenegro to Stanišić.

> detachments to combat stations for the purpose of protecting them).[167]

This anxiety with protecting Serb lives was one of Mihailović's main concerns and influenced much of his wartime behaviour,[168] including the policy of collaboration with the Italians,[169] which he seems to have approved at the meeting.[170] Whilst Mihailović was far from pleased with the relationship between the Italians and Serb nationalists that he found in Montenegro and the NDH,[171] there was little he could do about it; he had little more than his titles and a handful of officers and soldiers, while these men had established their fiefdoms and had the loyalty of large numbers of armed men.[172] Even if the Chetnik-Italian collaboration displeased him, Mihailović could nonetheless see its tangible results: armed units far larger than anything he had in Serbia controlling large swathes of the countryside, and, perhaps most importantly, a means of protecting the Serbian people from the persecution of the Ustaše.

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[167] Report by Vittorio Castellani (Consul of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attached to the Staff of the Second Army) for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-821,* Roll 252, Frame 298.
[168] Karchmar (1973) wrote about the "casualty consciousness which characterized the Četnik Movement ... [which] if not itself irrational, nevertheless led to irrational decisions" (p. 939).
[169] Karchmar (1973) pp. 939-941.
[170] Report by Vittorio Castellani (Consul of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attached to the Staff of the Second Army) for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-821,* Roll 252, Frame 298.
[171] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 142, 144. At his trial Mihailović stated that he "disliked the situation" (p. 142) and that it was "so bad that it could not be improved" (p. 144).
[172] Karapandžić (1958) p. 201. To his credit, Mihailović brought a detailed plan to the Avtovac Conference which outlined the actions to be taken on the day of the uprising against the Germans and Italians, and managed to convince the nationalist leaders to accept it, although this would not have been especially difficult since the plan required nothing of them at the present moment (The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 391).

On the second day of the Avtovac Conference, another meeting took place in Trebinje[173] attended by Trifunović Birčanin, Jevđević, Radmilo Grđić, Milan Šantić, and Radovan Tunguz Perović.[174] The five men "unconditionally acknowledged Draža Mihailović as their supreme commander and leader",[175] according to a German intelligence report on the meeting.[176] Šantić gave a speech in which he declared that the aim of the Chetniks was the "[c]reation of Great Serbia",[177] and elaborated how this could be achieved:

> We must be prepared for when our time arrives. Serbian lands must be cleansed of Catholics and Muslims. Only Serbs will live in them. The cleansing will be accomplished thoroughly. We will squeeze and destroy all of them without exception or pity. This will be the starting point of our liberation.[178]

Šantić justified his plan by arguing that "[w]hat the Catholics and Muslims did to the Serbian people gives us the moral justification for everything we do."[179] He

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[173] Letter Number G 50/42 from the German Consulate in Sarajevo to the German Embassy in Zagreb, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,026.
[174] Letter Number G 50/42 from the German Consulate in Sarajevo to the German Embassy in Zagreb, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,026. Šantić was a journalist who had been sent by Mihailović's Belgrade organisation to Hercegovina in autumn 1941 to organise Chetnik units (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 108 (Footnote 2)). Tunguz Perović was a Montenegrin Serb writer from Nevesinje.
[175] Letter Number G 50/42 from the German Consulate in Sarajevo to the German Embassy in Zagreb, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,026.
[176] Letter Number G 50/42 from the German Consulate in Sarajevo to the German Embassy in Zagreb, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,026.
[177] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,027.
[178] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,028 (Underlining in original).
[179] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,028.

recommended temporary good relations with disaffected Croats and Muslims since they could be utilised to attack the Italians, thus bringing reprisals upon their communities rather than Serbian ones.[180] It is not known if the other meeting attendees spoke, or if any resolutions other than recognition of Mihailović's leadership were passed.[181] Furthermore, it can not be asserted whether Mihailović supported any statements made at the meeting, or whether he was even aware that it was being held.

If the new environment that Mihailović found in Montenegro and the NDH coerced him to adapt to new military conditions and personalities, the political climate of these lands was similarly novel and forced him to confront new ways of thinking. Many of the nationalist leaders in Montenegro and the NDH disliked, or even hated, the Albanians, Croats, and Muslims,[182] and although this animosity had historic roots, it was greatly exacerbated by the persecution of the Montenegrin and Serbian populace in 1941. In eastern Montenegro, where Mihailović now found himself, these feelings were particularly strong. This region was the home of the Vasojevići tribe, known for its long history of conflict with, and general dislike of, its Albanian and Muslim

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[180] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,028.

[181] The only source on this meeting would appear to be an intelligence report produced by the German consulate in Sarajevo, to which is attached a transcript of Šantić's speech. Interestingly, nothing is said about whether any of the other men spoke at the meeting; it is quite possible that Šantić was the only one present who gave a speech, but this is unlikely. Perhaps Šantić's speech was included in the report precisely because of its chauvinistic content. Whatever the facts, Šantić's statements were his own, and assertions that they were adopted as official policy (Milazzo (1975) pp. 94-95) seem wide of the mark.

[182] Karchmar (1973) p. 578; Milazzo (1975) pp. 45-46.

neighbours,[183] which the war amplified; the Vasojevići lands had seen an influx of Montenegrin and Serb refugees from Kosovo, Metohija, and the parts of Montenegro annexed by Albania, and had been devastated the previous year by Albanian irregulars recruited by the Italians during the suppression of the Montenegrin uprising.[184] Consequently, nationalist leaders in this area viewed the Albanians and Muslims as their main enemy.[185] Đurišić, the man on whom Mihailović was most reliant for protection and support in Montenegro, and who was the most powerful figure amongst the Vasojevići, was possessed of a particular hatred of the Muslims.[186] Moljević's views, whilst certainly extreme, were not entirely atypical of those held by many Serb nationalist leaders and intellectuals in the NDH.[187] By the spring, even Vasić was spouting Serb chauvinism, whereas the previous year his position had been milder; in a letter to Mihailović commenting on Moljević's writings, he wrote that the "question of a homogenous Serbian state, which is to encompass the entire ethnic territory upon which Serbs live today, is beyond discussion. All Serbs agree with this."[188] It was largely inevitable that the prevailing political climate in Montenegro and the NDH would have an impact on the thinking of a man like Mihailović, especially

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[183] Karchmar (1973) p. 578; Milazzo (1975) pp. 45-46.
[184] Joksimović (1958) pp. 94-95; Karchmar (1973) p. 384.
[185] Milazzo (1975) pp. 45-46.
[186] As early as 25 July 1941, Đurišić proposed driving out the Muslim population in the area between Berane and Rožaje (Roberts (2007) p. 360 (Footnote 61)).
[187] An example is the *Proposal of the Dinaric Division* written in March 1942 by three leading officers from this Chetnik unit (Major Borivoje Radulović, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, and Captain Milo Rakočević, *Proposal of the Dinaric Divison,* 12 March 1942, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 262-266). It called for the creation of "a Great Serbia, which would encompass: Serbia, Vojvodina, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Montenegro, Dalmatia (to Šibenik) and Lika … <u>In this imagined Serb unit only Orthodox inhabitants may reside</u>." (Major Borivoje Radulović, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, and Captain Milo Rakočević, *Proposal of the Dinaric Division,* 12 March 1942, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 263 (Underlining in original)).
[188] Letter by Dragiša Vasić for Division General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from early Spring 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 259.

given that such views were held by individuals with strong personalities that he respected.[189]

Following the Avtovac Conference, Mihailović and his staff, which had been named the High Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland (*Vrhovna Komanda Jugoslovenske Vojske u Otadžbini*) on 10 June,[190] returned to northern Montenegro.[191] The lack of food forced a move, this time to the hamlet of Polja Kolašinska, just outside of Kolašin, where they stayed for either one[192] or two[193] months. In late summer, Mihailović and the High Command moved once again, this time to the hamlet of Gornje Lipovo at the base of the mighty Sinjajevina mountain range, not far from Kolašin, where they remained for the rest of the year.

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[189] Karchmar (1973) provided an insightful description of the impact of the climate in Montenegro on Mihailović: "In Montenegro, Mihailović was submerged in a completely different political climate. He was now surrounded by men whose attitudes were far more extremist than was the case in Serbia. Virulent Great Serbian opinions were common. A characteristic of the men of Northern Montenegro on whom he now depended was a bitter and bloodthirsty anti-Moslem prejudice ... In his contacts with, and increasing dependence on, the Herzegovinians and Dalmatians, the situation was no better; here he found a pervading hatred of the Croats ... Furthermore, in both Montenegro and Herzegovina the primary preoccupation of the natives was not so much the war as the merciless internal struggle they had just fought against the Communists ... in Montenegro he was surrounded by an atmosphere of multiple holy war: against the Communists, against the Moslems, against the Croats; this could not but have an effect on his own opinions, partly because these trends seemed to be what a large part of his beloved Serbian people really wanted, and partly because these opinions were held by prominent personalities and powerful intellects which he respected." (pp. 577-578).
[190] Telegram (Number 35) from Slobodan Jovanović to Division General Draža Mihailović, 11 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 837.
[191] Kordić (1998) p. 84.
[192] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 392.
[193] Kordić (1998) p. 89.

## The Government-in-Exile and its National Policy

When a new Yugoslav government-in-exile was formed in London on 11 January 1942 under the prime ministership of Slobodan Jovanović, a respected Serb historian and jurist, Mihailović was named Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce.[194] Accepting this ministerial position seemed like a judicious move by Mihailović; the government had come to power as a result of an anti-German *coup d'état*, it contained representatives of most of the largest political parties,[195] and it had the support of the Allies. Although he would be required to obey orders, and support and implement official policy, he could expect a great deal in exchange. Other than financial, material, and propaganda aid, Mihailović could anticipate assistance in the form of advice, directives, and information, and that his official position would give him legitimacy, increase his authority, and make him the lightning rod for all anti-Axis forces in the country.

From its beginning, the government gave the impression that it was not only sincerely devoted to the Yugoslav idea, but that it desired to create a new and better Yugoslavia. In his declaration of 4 May 1941, General Dušan Simović

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[194] Tomasevich (1975) pp. 262-263.

[195] The composition of the government-in-exile at the end of 1941 was: General Dušan Simović (Prime Minister, officer, Serb), Slobodan Jovanović (Deputy Prime Minister, academic, Serb), Juraj Krnjević (Deputy Prime Minister, Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Miha Krek (Deputy Prime Minister, Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Jovan Banjanin (Yugoslav National Party, Serb), Rudolf Bićanić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Srđan Budisavljević (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Branko Čubrilović (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Milan Gavrilović (Agrarian Union, Serb), Franc Grabovšek (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Milan Grol (Democratic Party, Serb), General Bogoljub Ilić (officer, Serb), Bogoljub Jevtić (Yugoslav National Party, Serb), Ilija Jukić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Sava Kosanović (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Lojze Kuhar (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Božidar Marković (Democratic Party, Serb), Milan Martinović (Serb), Vladimir Milanović (Serb), Momčilo Ninčić (Radical Party, Serb), Franc Snoj (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Ivan Šubašić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Juraj Šutej (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), and Miloš Trifunović (Radical Party, Serb) (Đuretić (1982) p. 14 (Footnote 1); Tomasevich (1975) p. 49).

emphasised that the government's main aim was the struggle for the liberation of the country, and that the *Sporazum* was "one of the building stones of state policy".[196] In early 1942, King Peter declared:

> Yugoslavia will tomorrow once again be its own ruler and on our crown will once again shine those precious gems which represent our various regions – Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia with Hercegovina, Slavonia, Vojvodina, Montenegro, Serbia with South Serbia.[197]

Jovanović expressed his view on how the national question could be solved:

> Neither Serbian nor Croatian nationalism alone can take us along the correct path, but only when they are welded with the Yugoslav state idea, just as the Yugoslav state idea will not have any strength if it is not joined with Serbian and Croatian nationalism.[198]

Public statements made by the most important figures in the exile government wholeheartedly supported the restoration of Yugoslavia. The question remained: what kind of Yugoslavia?

The first discussions on the future of Yugoslavia occurred in late 1941 when the government received a draft declaration written by representatives of the Yugoslav emigrant community in North America.[199] This document was discussed at a cabinet meeting on 11 November 1941, where the ministers, despite

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[196] Declaration by Prime Minister General Dušan Simović, 4 May 1941, in Đuretić (1983) p. 167.
[197] Speech given by King Peter II at the National Defence Public Interest Committee, 2 January 1942, in Đuretić (1983) p. 177.
[198] *Jugoslovensko-Američki Glasnik* (San Francisco), 24 April 1942, in Đuretić (1983) p. 208.
[199] The draft declaration stated: "We proclaim that the restoration of Yugoslavia, a new state of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, is the only guarantee of our future." (Draft declaration by North American Yugoslavs, in Đuretić (1983) p. 209).

some minor disagreements, agreed with its contents.[200] Even so, a declaration was not produced. In early April 1942, George Rendel, the British envoy to Yugoslavia,[201] informed the exiles that it was necessary to formulate a declaration and suggested a few points.[202] When the *émigrés* failed to produce such a document, Rendel suggested to Jovanović that the British might formulate a draft proposal for the divided Yugoslavs, to which Jovanović acceded.[203] The resulting draft declaration was completed by the middle of May,[204] and although it had much to commend it,[205] was opposed by almost the entire cabinet.[206] Further

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[200] Đuretić (1983) p. 209.
[201] The diplomatic mission to the government-in-exile was raised to embassy rank in May 1942 (Đuretić (1983) p. 213).
[202] These included: (1) a reconfirmation of the principles of the Corfu Declaration of 1917; (2) a commitment to a union of equal partners; (3) an expression of loyalty to King Peter II and the Karađorđević dynasty; (4) a statement of intent to maintain Belgrade as the common capital; and (5) a reaffirmation of the *Sporazum* (Đuretić (1983) p. 212; Wheeler (1980) p. 148).
[203] Đuretić (1983) p. 213.
[204] Wheeler (1980) p. 149.
[205] The draft declaration contained the following suggestions and positions:
(1) it is recommended that an emphasis be placed on faith in the final victory of the Allies;
(2) to emphasise that the events of 27 March 1941 led to the establishment of a government truly representative of the people;
(3) that the spontaneous and heroic resistance of the people illustrate the depth of the movement, which reprisals only strengthen;
(4) it is demanded that the declaration should be in line with the Atlantic Declaration and the policies of the Big Three;
(5) an emphasis should be placed on the transformation of the political, social, and economic structure of Europe;
(6) the following guiding principles should be emphasised: (a) restoration of government on democratic and constitutional principles, guarantees of individual freedoms (reference to Roosevelt's Four Freedoms); (b) the passing of a new constitution which will enshrine principle of federalism and Karađorđević dynasty; (c) reaffirmation of the Corfu Declaration and Rome Agreement as well as the principle of equality of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes; (d) recognition of the 1939 *Sporazum* until the constitutional assembly makes the final decision, which should be in agreement with the Croats and Slovenes; (e) all of this is to be prepared before the sitting of the constitutional assembly;
(7) the government should declare the principles of federalism and monarchism as the basis;
(8) the principle of federalism must guarantee that one part of the country is not sacrificed for another, that some functions will be joint, but that in economic and administrative affairs each unit will have responsibility;
(9) there exists a general agreement of the need for three federal units (Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia), but after the liberation the possibility of forming other units will be considered, "where the population is mixed", but not at the expense of the union;

efforts by the British and Jovanović failed to produce any results; no declaration could be formulated that satisfied all parties.[207] On 16 July, Jovanović called a halt to the proceedings.[208] The British were so frustrated with the Yugoslavs that they did not pursue the matter further.[209]

A number of moderates in the cabinet made another attempt to produce a declaration in the autumn.[210] Despite his belief that the project should be dealt with after the war and that it was more important to establish cooperation between Maček and Mihailović in Yugoslavia, Jovanović signed on to the project.[211] The Foreign Office, in spite of some reservations about the wisdom of supporting a common South Slav state,[212] declared that it was more important than ever for a declaration to be made to reassure the Croats and Slovenes, because there existed a Great Serb faction determined to establish Serb hegemony after the war.[213] The moment appeared to be propitious. The entire project, however, stumbled and eventually failed.

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(10) the government must emphasise that the massacres committed by the Pavelić regime are abhorrent to the Croatian people and Catholic clergy, that they are a result (especially in Bosnia) of the enemy's policy of "divide and rule" (Đuretić (1983) pp. 213-214).

[206] Wheeler (1980) wrote that "[t]he most extreme Serbs (now led by Gavrilović) considered it nothing but a "Croat document"; Jovan Banjanin, an integral Yugoslavist, rejected explicit federalism; the Serbs in general objected to mention of the Pact of Rome, the Croats to the Corfu Declaration; many ministers regarded the call for a constituent assembly as implying that their own government was unconstitutional; while Grol was of the opinion that it was premature to consider constitutional questions at all." (p. 150).

[207] Wheeler (1980) pp. 150-151.

[208] Wheeler (1980) p. 150.

[209] Đuretić (1983) p. 217.

[210] The move was initiated by Jovan Banjanin (Serb; Yugoslav National Party), Milan Grol (Serb; Democratic Party), Ilija Jukić (Croat; Croat Peasant Party), and Juraj Šutej (Croat; Croat Peasant Party) (Wheeler (1980) p. 151).

[211] Wheeler (1980) p. 151.

[212] Đuretić (1983) p. 230; Wheeler (1980) p. 152.

[213] Wheeler (1980) p. 152.

Despite the importance of formulating a declaration on wartime and postwar aims, the Yugoslav government-in-exile was unable to do this throughout 1941 and 1942. Whereas the Serb ministers had readily accepted the *Sporazum* as a starting point for negotiations on the postwar shape of Yugoslavia in the immediate aftermath of the April War,[214] news of the Ustaša massacres strained relations between them and the Croats.[215] Relations were further damaged by the confrontational and obstructionist behaviour of the Croat representatives,[216] especially their leader, Juraj Krnjević.[217] Questions were raised by the Croats as to the accuracy of reports emanating from Yugoslavia about the massacres of Serbs.[218] To a certain extent, this is understandable; the reports with their tales of barbarity and astronomical numbers must have appeared incorrect, or worse, to the Croats.[219] Later, a clearer picture emerged of the nature and magnitude of the massacres, but instead of unreservedly condemning the actions

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[214] Declaration by Prime Minister General Dušan Simović, 4 May 1941, in Đuretić (1983) p. 167.
[215] Đuretić (1983) pp. 171-173; Jukić (1974) pp. 110-112.
[216] Rendel (1957) described the behaviour of the Croats as marked by a "short-sighted obstinacy" (p. 216). Given that the cabinet functioned on the principle of unanimous decisions, the Croats were able to paralyse its functioning, which they did (Karchmar (1973) p. 652).
[217] Krnjević has been condemned by friend and foe alike for his behaviour during the war. Đuretić (1983) placed the lion's share of the blame on him for the conflicts in the cabinet (p. 205). Jovanović (1976) alleged that Krnjević had told him that Yugoslavia was "founded on lies and violence", and that the "Croatian people would not have accepted it had it not been forced on them." (pp. 59-60). Karchmar (1973) described him as a man who "belonged to a rather extreme faction of the [Croat Peasant] Party, and did not appear able to make up his mind whether he preferred a federal Yugoslavia or an independent Croatia; his loyalty to the government of which he was a member was minimal." (p. 650). Even his Croat Peasant Party colleague and fellow minister Jukić (1974) claimed that he was more interested in creating conflict than engaging "in any genuine debate regarding the future of Yugoslavia." (p. 139). Jukić (1974) described his wartime behaviour as such: "Krnjević was so anxious for Allied intervention that he often engineered clashes in the cabinet in the hope that they would intervene and impose their own solution. He was hoping, obviously, for a solution favorable to the Croats, leading perhaps to a dissolution of the Serbo-Croatian partnership, if not during the war then certainly after it. Meanwhile, he considered it his duty to keep the Serbo-Croatian dispute going." (p. 148).
[218] Martin (1946) pp. 52-53, 56; Đuretić (1983) p. 173.
[219] According to Jukić (1974), Krnjević simply could not believe the enormous scale of the massacres and suspected that it was Serb propaganda (p. 145).

of the Ustaše and offering their sympathies to their Serb colleagues,[220] the Croats expended their energies on questioning the accuracy of reports and emphasising Croat victims.[221] Krnjević and the Croats insisted that any discussion of Yugoslavia's future be dependent on the acceptance of the *Sporazum*,[222] but this was no longer acceptable to many Serbs, who, after the Ustaša massacres, would not allow any of their compatriots to remain in a postwar Croatia.[223] Nor were the Serbs completely blameless; many of them held chauvinistic views[224] and made little effort to allay Croat fears of postwar retribution.[225] Some, like the envoy to the United States, Konstantin Fotić, adopted a decidedly anti-Croat and anti-Yugoslav stance.[226]

The most difficult issue in formulating a postwar declaration was undoubtedly the territorial question.[227] The Croat ministers would accept nothing less than the borders established by the *Sporazum*,[228] and Krnjević wanted even more territory.[229] Not to be outdone, the Serb chauvinists in the government

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[220] Đuretić (1983) p. 170.
[221] Đuretić (1983) pp. 203-205. See Rudolf Bićanić, *Comments on the Memorandum of the Serbian Orthodox Church Addressed to General Danklmann,* 1 March 1942, Archive of the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (*Arhiv Saveznog Sekretarijata za Inostrane Poslove Jugoslavije*), Government-in-Exile, Folder 3.
[222] Đuretić (1983) p. 203.
[223] Wheeler (1980) p. 153.
[224] The worst offender was undoubtedly Momčilo Ninčić, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.
[225] Ninčić, after reading the Sekulić report, apparently declared that "after the war at least 100,000 Croats would have to be killed in retribution." (Jukić (1974) p. 111).
[226] Karchmar (1973) p. 688. In November 1942, Fotić stated that the "Yugoslav idea is the greatest threat to Serbia" (Đuretić (1983) p. 230).
[227] Karchmar (1973) p. 653.
[228] Đuretić (1983) p. 203.
[229] Krnjević informed Rendel that the Croat Peasant Party sought the inclusion of Bosnia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, central and southern Istria, Slavonia, and western Vojvodina in the postwar Croatia (Letter by Juraj Krnjević for George Rendel, June 1943, United Kingdom National Archives, FO 371/37630, R 5235/246/92).

made a number of extravagant claims of their own.[230] As the British historian Mark Wheeler noted: "Serb and Croat pretensions to Bosnia, Hercegovina and Dalmatia were irreconcilable ... The obvious solution – a Bosnian unit within a Yugoslav federation – was inconceivable to both Serbs and Croats in the exile government".[231] The main reason for their failure to formulate a solution to the national question – which admittedly was incredibly complex – was their lack of will to compromise; these old men were blinded by their loyalty to narrow national and party interests.

Despite the dismal failure of its efforts to produce a declaration on wartime and postwar aims, the government did raise issues related to the national question in its *communiqués* with Mihailović. On 6 June, Jovanović asked him if he had any contacts with Maček's organisation and if he was collaborating with it.[232] A few weeks later, on 15 July, Jovanović enquired if Mihailović had a similar organisation in Croatia and Slovenia, and if he had contacts with the Croatian armed forces.[233] The *émigrés* also informed Mihailović about negative stories concerning him and his movement in the international media. On 23 July, he was informed that the official newspaper of the Swedish Communist Party, *Ny Dag*, had published an article claiming that the Chetniks

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[230] "Vladimir Milanović, the Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires ... spelled out for Rendel the extent of his territorial ambitions ... [:] ... All of Bosnia, Hercegovina, the former Habsburg Military Frontier and the Adriatic littoral south of Metković ... would be incorporated in a greater Serbia (which, of course, already included Montenegro, Sandžak, Vojvodina and Vardar Macedonia)." (Wheeler (1980) p. 299 (Endnote 111)).
[231] Wheeler (1980) p. 153.
[232] Telegram (Number 32) from Slobodan Jovanović to Division General Draža Mihailović, 6 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 836.
[233] Telegram (Number 56) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 838.

had betrayed the Partisans,[234] which was one of the first shots in the propaganda war against Mihailović outside of Yugoslavia.[235] On 15 August, he was told about a memorandum presented by the Soviet Foreign Ministry to the Yugoslav Legation in Kuibyshev on 3 August in which Mihailović and the Chetniks were accused of collaborating with the Italians, Nedić, and Ustaše.[236]

If questions about collaboration and Mihailović's failure to cooperate with the Croats, Slovenes, and others troubled the government-in-exile, it was not manifested in its behaviour towards him. On 11 June, he was informed that his headquarters had been named the High Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, and Mihailović the chief of staff.[237] Five days later he was promoted to the highest rank in the Royal Yugoslav Army, that of Army General.[238] On 6 August, King Peter sent him a personal telegram in which he wrote: "We authorise and congratulate your work, as well as that of your collaborators, for the good of our people and resurrection of our fatherland."[239] Jovanović similarly wrote on 31 August: "I agree entirely with your views. The battle that you are leading can only have a military and general national [*opštenarodni*] character.

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[234] Telegram (Number 68) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 23 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 839.
[235] Karchmar (1973) pp. 406-407. The article carried the Tjentište Resolution composed at a meeting of Partisan political figures on 16 June.
[236] Telegram (Number 78) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 840. See also Karchmar (1973) p. 826; Roberts (1973) p. 63; and Trew (1998) p. 142.
[237] Telegram (Number 35) from Slobodan Jovanović to Division General Draža Mihailović, 11 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 837.
[238] Telegram (Number 46) from Slobodan Jovanović to Division General Draža Mihailović, 16 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 837.
[239] Telegram (Number 75) from King Peter II to Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 839-840.

Consider the whole of Yugoslavia as your military region".[240] Although it is questionable how well-acquainted King Peter and Jovanović really were with Mihailović's views and work, such glowing commendations and wholehearted support could not have failed to further convince Mihailović of the correctness of his behaviour and policies, and that he should continue in the same vein. This, coupled with little more than vague references to Yugoslav unity emanating from the king and government, meant that Mihailović was forced to decipher such ambiguous messages as best he could. He and his movement were thus deprived of the guidance they were entitled to expect from their government.

## Ismet Popovac and the Beginning of Cooperation with the Muslims

When Mihailović abandoned the nationally homogenous heartland of Serbia, he came to lands with a sizable Muslim population, which necessitated that he adopt a stance towards them. The massacres of Muslims by Serb rebels, most notably in southeastern Bosnia, had created a chasm between the two peoples, and Mihailović, despite his tenuous links to the insurgents, was considered the chief architect of these horrors; in a letter by the Muslims of the Čajniče District to an Italian commander from May 1942, Mihailović was described as an "unreasonable man ... [who had] ... come to a frightening idea: to destroy all Muslims with flame and sword in the lands upon which they have lived for centuries".[241] Many Muslims viewed Mihailović as chiefly responsible for

[240] Letter Number 94 by Slobodan Jovanović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 31 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 842.
[241] Memorandum by the Muslims of the Čajniče District for General Giovanni Esposito (commander of the Fifth Alpine Division "Pusteria"), 20 May 1942, in Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, p. 681.

the crimes by virtue of his position as commandeer of the JVO. It would not be an easy task to change their minds.

Despite the animosity and distrust that existed between Muslims and Serbs as a result of the mutual massacres, a few examples of tolerance and even cooperation existed. In the autumn of 1941, a wealthy Muslim landowner from Konjic named Mustajbeg Hadžihuseinović attempted to create an organisation that would unite Muslims and Serbs on a pro-Chetnik platform.[242] In northern Montenegro, a unit named the Kovač Muslim Chetnik *Odred* had been formed in the Kovač Municipality (Pljevlja District).[243] Muslims and Serbs organised the National Committee of Serbs and Muslims for Southeast Bosnia and Hercegovina (*Nacionalni Komitet Srba i Muslimana za Jugoistočnu Bosnu i Hercegovinu*) in the summer of 1942.[244] In response to the reestablishment of Ustaša control in Mostar and its surrounds, the committee members sent a letter to the commander of the Italian Sixth Army appealing for assistance against the Partisans and Ustaše, and promising to maintain peace and order, and to protect communication lines from Partisan attacks.[245] Although they distrusted and feared the NDH government, they were prepared to cooperate with it insofar as

[242] Tucaković (1995) p. 143 (Footnote 1).
[243] Tucaković (1995) p. 143 (Footnote 1).
[244] Letter by the National Committee of Serbs and Muslims for Southeast Bosnia and Hercegovina for General Renzo Dalmazzo (commander of the Sixth Corps, Second Italian Army), undated (probably from the summer of 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 12, Document 13.
[245] Letter by the National Committee of Serbs and Muslims for Southeast Bosnia and Hercegovina for General Renzo Dalmazzo (commander of the Sixth Corps, Second Italian Army), undated (probably from the summer of 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 12, Document 13.

the Italians promised to act as arbitrators.[246] But these were all local initiatives, not Mihailović's.

The beginning of cooperation between Mihailović and the Muslims began on 16 July 1942, when one of his officers, Captain Vojislav Lukačević,[247] held a meeting in Mostar with two Hercegovinian Muslims, one of whom was Ismet Popovac,[248] a Muslim leader from Hercegovina.[249] Popovac offered cooperation and expressed his desire to induce the Muslims to fight the Croats; his only precondition was that the Chetnik leadership employ its influence with the "Serbian masses ... to settle emotions."[250] Lukačević informed Mihailović that the "attitude of the Muslims is penitent",[251] and that the Muslim intelligentsia felt the urge for "rehabilitation".[252] He asked for permission to begin working with the

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[246] Letter by the National Committee of Serbs and Muslims for Southeast Bosnia and Hercegovina for General Renzo Dalmazzo (commander of the Sixth Corps, Second Italian Army), undated (probably from the summer of 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 12, Document 13.
[247] Some biographical data on Lukačević can be found in *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 205-206 (Footnote 20).
[248] Telegram (Number 109) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482. It seems that the Italians had tried unsuccessfully in the spring to organise a meeting between Jevđević and Popovac (Karchmar (1973) p. 598).
[249] Details concerning Popovac's prewar life are unclear. He was either a lawyer (Tomasevich (1975) p. 240 (Footnote 119)) or physician (Redžić (2005) pp. 33, 143), from either Mostar (Redžić (2005) p. 33) or Nevesinje (Redžić (2005) p. 143). According to Karchmar (1973), he was also the "former mayor" of Konjic (p. 590). One wartime document, written by a nationalist leader who had held a discussion with Popovac, describes him as a "physician from Nevesinje" (Letter by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 566). He was also a member of the Independent Democratic Party (Dujmović (2005) p. 61 (Footnote 24)).
[250] Telegram (Number 109) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.
[251] Telegram (Number 114) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.
[252] Telegram (Number 114) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.

Muslims, and for instructions.[253] Popovac was not the only such Muslim; Jevđević reported that in Mostar and other larger towns throughout Hercegovina there existed "small groups of Muslim intellectuals, pure Serbs, who have adopted a very correct stance and who have helped us greatly in political tacticising, declaring in numerous resolutions that they identify themselves with the Serbs and support their requests."[254] After the meeting with Lukačević, Popovac attended a conference in Čapljina on 24 July organised by followers of Avdo Hasanbegović, a prewar Minister of the Interior,[255] which was attended by a number of Muslim leaders, Major General Augusto Lussiana of the Italian Army, and several Chetnik commanders.[256] The aim of the meeting was to create voluntary Muslim Chetnik anti-communist units.[257]

After speaking with Lukačević, Popovac penned a letter to Mihailović.[258] He wrote that he had observed that Mihailović and the government-in-exile had adopted an appropriate stance towards the Muslims for which all "correct Muslims are grateful."[259] He then went on to remind Mihailović that the Muslim people had not, either "as an entirety or through any qualified forum",[260] recognised the NDH, and that a significant number of important Muslims

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[253] Telegram (Number 114) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.
[254] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Major Petar Baćović, undated (probably from the second half of July 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 469.
[255] Redžić (2005) p. 174.
[256] Redžić (2005) p. 174.
[257] Redžić (2005) p. 174.
[258] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 456-458.
[259] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 456.
[260] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 456.

throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina had signed numerous resolutions condemning the persecution of Serbs. Turning to concrete proposals, he suggested that a prominent Muslim, "with a good reputation and political roots in the people",[261] be found to act as the representative of the Muslims in the High Command, and to give advice on questions relevant to regions where Muslims lived. He also suggested that Muslim armed units be created, either alongside the Chetniks or separately. Furthermore, Popovac took the opportunity to censure the participation of individual Muslims in the massacre of Serbs:

> Outlining and proposing the above, I and all correct Muslims acknowledge with pain in our souls and nausea that many Muslims have abandoned not only their brotherly, but also their human considerations, and committed crimes which we most resolutely condemn. We unanimously agree that all of these criminals be brought before their deserved punishment when the appropriate moment arrives. We even go so far as to state that we will punish those who were passive at the time of the Serb tragedy and could have done something.[262]

Popovac touched upon the subject of Chetnik atrocities against Muslim civilians, mentioning the events in Foča and Goražde, although he was careful to point out that it may have been the work of provocateurs who had induced the Serb rebels to kill civilians. In response to this letter, Mihailović gave Baćović orders on how to behave towards the Muslims,[263] which unfortunately could not be located.

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[261] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 457.
[262] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 458.
[263] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 458 (Footnote 11); Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 734.

Popovac was a man of great industriousness and energy who worked ceaselessly, writing letters and holding meetings throughout Hercegovina. He found numerous Muslims who shared his aims and views; one of the most important was Mustafa Pašić, a prewar judge from Mostar.[264] On 25 July, Popovac wrote a letter for Đorđe Dragić,[265] the Chetnik chief of the Konjic District,[266] advising him to write two letters and suggesting their contents. The first was to be written for the official (NDH) head of the Konjic District, in which Dragić was to state that the "Chetniks had not liberated the Konjic District so that those Ustaše who had since last year butchered and persecuted Serbs and honourable Muslims could still pillage and destroy",[267] and that the Chetniks considered "all of those Muslims who had not been Ustaše as their brothers"[268] and would protect them from persecution by the NDH regime. A second similar letter was to be written for the *muderiz*[269] of Konjic,[270] and numerous copies of this letter were to be made so that the *muderiz* could distribute them throughout Konjic and its environs. Finally, Popovac recommended that Dragić establish contact with a number of Konjic Muslims.[271] Dragić heeded Popovac's advice, and

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[264] Karchmar (1973) p. 598; Redžić (2005) p. 97.
[265] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Đorđe Dragić (commander of the Konjic District), 25 July 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 23.
[266] Letter by the Head of the Propaganda Section of the Nevesinje Corps for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 25 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 238, Folder 1, Document 11.
[267] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Đorđe Dragić (commander of the Konjic District), 25 July 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 23.
[268] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Đorđe Dragić (commander of the Konjic District), 25 July 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 23.
[269] A *muderiz* is an instructor in an Islamic school.
[270] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Đorđe Dragić (commander of the Konjic District), 25 July 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 23.
[271] Devro Aljović, Devro Drkić, Avdo Hajduk, Jusuf Uzunović (the former head of the Ostrožac Municipality, Konjic District), and Derviš Zahirović.

penned a letter for the Konjic *muderiz*,[272] which included most of what Popovac had suggested as well as the statement that "we will not allow our people to commit any acts of violence of their own will against others."[273] Dragić outlined the steps that the Chetnik command, Pašić, and Popovac were undertaking to secure the release of a number of interned Muslims, one of whom, Mehmed Alija Adžić, had protected persecuted Serbs previously, and to locate some horses that had been confiscated and taken to Nevesinje.[274] A Chetnik intelligence report from the end of the year described Dragić as a "good organiser who has had good results amongst Serbs and Muslims."[275] Despite not having received a response from Mihailović to his letter as late as 24 August,[276] Popovac was not discouraged and continued working with great energy.

It is not easy to determine what motivated Popovac and others like him. Some have argued that they were opportunists who "overestimated the chances that the JVO would score high in the battle for postwar power. In joining that side they aimed, obviously against the interests of their own people, to ensure for themselves … a suitable position."[277] Others have condemned them as traitors

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[272] Letter by Đorđe Dragić for the Konjic *muderiz,* undated (probably from late July 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 38.
[273] Letter by Đorđe Dragić for the Konjic *muderiz,* undated (probably from late July 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 38.
[274] Letter by Đorđe Dragić for the Konjic *muderiz,* undated (probably from late July 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 8, Document 38.
[275] Report by the Head of the Intelligence Section of the Nevesinje Corps for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 25 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 238, Folder 1, Document 11. Dragić was fortunate that the commander of the Konjic Brigade (Nevesinje Corps) was Captain Veljko Remetić, described in the same report as an "excellent young officer, well-disciplined and a good organiser".
[276] Letter by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 566.
[277] Tucaković (1995) p. 145.

who collaborated with the "worst enemies"[278] of the Muslim people, and claimed that they were "only concerned with Serb lives".[279] The commander of the Nevesinje Brigade (Nevesinje Corps), Captain Vladimir Zečević,[280] after numerous talks with Popovac, concluded that "his main aim is to protect the Muslims, not the struggle for the Serbian people and Serb aims."[281] At least some of the Muslims who joined the Chetnik Movement did so from the belief that it was a democratic movement, as opposed to the Partisan, as well as from a feeling that they were Serbs of the Islamic faith.[282] Probably the most committed was Major Fehim Musakadić, the former police chief of Sarajevo,[283] who had been a volunteer in the Serbian Army during the First World War[284] and was one of Mihailović's colleagues on the Salonika Front.[285] Mihailović described him as "a Yugoslav and Serb from head to toe",[286] and rewarded his loyalty with the command of all Muslim JVO units.[287] When Musakadić was captured by the Partisans later in the war, he declared that he had joined the JVO because he was a "Yugoslav nationalist",[288] and because he wished to fight for "western

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[278] Filipović (2009).
[279] Filipović (2009).
[280] Zečević was an engineer and member of the Agrarian Union who was sent by Mihailović to Hercegovina in the summer of 1942. As reward for his hard work and loyalty, he was promoted to the rank of First Class Captain and given command of the Nevesinje Brigade of the Nevesinje Corps (Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the first half of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 532; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 532 (Footnote 8).
[281] Report by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 566.
[282] Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 7 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656.
[283] Karchmar (1973) p. 598; Šegrt (1964) p. 331.
[284] Konjhodžić (1965) p. 59.
[285] Radulović (1975) p. 49.
[286] Telegram (Number 367) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 28 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 139.
[287] Karchmar (1973) p. 598.
[288] Šegrt (1964) p. 332.

democracy".[289] In this manner, Mihailović gained the allegiance of a group of Muslims who he could utilise to gain the support of the Muslims and to mobilise them in to the Chetnik Movement.

## The Bosnian Chetniks and their Policies

The national question was particularly important to the Bosnian Chetniks because of the nationally mixed nature of Bosnia and the uncertainty of its future status. Unlike commanders in Serbia who operated in a nationally homogenous environment, those in Bosnia had to deal with the realities of the national question in all of its complexity. As might be expected, different commanders adopted different policies towards the non-Serbian populace, and any attempt to make sweeping generalisations is bound to ignore the complicated and confusing nature of this issue.

### Eastern Bosnia

The Chetnik leadership in eastern Bosnia was composed of Mihailović's officers and the indigenous commanders.[290] Major Boško Todorović, Mihailović's chief delegate, engaged in a number of battles against the Muslim militia in southeastern Bosnia and eastern Hercegovina throughout January, during which a number of Muslim villages were torched.[291] He described the fighting as a

[289] Šegrt (1964) p. 332.
[290] See Chapter III, "Mihailović and the Serb Nationalists of the NDH".
[291] Report by Major Boško Todorović for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 134-136.

"counterattack against the Turks"[292] in response to the burning of the Serbian village of Bodežišta and threats to burn more Serbian hamlets for Orthodox Christmas. Todorović, like most of the nationalist leaders, was motivated foremost by the desire to protect Serb lives; in his instructions to Mutimir Petković and Milan Šantić regarding their upcoming talks with the Italians, he described the primary goal of the Bosnian and Hercegovinian Chetniks as the "protection of the Serbian populace",[293] and declared that the aim of the talks was to secure "joint protection of the Serbian populace from Ustaša and all other violence."[294] Todorović believed that the insurgents were motivated by the same ideal, describing their objective as the fight "for the Serbian people above all else (because the vast majority of them are Serbs)".[295] Muslim lives were apparently of little interest to him.

Although Todorović was Mihailović's official representative in eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina, he had to contend with the local leaders thrown up by the uprising of the previous year, the most important, undoubtedly, being Major Jezdimir Dangić, who had his own parallel organisation, the Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* (*Štab Bosanskih Četničkih Odreda*). Aware of the almost total absence of discipline amongst the eastern Bosnian Chetniks, and their subsequent penchant for killing and pillaging, Dangić set about establishing

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[292] Report by Major Boško Todorović for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 134.
[293] Instructions by Major Boško Todorović for Milan Šantić and Mutimir Petković, 16 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 123.
[294] Instructions by Major Boško Todorović for Milan Šantić and Mutimir Petković, 16 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 123.
[295] Report by Major Boško Todorović for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 138.

order. On 12 February, a command was issued for the establishment of military tribunals on the territory controlled by the Chetniks,[296] and four days later, the following directive was proclaimed:

> Gone are the times of pillage, theft, obstinacy, and the killing of people in the rear (without consideration of their faith and nationality) – without trial and the orders of competent commanders. Familiarise all with the fact that our "Serb penal expedition" is doing its job, that it executes sentences on the spot, and that many have already felt this.[297]

Dangić ordered a halt to the mistreatment all people, irrespective of their faith or nationality.

On 22 February, Dangić's staff issued a flyer to the Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina in an attempt to win them over with propaganda.[298] The leaflet reminded the Muslims that they and the Serbs had lived together for five hundred years under the Ottomans in peace, before it listed the crimes that the Muslims had committed against the Serbs: the massacres perpetrated by Muslims in the Austro-Hungarian *Shutzkorps* during the First World War, and the killing of 518,000 Serbs by the Ustaše during the present war.[299] Although

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[296] Regulation concerning military courts for liberated parts of Bosnia, 12 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 4, Document 42.
[297] Order Number 1 by the Commander of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* (Major Jezdimir Dangić) for all subordinates, 16 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 1, Document 3.
[298] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.
[299] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.

"many"[300] Muslims had participated in these crimes, the staff recognised that the blame lay with the "Croats, Ustaše, corrupt *beys*, and assorted individuals who should not be allowed to call themselves Muslims, because they do not believe in dear God, do not rejoice for Heaven, and do not fear Hell."[301] The flyer went on to explain that the Serb nationalists were fighting only to protect their lives and homes, and to punish those who had killed so many Serbs. It warned the Muslims that if they continued "killing Serbs, raping girls, and burning our villages",[302] dire consequences would follow. It also advised the Muslims to listen to voices of moderation and restraint within their community, and to join with the Chetniks to expel their common enemy from Bosnia and Hercegovina. Appeals were made to remember the positive aspects of Yugoslavia: the numerous Muslims who held public office, including ministerial positions; the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation; and the respect for Islamic dress and rituals. It ended with: "Remember well our peaceful lives in Yugoslavia, and think about what awaits you if you continue with your ways."[303]

During March and early April, great changes occurred in the Chetnik leadership in eastern Bosnia as a result of a number of military assaults by the Partisans and Ustaše.[304] Most of the indigenous commanders were arrested,

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[300] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.
[301] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.
[302] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.
[303] Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* "Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine", 22 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 1, Document 51.
[304] The Partisans launched an offensive on 4 March (Karchmar (1973) p. 497). Dangić's Chetniks were no match for the Partisan Provisional Assault Group, "a large body of highly disciplined and

killed, scattered, or so thoroughly discredited in the eyes of the Serbian peasantry that by the summer, eastern Bosnia was in the hands of Mihailović's officers. One of them, Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić, the commander of the Rogatica Brigade (Romanija Corps),[305] was particularly concerned with the welfare of the Muslim civilian population. His Order Number 5 from 19 October to his subordinate battalion commanders is worth quoting:

> Since I know how great our hatred of the Ustaše is, I deem it necessary to remind the heroic soldiers of the Rogatica Brigade that their hatred of the Ustaše must not take them so far that they forget that the Muslim inhabitants in the rear – women, children, and the elderly – are not our enemies, and that it is not soldierly nor heroic nor Chetnik to demonstrate your strength by committing violence and atrocities against those who are in a position to do nothing except plead for mercy and cry.
>
> Our holy battle will only be useful if we act kindly and militarily towards the innocent Muslim population, and there will be great negative consequences if the butchering, killing, burning, and massacring of the previous year is repeated.[306]

The order went on to remind the commanders that the enemies of the Chetniks were the Partisans and Ustaše.[307] Furthermore, specific orders were given

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well-armed troops" (Karchmar (1973) p. 497). On 30 March, the dreaded Ustaša Black Legion marched out of Sarajevo and destroyed the few Chetnik units that remained (Karchmar (1973) pp. 500-501).

[305] Đukić was a particularly capable commander. In a report on the fighting between the Chetniks and Partisans in the Dinara region in early 1943, the Rogatica Brigade and its commander were described as the "best unit in all battles" (Report Number 273 by Momčilo Đujić for the Staff of the Command of Bosnian, Lika-Dalmatian, and Hercegovinian Military-Chetnik *Odredi,* 28 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 297).

[306] Order Number 5 by Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić (commander of the Rogatica Brigade, Romanija Corps) for battalion commanders, 19 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 5, Document 15.

[307] Order Number 5 by Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić (commander of the Rogatica Brigade, Romanija Corps) for battalion commanders, 19 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 5, Document 15.

forbidding the mistreatment and killing of prisoners of war and innocent civilians on Chetnik territory:

> In the interests of the common good, I FORBID the mistreatment and killing of enemy innocents in the rear and the butchering and torture of prisoners.
>
> All subordinates will make the greatest effort to ensure that from today this order is carried out, that is, that the people in the rear are not harmed and prisoners of war are handed over to superior battalion commanders who will try them.
>
> Everyone who commits a crime against this order will be tried and the sentence will be heavy and harsh.[308]

Although it can not be said that there was any great number of commanders who were as genuinely concerned with the lives and well being of Muslim civilians as Đukić, it is nonetheless true that the Chetnik Movement was not wholly devoid of them.

## Central and Western Bosnia

Due to its distance from Serbia, the nationalist organisation in central and western Bosnia developed largely independently of Mihailović and his movement. Recognising the need for a formal structure to coordinate their activities, the leaders of the various rebel units along the Vrbas River organised a conference on 7 June 1942 in the village of Javorani.[309] One of the delegates, a lawyer named

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[308] Order Number 5 by Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić (commander of the Rogatica Brigade, Romanija Corps) for battalion commanders, 19 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 5, Document 15 (Capitalisation in original).

[309] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 311-318. In attendance were the leaders of the five largest Chetnik units in the area: Uroš Drenović (Kočić Battalion), Vukašin Marčetić (Manjača *Odred*), Rade Radić (Borja *Odred*), Lazar Tešanović (Obilić *Odred*), and Mitar Trivunčić (Gvozdeni Battalion) (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 311).

Branislav Lazičić, stated that it was a "sin"[310] that they did not have a link with Serbia, since "the fate of Serbia is our fate, because this land upon which we live is Serbian as well".[311] Vukašin Marčetić, a commander from Mount Manjača, recommended that contact be established with former Yugoslav officers in the NDH armed forces, and that efforts be made to gain the support and sympathy of "honest"[312] Croats and Muslims who were going over to the Partisans in large numbers because Partisan propaganda had succeeded in presenting the Chetniks as "wild animals".[313] Despite these gestures, Marčetić stated that he considered "Bosnia and Serbia to be one country, and I hope that it is cleansed of everything that is not Serb."[314] Other commanders voiced similar opinions; an officer named Ilija Mikašinović gave a speech in the village of Pribinić where he told the assembled crowd that "all Turks should be exterminated",[315] while a certain Pojezna told some soldiers that all non-Serbs in Bosnia would be "destroyed".[316] Not all commanders held such chauvinistic views. Jovo Kitić, the commander of the Karađorđe Battalion, and Teodor Arsenić, the commander of the Voja

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[310] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 313.
[311] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 313.
[312] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 314.
[313] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 314.
[314] Minutes of the conference of the Vrbas River Chetnik *Odredi* held in Javorani, 7 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 314.
[315] Letter from Jovo Kitić (commander of the Karađorđe Battalion, Borja *Odred*) and Teodor Arsenić (commander of the Voja Tankosić Battalion, Borja *Odred*) to Rade Radić, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 562.
[316] Letter from Jovo Kitić (commander of the Karađorđe Battalion, Borja *Odred*) and Teodor Arsenić (commander of the Voja Tankosić Battalion, Borja *Odred*) to Rade Radić, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 562.

Tankosić Battalion, called such views "Hitler's watchword",[317] and informed their commander, Radoslav "Rade" Radić (the commander of the Borja *Odred*), that they could not work with people who held such views and were leaving the *odred* to form their own unit.[318]

The Bosnian Chetniks organised further conferences during the summer to create a unified command[319] at which they also discussed their stance towards the non-Serbs. At an assembly of commanders and delegates from central and northeastern Bosnia in Srpska Grapska on 1 and 2 June[320] attended by some of the leading chieftains (Savo Božić from Mount Trebava, Vukašin Marčetić from Mount Manjača, Golub Mitrović from the Zenica region, Rade Radić from Mount Borja, Lazar Tešanović from Mount Čemernica, and Cvijetin Todić from Mount

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[317] Letter from Jovo Kitić (commander of the Karađorđe Battalion, Borja *Odred*) and Teodor Arsenić (commander of the Voja Tankosić Battalion, Borja *Odred*) to Rade Radić, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 563.

[318] Letter from Jovo Kitić (commander of the Karađorđe Battalion, Borja *Odred*) and Teodor Arsenić (commander of the Voja Tankosić Battalion, Borja *Odred*) to Rade Radić, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 561-563. They actually joined the Manjača *Odred* (Vukašin Marčetić) where they distinguished themselves as capable commanders (Report by Major Slavoljub Vranješević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 3 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 148).

[319] On 1 and 2 July, a number of Chetnik commanders (Savo Božić, Vukašin Marčetić, Golub Mitrović, Rade Radić, Lazar Tešanović, and Cvijetin Todić) held a conference in Srpska Grapska where they formed the Headquarters of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* (Minutes of the conference of Chetnik *odred* delegates of eastern and western Bosnia, 1 & 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 405-409). This was followed by another meeting on 21 August, at which it was agreed to form a single staff for all Chetnik units in Bosnia (Minutes of joint conference of the Headquarters of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* and Mountain Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi,* 21 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 552-554.). This was finally achieved on 2 December 1942 with the creation of the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* (Minutes of the inter-*odred* conference of Bosnian Chetnik *odredi,* 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailović,* pp. 217-224 (#119)).

[320] Minutes of the conference of Chetnik *odred* delegates of eastern and western Bosnia, 1 & 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 405-409.

Ozren),[321] a common policy towards the Muslims was canvassed. The meeting minutes reveal the deliberations and conclusions:

> There took place a discussion in which it was emphasised that there is a large number of Muslims who did not commit any violence towards Serbs, and that the question of Muslim responsibility should not be generalised; instead, the position should be taken that only those Muslims for whom there exists incontrovertible evidence of their guilt should be located and punished. All others are to be spared from repression by the Chetniks; in any event, Muslim children and women are to be spared, since all participants consider that we must be guided by the most fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, so that he who is not guilty, should not suffer.[322]

Collective punishment of the Muslim people was rejected, since the men recognised that there were many Muslims who had not participated in the Ustaša crimes. Instead, only individual Muslims would be punished, and then exclusively in cases where overwhelming evidence of guilt existed. Given that this policy was agreed upon at such a notable meeting, it bears the stamp of official policy and was thus binding on those present. The conference was particularly important since it was attended by some of the most important figures amongst the Bosnian Chetniks, including Radić, who in a few months would assume the position of head of all Chetniks in Bosnia.[323]

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[321] Minutes of the conference of Chetnik *odred* delegates of eastern and western Bosnia, 1 & 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 405.
[322] Minutes of the conference of Chetnik *odred* delegates of eastern and western Bosnia, 1 & 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 407.
[323] On 1 and 2 December the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* was created in the village of Kulaši, with Rade Radić as its head (Minutes of the inter-*odred* conference of Bosnian Chetnik *odredi* in Kulaši, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailović,* pp. 217-224 (#119)).

Considering that Radić became the leader of the Bosnian Chetniks,[324] it is worthwhile to examine his views on the national question. As chief of the Main Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* (*Glavni Štab Bosanskih Četničkih Odreda*),[325] he supervised the production of propaganda material, some of which was directed at the Croats. On 28 July, he sent his subordinates instructions and examples of propaganda leaflets, one of which was titled "A Message for Croat Farmers".[326] Denouncing the robbing of Croat and Muslim civilians, and *Domobrani* favourably disposed towards the Chetniks, Radić ordered the *odred* commanders on 27 November to halt this behaviour.[327] One of the aims of the struggle of the Bosnian Chetniks was to ensure that Bosnia, or at least the parts of Bosnia inhabited by Serbs, became part of any postwar Serbia. In a letter by the Main Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* to Captain Dragoslav Račić from 15 September, the Bosnians expressed their belief that the current struggle against the Partisans "would determine if in Bosnia, as well as in other Serbian lands, either communism or Serbdom will prevail."[328] They went on to state that "we are fighting, sincerely fighting, for the liberation of the whole of Serbdom [and] for unification with Mother Serbia".[329]

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[324] Minutes of the inter-*odred* conference of Bosnian Chetnik *odredi* in Kulaši, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 217-224 (#119).
[325] It would seem that the Headquarters of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* was created some time after the meeting in Srpska Grapska on 1 and 2 June.
[326] Order Number 34/42 by Rade Radić for Bosnian Chetnik *odred* commanders, 28 July 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 9, Document 10.
[327] Order Number 212 from the Staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* to *odred* commanders, 27 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 204, Folder 7, Document 14.
[328] Letter Number 163 by the Headquarters of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Captain Dragoslav Račić, 15 September 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 201 (#114).
[329] Letter Number 163 by the Headquarters of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Captain Dragoslav Račić, 15 September 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 201 (#114).

The First Kulaši Conference (1 and 2 December) was scheduled to commemorate the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1918. Opening the meeting, Radić declared that the delegates had met to determine what was best "for the entire Serbian people."[330] Savo Božić, the commander of the Trebava *Odred*, reported that he had been in contact with Major Muhamed Hadžiefendić, an independent Muslim warlord in northeastern Bosnia,[331] who had declared his willingness to cooperate with the *odred* on an anti-communist platform.[332] Interestingly, a number of delegates expressed resentment and even hostility towards the *srbijanci* for perceived past injustices. Mirko Đukanović, the representative of the Majevica *Odred*, declared:

> For twenty-two years they spoke of how they liberated us, but I can state today that in the former Yugoslavia every Gypsy had more rights than the Serbs of Bosnia. Serb Bosnians must today actively work, as we already are, so that when the liberation arrives we can say to our brothers in Serbia that we liberated ourselves.[333]

Luka Radić spoke of the need for the Bosnian Serbs to enter any postwar state on their own terms:

> We learnt a great deal from 1918 and we will not allow it to repeat itself. We want to be the liberators of our people and to enter the future state under our own conditions … no longer can Mujo and Mihailo be equal since only Mihailo matters today. This staff and these representatives of our people can await the end of the war

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[330] Minutes of the First Kulaši Conference, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 218 (#119).
[331] Redžić (2005) pp. 91, 173, 177, 179, 223; Tomasevich (2001) p. 496.
[332] Minutes of the First Kulaši Conference, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 220 (#119).
[333] Minutes of the First Kulaši Conference, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 222 (#119).

> with pride and can clearly declare that they will enter a common state only under conditions that agree with the needs of our people … After the battle of guns, there will need to be a battle of minds.[334]

Despite such outbursts of parochialism, a letter was penned for Mihailović on the first day of the conference in which his official position as Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce was recognised.[335] The delegates explained that in "Bosnia the struggle is purely Serb and the people are fighting for a purely Serb affair under the Serbian tricolour".[336] Two weeks later another letter was written by Bosnian Chetnik leadership in which it was stated that

> we Serbs from Bosnia completely tie our destiny to the destiny of Serbia, since we consider Serbia to be our motherland and all of the suffering that we are enduring and the battles that we are fighting we consider necessary to demonstrate for once and for all time that Bosnia is exclusively an integral part of Serbian lands, that is, those regions to which Serbs have a right geographically and historically and statistically to call Serbian regions and to ask that all of those regions enter in to a new free and independent Serbian state.[337]

Notwithstanding this call for the creation of a Serb national state, the Bosnian Chetniks were not against the idea of non-Serbs residing in this new state, although they insisted that it was necessary to "precisely define and establish in writing the relations of all those who will live in this new country of ours."[338] The

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[334] Minutes of the First Kulaši Conference, 1 & 2 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 222 (#119).
[335] Letter Number 224 by the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 211-213 (#118).
[336] Letter Number 224 by the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 213 (#118).
[337] Letter Number 226 by the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Army General Draža Mihailović, 14 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 761.
[338] Letter Number 226 by the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* for Army General Draža Mihailović, 14 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 761.

primary goal of the Bosnian Chetniks was to ensure the unification of Bosnia with Serbia after the war.

## Chetnik Massacres

Perhaps no other Muslim community suffered as much as Foča during the Second World War.[339] Occupied by the Italians after the April War, it was abandoned by them in late November 1941 due to Partisan pressure in Montenegro.[340] To prevent the town from falling in to the hands of the Partisans, an agreement was signed with Todorović whereby the Chetniks would occupy it after the Italians evacuated.[341] What followed the entry of the nationalist forces in to Foča was the first of many large scale massacres of Muslim civilians in southeastern Bosnia,[342] which ended, albeit temporarily, when the Partisans captured of the town on 20 January 1942.[343] Foča became the centre of their liberated territory until 10 May when the Italians retook it. Given its strategic importance, it was coveted by everyone.[344] During May and June, the Chetniks gained control of much of the surrounding countryside, and were bitterly

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[339] Dulić (2005) p. 201.
[340] Karchmar (1973) pp. 480-481; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 87 (Footnote 4).
[341] Agreement between Lieutenant Colonel Pietro Castagnero (commander of the Eleventh Alpine Regiment, Fifth Alpine Division "Pusteria") and Major Boško Todorović (commander of the Operational Units of Eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina), 30 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 87.
[342] Dulić (2005) pp. 199-205; Karchmar (1973) p. 481; Tucaković (1995) pp. 35-47.
[343] Tucaković (1995) p. 47. The commander of the Partisans who captured Foča, Kosta Nađ, recounted his first impressions of the town and the behaviour of its Muslim populace: "Upon entering Foča, one is struck by the presence of death. Everywhere we could see the horrible scenes of Chetnik crimes. The Muslim inhabitants greeted us as liberators. Old women raised their *hijabs*, flew towards us, and tried to kiss our hands ... As soon as I dismounted, two old men in *fezes* knelt before me and began to bless me." (Nađ (1979) p. 29).
[344] Bojović (1956) p. 264.

disappointed when the Italians decided to transfer control of the town to the Croats, evacuating it once again on 7 June.[345]

Ostojić, however, was not going to allow such a prize to slip from his grasp.[346] More JVO units were brought in,[347] and the frightened Croat garrison signed an agreement with Baćović on 9 June,[348] which included the stipulation that one hundred Chetniks would enter Foča to "maintain order and security".[349] Despite this, fighting broke out three days later over the demarcation line between the Croats and Serbs.[350] The rest of June and the following month saw numerous skirmishes accompanied by the killing of civilians on both sides throughout the Čajniče and Foča districts.[351] On 8 August, Ostojić proudly reported to Baćović that Mihailović had approved his plan to attack Foča,[352] and the following day Mihailović telegrammed Baćović to inform him that Ostojić was in command of the operation.[353] Baćović and Jevđević, however, were concerned about the consequences of such an attack and asked Ostojić for a letter absolving

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[345] Report by the Čajniče District administration on the situation in Foča between 30 May and 19 August 1942, undated (probably from September 1942), in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 304.
[346] Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Captain Rudolf Perhinek for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 369.
[347] Report by the Čajniče District administration on the situation in Foča between 30 May and 19 August 1942, undated (probably from September 1942), in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 304.
[348] Agreement between Major Petar Baćović and Colonel Stjepan Jakovljević and Second Lieutenant Milan Štimec, 9 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 362 (Footnote 4).
[349] Agreement between Major Petar Baćović and Colonel Stjepan Jakovljević and Second Lieutenant Milan Štimec, 9 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 362 (Footnote 4).
[350] Report by the Čajniče District administration on the situation in Foča between 30 May and 19 August 1942, undated (probably from September 1942), in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 304.
[351] Report by the Čajniče District administration on the situation in Foča between 30 May and 19 August 1942, undated (probably from September 1942), in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 304; Statement by Dušan Tošović, Mirko Kosovac, and Đorđe Grujičić, 2 March 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 283.
[352] Telegram from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Major Petar Baćović, 8 August 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 501 (#505).
[353] Telegram (Number 336) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Petar Baćović, 9 August 1942, *Zbornik Volume* 14, Book 1, p. 556.

them of any responsibility in exchange for the participation of 1,200 of Baćović's men in the operation.[354] Furthermore, they threatened to resign their posts, and hampered Ostojić's efforts by preventing him from using their wireless transmitter to communicate with Mihailović.[355] They telegrammed Mihailović with their concerns:

> We will execute the order to attack Foča but we absolve ourselves of any responsibility because it will have evil consequences for the people. We beg you to postpone the attack until you receive our written report. Please reply today. Jevđević [and] Baćović.[356]

Ostojić, however, would hear none of it; he wanted the attack carried out immediately,[357] as he longed to get his hands on the vast reserves of military material inside the town.[358] Whilst Ostojić viewed the issue from a purely military perspective, Baćović and especially Jevđević took the non-military aspects of such an operation, especially the suffering of the civilian population, in to consideration.[359]

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[354] Telegram (Number 396) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 544.
[355] Telegram (Number 396) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 544.
[356] Telegram (Number 391) from Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 544.
[357] Telegram (Number 396) from Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 544-545.
[358] Telegram (Number 406) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 545-546.
[359] Typical of this concern with the fate of the Serbian populace was Baćović's decision to release captured Croat troops in June to "protect the Orthodox population in Foča and its surrounds" (Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Captain Rudolf Perhinek for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 370).

Ostojić decided to attack Foča on 19 August.[360] The day before the offensive, he gave a speech before the assembled Chetniks[361] in which he spoke of the Serbian tradition of defending freedom, describing the men standing before him as the contemporary protectors of Serb freedom.[362] Although the speech began by speaking of Serb heroism and resistance to the occupier, it rapidly degenerated in to a harangue against the "betrayal of Pavelić and the Muslims".[363] Ostojić then spoke of the Ustaša massacres of Serbs and claimed that most of the Ustaše in Bosnia and Hercegovina were Muslims, and of the need to destroy the "Ustaša nest in Foča":[364]

> Today it is the turn of Pavelić's traitors. Justice is slow but attainable. Serb blood has boiled from the earth and cries out for vengeance ... Today it is your holy duty to go to the aid of Serbian Bosnia, with your blood to defend and protect it, to save it definitively for the Serbs, to demonstrate once more that this is Serbian patrimony since the times of King Mihailo [Vojislavljević] until today. We can not sit with weapons in our hands and allow the *balije* [a derogatory term for Muslims] to snatch Bosnia and destroy the Serbian people. The spilled blood of innocent Serbs, the tears of Serb women, the cries of Serb children throughout Bosnia call us to avenge and protect them.[365]

In what might be interpreted as permission for wholesale slaughter, Ostojić went on to say:

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[360] This is an important day in the Julian (Old Style) Orthodox Christian calendar, as it marks the Transfiguration of Christ.
[361] The Durmitor, Foča, Kalinovik, Nevesinje, and Šavnik *odredi* participated in the attack on Foča (Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. 195).
[362] Order Number 1 by the Commander of JVO Forces Designated for the Attack on Foča, 18 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 1.
[363] Order Number 1 by the Commander of JVO Forces Designated for the Attack on Foča, 18 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 1.
[364] Order Number 1 by the Commander of JVO Forces Designated for the Attack on Foča, 18 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 1.
[365] Order Number 1 by the Commander of JVO Forces Designated for the Attack on Foča, 18 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 1.

> Everything that is not for a new, great and mighty future Yugoslavia, for its king, everything that has tied itself to the conqueror and his fifth-column servants must be destroyed. The servants of the occupier, traitors, and corrupt degenerates do not deserve our mercy.[366]

The attack began in the morning, and by midday the town had been captured.[367] Baćović reported that four Chetniks were killed during the fighting.[368] Although a fair number of *Domobrani* and Ustaše were undoubtedly killed,[369] a large number of Muslim civilians, including women and children, also perished. Baćović and Jevđević reported to Mihailović that some 300 women and children had been killed during the operation, despite orders by Ostojić not to harm them.[370] Ostojić reported a far higher figure:

> Yesterday I completed the action as far as Ustikolina and Jahorina ridge. Ustašas well beaten. According to details obtained, about 500 dead and about 1,000 – 2,000 Moslems slaughtered. All the troops good fighters, but much better plunderers, except Pavle [Đurišić]. The fall of Foča had a good effect, Moslems fleeing in masses to Sarajevo.[371]

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[366] Order Number 1 by the Commander of JVO Forces Designated for the Attack on Foča, 18 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 1.
[367] Daily Report Number 233 by the General Staff of the *Domobrani,* 21 August 1942, in Dedijer (1981) Volume I, p. 351.
[368] Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 592.
[369] In the middle of June, the town housed forty *Domobrani* and 270 Ustaše (Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Captain Rudolf Perhinek for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 369).
[370] Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 592.
[371] Telegram (Number 466) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 23 August 1942, in *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 91.

A Muslim survivor of the massacre estimated 2,000 civilian victims,[372] while an NDH official approximated 3,000 victims, mainly women and children.[373] The latter three figures, however, appear to be overinflated considering the findings of the Yugoslav war crimes commission, which tabulated some 331 victims in this massacre.[374]

Although there were military causalities amongst the dead – Foča quartered the 27th Ustaša Battalion, which the Chetniks annihilated[375] – it is obvious that the victims included many innocent civilians. How could this happen, especially given that Ostojić had issued orders against the mistreatment of women and children? Some of the victims drowned when two bridges collapsed; one of the bridges was destroyed by Chetnik artillery fire, perhaps unintentionally,[376] and a temporary bridge, probably erected after the destruction of the original, collapsed under the weight of the fleeing people, most of whom drowned.[377] That said, a large number of Muslim civilians were massacred.[378]

The other penchant of the Chetnik rank and file was looting, and it accompanied the capture of Foča. Captain Vladimir Zečević detailed the wholesale pillaging in a letter to Mihailović:

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[372] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 129.
[373] Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 308.
[374] Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284. If this figure is indeed accurate, then it is very close to that reported by Baćović and Jevđević.
[375] Trew (1998) pp. 145, 277 (Endnote 108).
[376] Bojović (1956) p. 264. As might be expected, Captain Nikola Bojović, the commander of the Durmitor *Odred*, stated that it was only Ustaše who drowned.
[377] Daily Report Number 233 of the General Staff of the *Domobrani,* 21 August 1942, in Dedijer (1981) Volume I, p. 351.
[378] Tucaković (1995) pp. 75-76, 77-78, 302-303.

> I must, unfortunately, report that Foča was thoroughly looted and most of its buildings demolished. There were cases where Serb families were robbed. The looting was committed by Chetniks as well as local peasants, male and female, old and young. Many officers were not at their peak because they did not do anything to prevent the looting; in fact, some even stated that it was a natural occurrence and that the looting of enemies should not be prevented.[379]

Interestingly, Zečević failed to mention the mass killing of Muslim civilians, although he may not have been aware of it. Obviously appalled and disgusted at the endemic robbery, he pleaded with Mihailović to "take the appropriate stance regarding this painful question and order the sternest of punishments, including death sentences."[380]

In the immediate aftermath of the events in Foča, the Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina (*Komanda Istočne Bosne i Hercegovine*) issued two flyers. The first was written the day after the attack, and justified the capture of the town, claiming that it was necessary to halt the "killing and robbery"[381] that was being committed against the Serbs in the Foča region by the Ustaše. The attack was the Chetniks' "obligation … [as the] … only protectors of the Serbian people".[382] Although it claimed that 450 Ustaše were killed in "only one day",[383] it

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[379] Letter by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 565.
[380] Letter by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 565. It is interesting to note that while Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) quoted most of the paragraph they excluded the last sentence in which Zečević pleaded with Mihailović to punish those who had committed crimes in Foča (p. 130).
[381] Staff of the Command of Operational Units of East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Obaveštenje br. 12 komande operativnih jedinica istočne bosne i hercegovine", 20 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 2, Document 49.
[382] Staff of the Command of Operational Units of East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Obaveštenje br. 12 komande operativnih jedinica istočne bosne i hercegovine", 20 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 2, Document 49.

made no mention of civilian deaths. The second leaflet was an open letter by Jevđević in which he attempted to explain the events and hide the massacre.[384] The attack on Foča, explained Jevđević, was "provoked"[385] by the massacre of hundreds of Serb women and children during the period that the NDH controlled the town (10 June – 19 August). Unable to conceal the Muslim civilian deaths, Jevđević tried to explain them as accidental:

> It is true that during the panicked flight of the Ustaše some of the populace that was intermingled with them suffered, especially on the Foča bridge, but it is also true that immediately after the definitive conquest of Foča, medical assistance was given to all Muslim men and women, and our command paid for the evacuation of a good proportion of the women and feeble to Sarajevo. It is true that after the fall of Foča irresponsible elements began to pillage surrounding Muslim villages, but it is also true that two days later the regular army was sent to these villages and protected the Muslims, returned the stolen goods, and shot eight looters, after which no more acts of looting were committed.[386]

Jevđević concluded the letter by informing the Muslims that in the future Yugoslavia they would have no choice but to "finally and definitively accept Serbian nationality and abandon speculative tacticising between the Serbian and Croatian people … because all regions in which Muslims live will be indisputably and inviolably part of the Serb state unit."[387]

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[383] Staff of the Command of Operational Units of East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Obaveštenje br. 12 komande operativnih jedinica istočne bosne i hercegovine", 20 August 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 2, Document 49.
[384] Proclamation by Dobroslav Jevđević, undated (probably from September 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 5, Document 54.
[385] Proclamation by Dobroslav Jevđević, undated (probably from September 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 5, Document 54.
[386] Proclamation by Dobroslav Jevđević, undated (probably from September 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 5, Document 54.
[387] Proclamation by Dobroslav Jevđević, undated (probably from September 1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 5, Document 54.

The massacre in Foča occurred during a period characterised by a number of Chetnik military operations, most of which were accompanied by the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians. A week before the capture of Foča, the Italians launched Operation *Albia* (12 August – 2 September), an anti-Partisan operation centred on Mount Biokovo in southern Dalmatia in which a number of Chetnik units participated.[388] On their way home after the operation, the Chetniks passed through the Ljubuški and Vrgovac Districts where they committed numerous atrocities, described by their commander Baćović in a telegram to Mihailović:

> I have returned from my trip through Hercegovina. Four of our battalions, about 900 men, set off on 30 August via Ljubuški, Imotski, and Podgora, and reached the sea at Makarska. Seventeen Ustaša villages burnt. 900 Ustaše killed. Several Catholic priests skinned alive ... Our losses very small.[389]

The following day Baćović confirmed the atrocities committed by his troops: "Our Chetniks killed all males fifteen and older. Women and children under fifteen were not killed. Seventeen villages were razed."[390]

Chetnik units under Baćović participated in another Italian anti-Partisan operation in October called Operation *Alfa*, centred on the Prozor District.[391] Whilst bivouacking in Drežnica prior to the march on Prozor, the men of the

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[388] *Hronologija Oslobodilačke Borbe Naroda Jugoslavije, 1941-1945* (1964) p. 323.
[389] Telegram (Number 544) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 September 1942, in *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 91.
[390] Report by Major Petar Baćović for unknown, 5 September 1942, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 325.
[391] Units of the Nevesinje and Trebinje corps participated in Operation *Alfa* (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656 (Footnote 4)).

Gacko Brigade (Nevesinje Corps) slaughtered one hundred Muslim civilians.[392] In an effort to prevent more massacres, Baćović and Jevđević gave speeches in Drežnica and Konjic before the assembled troops and Muslim leaders in which they "explained our new policy towards honourable Muslims, which disciplined the troops and brought great joy to the Muslims."[393] Prozor was captured by the Chetniks and Italians on 8 October, but the Italians forced the Chetniks out only a week later; it seems that the unruly allies were killing and robbing civilians.[394] Reports on the number of Croats and Muslims massacred during Operation *Alfa* range from 700[395] to approximately 2,000.[396]

## The Muslim National Military Organisation

Despite not having received a reply to his first letter to Mihailović from 21 July[397] a month after he had penned it (24 August),[398] Popovac continued working energetically during the late summer and autumn. On 13 September, he held a meeting in Stolac with a number of Muslim leaders and proposed the creation of an armed Muslim organisation to protect the interests of the Muslims,

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[392] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from late September 1942), in *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 638.
[393] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from late September 1942), in *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 638.
[394] Report by Nedjeljko Nališ (agricultural inspector from Prozor) on events in Prozor in October 1942, undated (probably late October 1942), in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 363, 366.
[395] Report by Captain Vigiac for the Chief of the Intelligence Section of the Sixth Army Corps, 18 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656 (Footnote 4).
[396] An NDH official reported 2,026 victims (Report on Chetnik behaviour in the Stolac, Mostar, Prozor, and Konjic Districts in October 1942, undated, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 357-358). The number of victims in each district was: Prozor (1,716); Mostar (200); Stolac (86); and Konjic (24). Baćović reported that some 2,000 Croats and Muslims had been massacred in the Prozor District (Telegram (Number 58) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 23 October 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 504 (#519)).
[397] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 456-458.
[398] Letter by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 566.

because, as he argued, it was a "question of their safety and survival".[399] This organisation would "not be directed against either the Serbian or Croatian people".[400] That same day, he organised a meeting between a number of Hercegovinian Muslim leaders and General Alessandro Lusana of the Italian Army who informed them that the creation of any Muslim armed units would only be considered if they were established and operated under the full supervision of the Italian Army and obeyed all commands that it issued.[401] The Muslim leaders held another gathering in Stolac two days later and agreed unanimously to the terms.[402]

By the second half of September, Popovac had created a body named the Command of the Muslim National Organisation for East Bosnia and Hercegovina (*Komanda Muslimanske Nacionalne Organizacije za Istočnu Bosnu i Hercegovinu*) to coordinate the work of the pro-Mihailović Muslims in eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina.[403] On 1 October it issued a propaganda flyer imploring fellow Muslims in the Partisans to abandon this movement because its leadership was "composed predominantly of anational elements".[404] Before these Muslims

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[399] Minutes from the meeting of Muslims in Stolac, 15 September 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 1.
[400] Minutes from the meeting of Muslims in Stolac, 15 September 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 1.
[401] Minutes from the meeting of Muslims in Stolac, 15 September 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 1.
[402] Minutes from the meeting of Muslims in Stolac, 15 September 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 1.
[403] Command of the MNVO for East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Braći Srbima Muslimanima koji se još nalaze u partizanima!", 1 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 2.
[404] Command of the MNVO for East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Braći Srbima Muslimanima koji se još nalaze u partizanima!", 1 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 2.

returned to their homes, they should, if possible, "liquidate their leaders, and in this way render enormous services for the Serb cause and for us Muslims."[405]

Whilst marching towards the Prozor District to participate in Operation *Alfa*, Baćović and Jevđević, at the latter's insistence, held a meeting with Popovac and a number of Muslim representatives. The Chetnik leaders explained the preconditions for cooperation:

> During these talks *vojvoda* Jevđević and I offered them cooperation only in the event that they organise separate Chetnik Muslim organisations under our control and that they openly attack Pavelić and his Ustaše. The Muslims agreed to this. *Vojvoda* Jevđević provided you with a comprehensive report on this.[406]

One of the greatest hurdles to cooperation between the Chetniks and Muslims was the lack of discipline in Chetnik units and their penchant for pillage, which Baćović recognised needed to be curtailed if the Muslims were to be convinced to work with them:

> We are trying everything to prevent pillaging which has become the main pastime of our Chetniks; whether we will succeed is the great question. This is not only a problem with us, but in all regions; let Foča stand as an example.[407]

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[405] Command of the MNVO for East Bosnia and Hercegovina, "Braći Srbima Muslimanima koji se još nalaze u partizanima!", 1 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 2.
[406] Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 7 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656.
[407] Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 7 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656.

The next day (8 October), Popovac sent Mihailović a brief report from his base in Nevesinje outlining his achievements: he and his colleagues had established committees in Konjic, Mostar, and Stolac, and were formulating a plan "of our future actions for the destruction of our common enemy."[408] Perhaps fearful that his earlier approaches to the Italians might not sit well with the Chetnik leader, he reassured Mihailović that everything was being done with the knowledge of and in collaboration with Baćović and Jevđević.[409]

On 3 November, Popovac penned another report for Mihailović in which he outlined his accomplishments of the previous month.[410] He had visited Blagaj, Gacko, Konjic, Mostar, Prozor, Stolac, and Trebinje, and had established contact with Muslims in Sarajevo, Tuzla, and other towns in Bosnia. Mihailović was informed that there were 3,000 armed Muslims in the Italian occupation zone, but that they were unable to carry their arms openly. Jevđević was employing his influence with the Italian Army to legalise these units. Measures had been instituted to prevent Ustaše or individuals with close links to the NDH regime from joining these Muslim units, but this was hardly necessary since most of them had already fled the region. Conscious of the Serbian peasantry's great distrust of the Muslims, Popovac pointed out that legalisation through the Italians had the advantage of being psychologically acceptable to the Orthodox peasantry and the common Chetnik. Despite their promises, the Italians did not

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[408] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 664.
[409] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 664.
[410] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 685-687.

seem particularly keen on the idea and little progress had been made. Nonetheless, Popovac had organised armed units in the Konjic, Mostar, Nevesinje, and Stolac districts. The Muslims of Bjelimići and Gacko had also offered to join Popovac's organisation, but had been rejected because they had a small number of Ustaše among them; when they liquidated them, they would be accepted. Popovac lamented that his greatest hurdle was the negative impact of the massacres of Muslim civilians in the Prozor District, which he sanitised in his report by referring to them as "Chetnik mistakes".[411] Energetic propaganda was being employed to counter the negative effects of the massacres. Popovac believed that his work was also hampered by the lack of sufficient numbers of potential Muslim leaders, and Muslim fears of the Chetniks because of their atrocities. He recommended that Mihailović issue directives for JVO commanders and soldiers to adopt a friendlier attitude towards the Muslims, and that heavier punishment be meted out to those guilty of theft and looting, be they Muslim or Serb, and that it be made public.

Yet the endemic banditry and anarchy continued. One week after Popovac penned his report to Mihailović in which he specifically mentioned the successes in Stolac, the Stolac Muslim National Military Organisation (*Muslimanska Nacionalna Vojna Organizacija* – MNVO) Committee sent Popovac a letter outlining the crimes committed against the Muslim population of the Stolac

[411] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 686.

District during the previous month.[412] The theft of livestock was a regular occurrence, and although it was the few Muslims who remained who suffered the most,[413] Serbian peasants were not immune from this lawlessness.[414] The Stolac Chetnik command sent out a group of men to apprehend the bandits, but they could not be located. Whilst the president of the Stolac MNVO committee recognised that these murders and thefts were not the work of the JVO, he nonetheless pointed out that such anarchy harmed its image. The letter ended with a plea for measures to be taken to prevent banditry.

Popovac's next report for Mihailović, dated 26 November, was similarly filled with his exploits.[415] Muslim Chetnik units had been established in Aladinići[416] and Galatičevo, and on 21 November, 200 Muslims had joined the Galatičevo group to avoid being drafted in to the NDH armed forces. A number of Muslim leaders throughout Bosnia had been contacted; Suljaga Salihagić, a former parliamentarian from Banja Luka, had traveled to Hercegovina and conferred with Popovac about the situation in Banja Luka and Bosanska Krajina, after which Salihagić returned to Banja Luka to begin organising there. On 20

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[412] Letter Number 7 by the president of the Stolac MNVO Committee for Ismet Popovac, 10 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 1.
[413] The worst cases were the murder of an eighteen year old Muslim girl who was tending a flock of livestock, and a seventy year old Muslim man who was tending his two cows. A number of assaults also occurred.
[414] Two Serbian peasants (Risto Perišić and Savo Perišić) had a bull, two cows, and twenty-five rams stolen.
[415] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 26 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 715-716.
[416] The Aladinići Battalion was composed of three companies: First Company (145 men commanded by Hakija Šetka); Second Company (250 men commanded by Alija Krpo); and Third Company (130 men commanded by Ibro Hasanagić) (Letter Number 9 by the president of the Stolac Muslim National Organisation Committee for Ismet Popovac, 30 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 55).

November, Second Lieutenant Hamdija Čengić along with a group of ten Muslims was sent to organise the region between Kalinovik and Sarajevo. One of the keystones of Popovac's work was his close relationship with Baćović and Jevđević. The only problem, he lamented, was a dearth of officers and war materials.[417]

Popovac's greatest accomplishments were in the Stolac District, although it also demonstrated some of the most important flaws in the entire Muslim policy of the Chetnik Movement. The local MNVO had organised a political body to compliment its armed units, and declared cooperation with the Orthodox as "our greatest and only duty".[418] Its members expressed a very high opinion of Lieutenant Milorad Vidačić, the commander of the Trebinje Corps, which incorporated the Bileća, Ljubinje, Stolac, and Trebinje districts, and of Jevđević, who was described as working particularly hard to reconcile Muslims and Serbs.[419] This good work, however, was being jeopardised by the mistreatment and plundering of Muslims by what the members of the political body called "irresponsible elements".[420] A number of robberies and the disarming of Muslim soldiers occurred in late November and early December, and this prompted Popovac to send a strongly worded letter to Vidačić in which these incidents were

[417] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 26 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 715-716.
[418] Letter Number 9 by the president of the Stolac Muslim National Organisation Committee for Ismet Popovac, 30 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 55.
[419] Letter Number 9 by the president of the Stolac Muslim National Organisation Committee for Ismet Popovac, 30 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 55.
[420] Letter Number 9 by the president of the Stolac Muslim National Organisation Committee for Ismet Popovac, 30 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 170, Folder 3, Document 55.

summarised and the offenders (all Serbs) were named.[421] It ended with the demand that they be tried and punished.[422] Reminding Vidačić that the Muslims had fulfilled their obligations and desired cooperation, he stated that it was "funny to even think that our element [the Muslims] could participate in a common struggle with precisely those from who it needs to be protected",[423] and that instead of fighting the Ustaše, the Muslims had to defend themselves from "individual Chetniks".[424]

Despite Popovac's complaint to Vidačić about the crimes being committed against the Muslims in Stolac, they continued. Around 20 December, a group of about forty to fifty armed Serbs attacked the Muslim village of Basalije near Stolac in an attempt to steal the village's livestock, but the attack was repulsed by the locals.[425] On 23 December, some shepherds witnessed the murder of two older Muslim men by a group of drunken Serb youths.[426] The Stolac MNVO committee members went to the Chetnik command in Stolac with evidence, but

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[421] Incidents took place on 27 November, 30 November, 2 December, and 5 December (Letter by the Main Staff of the Muslim National Organisation (Ismet Popovac) for Lieutenant Milorad Vidačić (commander of the Trebinje Corps), 12 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 36).
[422] Letter by the Main Staff of the Muslim National Organisation (Ismet Popovac) for Lieutenant Milorad Vidačić (commander of the Trebinje Corps), 12 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 36.
[423] Letter by the Main Staff of the Muslim National Organisation (Ismet Popovac) for Lieutenant Milorad Vidačić (commander of the Trebinje Corps), 12 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 36.
[424] Letter by the Main Staff of the Muslim National Organisation (Ismet Popovac) for Lieutenant Milorad Vidačić (commander of the Trebinje Corps), 12 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 36.
[425] Report Number 17 by the Stolac Muslim Military Organisation Committee for the Staff of the Muslim Military Organisation, 23 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 7.
[426] Letter Number 18 by the Stolac Muslim Military Organisation committee for the Staff of the Muslim National Organisation, 25 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 4, Document 39.

they doubted that the incident would be investigated, citing a previous case in which the murderer of a Muslim sat in prison for only one day. For all of the Chetniks' talk of reconciliation and cooperation, Muslim civilians continued to suffer.

## The National Policy towards the Croats in the Autumn

Despite Trifunović Birčanin's efforts to convince Croats to cooperate with or join the Chetnik Movement, by the autumn it can not be said that he had had any great success.[427] In the year following his arrival in Split, Trifunović Birčanin had held three meetings with representatives of the Croat Peasant Party,[428] at which he advised them to "form separate Croat national units, [and] only to declare that these units would be part of the Yugoslav Army".[429] Although on all three occasions the delegates agreed with the proposal, nothing had been accomplished as late as October.[430]

The weak results with the Croats were largely due to Trifunović Birčanin's failings. Although his age[431] and poor health[432] hindered his work, a far greater impediment was his thinking; in a letter to Mihailović from October he wrote that

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[427] According to Đuro Vilović, Trifunović Birčanin was unable to convince any great number of Croats to "accept his political line and solutions despite numerous concessions to Croat sensibilities" (Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23).
[428] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 673.
[429] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 673.
[430] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 673-674.
[431] He was born in 1877.
[432] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 669.

"[a]ccording to my deepest belief, the vast majority of Croats have no desire to be where there are Serbs."[433] In the same letter he accused prominent Croats, especially Croat Peasant Party members, of forming their own clandestine organisation independently of Mihailović's whose purpose was to unite with the Partisans.[434] Furthermore, he believed that the majority of Croats were sympathetic to the Partisans,[435] and that there existed a conspiracy in the government-in-exile to inculcate its Serb members with "communist-Croat ideology".[436] Trifunović Birčanin's negative views of Croats manifested themselves in his behaviour: from his arrival in Split (early November 1941) to October 1942, he had met with representatives of the Croat Peasant Party on only three occasions.[437] These conferences appear to have been largely a waste of time, since Trifunović Birčanin's precondition for any cooperation was that the Croats abandon certain ideas that he believed had destroyed Yugoslavia and led to the massacres of Serbs, namely "Roman clericalism, Austrianism, and the Croatian state idea."[438] Given the centrality of Catholicism to Croatian national identity, and the desire of many Croats to have their own state, not necessarily outside of a South Slav union, it is hardly surprising that such attempts at collaboration failed. The Croat Peasant Party agents, on the other hand, were far more

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[433] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 674.
[434] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 674.
[435] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 674.
[436] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 675.
[437] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 673.
[438] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.

accommodating; they supported the renewal of Yugoslavia as established by the *Sporazum*.[439] An important bone of contention was the Ustaša massacres; Trifunović Birčanin wanted the Croat delegates to openly condemn the killings, whereas they did not want any public talk of the "debts of the Ustaše",[440] possibly fearing that the entire Croatian nation would be burdened with these crimes.

Trifunović Birčanin appointed as his closest collaborators men whose views on the Croats were hardly conducive to good relations with them. Jevđević believed that Croats were going over to the Partisans because, as he wrote in late summer, they could "feel that the people's mood is exclusively Serb",[441] a statement that reveals more about Jevđević than the disposition of the Serbian people. Whereas Trifunović Birčanin and Jevđević were not hostile towards the Croats, but rather blinded by a condescending and distrustful opinion of them, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, Trifunović Birčanin's chief of staff, was possessed of a particular hatred of Croats. In March he participated in the formulation of a program which called for the expulsion and mass killing of the Croats and Muslims,[442] and in September he wrote to Ostojić:

> The lofty interests of the common cause render it imperative not to sever ties now, *when we expect so much from them* [the Italians]. The Muslims and Ustaše i.e. Croats will pay their cheque sooner or

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[439] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[440] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[441] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 596.
[442] Major Borivoje Radulović, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, and Captain Milo Rakočević, *Proposal of the Dinaric Division,* 12 March 1942, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 262-266.

> later; there is time for them, for they have nowhere to go and will remain within our reach.[443]

Given the views that Trifunović Birčanin and his closest associates held, it is hardly surprising that they failed to recruit any significant number of Croats for the Chetnik Movement, or to cooperate with those Croats who were opposed to the Ustaša regime.

During 1942, the members of the National Committee in Split coalesced in to two groups, one that held Serb chauvinist views, and another that was Yugoslav in its outlook.[444] The split reflected different views on the national question and the appropriate attitude to adopt towards the Italians and Partisans. When in May the National Committee was composing its first propaganda leaflet, these differences came to the fore; Silvije Alfirević, pursuing the policy line established by Trifunović Birčanin, wanted the leaflet to attack the "clericalists, Ustaše, and Partisans",[445] while the other group, centred on Niko Bartulović, wanted the struggle with the Axis emphasised, and the conflict with the Partisans downplayed.[446] The former won.[447] The Yugoslav group pleaded on numerous occasions with Trifunović Birčanin to adopt a hostile stance towards the occupier

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443 Letter by Captain Radovan Ivanišević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 29 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 636 (Italics in original).
444 Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23. Interestingly, both factions were nationally mixed.
445 Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
446 Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
447 Although Vilović reported that the leaflets were confiscated by the Italians (Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23), it would seem that not all of them were seized, since at about this time an anti-Partisan propaganda leaflet appeared in Split (Gizdić (1959b) pp. 254-255).

since this would draw Croats in to the movement, but the old *vojvoda* would not budge;[448] indeed, he could hardly afford to antagonise the Italians since he resided in Split thanks largely to their goodwill. The Chetnik-Italian collaboration alienated many Dalmatian Croats, whose primary motivation was opposition to the Italians who had annexed their homeland; as Baćović and Jevđević noted, the relationship between the Chetniks and Italians was one of the root causes of the difficulties with the Croats.[449] The men of the Yugoslav faction continued with their pleading, but to no avail; eventually, Trifunović Birčanin simply stopped communicating with them, which essentially forced them to work against him.[450] The Yugoslav group, however, was in a difficult position, given that Trifunović Birčanin was Mihailović's official representative.

By the autumn, things were not going very well for Trifunović Birčanin. The Dalmatian Partisans were growing in popularity and strength, while the nationalists were riven by infighting. Furthermore, the National Committee was inefficient and unpopular, and many of his closest associates were indolent and enjoyed lavish lifestyles.[451] Questions about Trifunović Birčanin's competence were raised within the Chetnik leadership,[452] and his authority was being eroded

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[448] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[449] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 596.
[450] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[451] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 887-889. In a letter dated 31 December 1942, a group of Croats wrote to Trifunović Birčanin: "We think that you have surrounded yourself with small men who are not technically or professionally capable of satisfying our present needs. This concerns all patriots." (Gizdić (1959b) p. 633).
[452] Letter by Milan Đukić for Major Petar Baćović, 24 October 1942, in Gizdić (1959b) p. 633.

by Ostojić, Baćović, Jevđević, and others.[453] His health was deteriorating, and his collaborators, anticipating his imminent death,[454] were jockeying to succeed him.[455] At about this time, the leadership of the Croat Peasant Party began approaching the two Yugoslav resistance movements.[456] A party delegate arrived in Split for talks with Trifunović Birčanin, but because of the latter's physical weakness, nothing came of this.[457]

In November, Trifunović Birčanin's health took a sudden turn for the worse,[458] and he named his successors: Alfirević and Sergije Urukalo were charged with political affairs, and Ivanišević and Captain Mladen Kostić with military.[459] Radmilo Grđić, one of the strongest advocates of Croat-Serb reconciliation and cooperation,[460] came to Split and warned the nominated heirs that the Chetnik Movement was in dire straits and that it needed a "Yugoslav revolution"[461] to draw Croats to it and create a new Yugoslavia.[462] This appeal,

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[453] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 31 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 583-585.
[454] On 23 October, Ivanišević sent Mihailović a letter warning of Trifunović Birčanin's imminent death (Letter by Captain Radovan Ivanišević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 23 October 1942, in *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 26).
[455] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[456] By October, a number of leading Croat Peasant Party figures were in contact with the Partisans (Dedijer (1981) Volume I, p. 312).
[457] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 735.
[458] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23; Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 734.
[459] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[460] Letter by Croat nationalists from Split for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[461] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.

however, fell on deaf ears, and in late November the National Committee was struck a severe blow when a number of prominent Croats broke from it and formed their own organisation, the Civic Bloc (*Građanski Blok*).[463] Disturbed by this development, Grđić returned to Split in the middle of December to plead directly with Trifunović Birčanin to reconcile with the rebellious Croats, but the stubborn old *vojvoda* not only refused to see Grđić, but would not even accept a letter from him.[464] Grđić, fearful that the Croat-Serb coalition might disintegrate completely, held discussions with Bartulović and the other heads of the Civic Bloc and, together with a number of Serb members of the National Committee who were dissatisfied with Trifunović Birčanin's incompetence and chauvinism, they formed the Split branch of the JRP.[465]

Although the JRP had at least three chapters (Split, Sušak, and Zagreb), all of which produced their own newsletter,[466] by the end of the year it can not be said that it was particularly well-organised or large. Grđić, however, worked energetically to amalgamate the largely independent branches in to a single organisation.[467] The JRP claimed for itself the right to negotiate with the Chetnik

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[462] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[463] Gizdić (159b) p. 700. The members of the Civic Bloc included Niko Bartulović, Beroš, Borković, Buč, Ivo Čičin-Šain, Čulić, Farolfi, Nenad Grisogono, Mihaljević, Tomo Mimica, Ivan Petar Mladineo, Novak, and Pederin (Gizdić (1959b) p. 700).
[464] Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23.
[465] Telegram (Number 363) from Radmilo Grđić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 12 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 68; Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23; Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 888; Dedijer (1981) Volume II, p. 24; Karchmar (1973) p. 596.
[466] Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 168-169.
[467] Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 169.

Movement on behalf of the Croatian people and their interests.[468] As discussed earlier,[469] a meeting was held between Major Žarko Todorović, the head of the Command of Belgrade, and representatives of the JRP from Zagreb in late May where it was agreed to maintain regular contact and begin collaborating.[470] By the end of the year, however, few results were discernible; the JRP leadership complained that the "[c]onnection, cooperation, and exchange of ideas between Belgrade and Zagreb have not functioned as we wished, suggested, and as it should have, nor has the connection between the JVO and JRP."[471] In response to a letter penned by Todorović on 4 December, the JRP leadership asked a number of questions that perfectly illustrated Croat fears:

> (1) What guarantees can we receive that the 'movement' is not following, nor will follow, a Great Serb policy instead of a Yugoslav policy [?] ... From the terrain, our people (from Bosnia and Lika, for example) report that a mood of Great Serbism rules in many battalions ...
> (2) What guarantees can we receive that the JVO will prevent with all of its strength the slaughter of Croats as a whole [?] ...[472]

The JRP leadership also wanted to know the Chetnik Movement's position regarding the Croat Peasant Party, and the agreements between some NDH Chetniks and the Italians and Ustaša government. Naturally, it wanted to know

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[468] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[469] See "National Policy in the Spring" in this chapter.
[470] Milošević (2005) p. 215.
[471] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[472] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.

what its role would be in the event of a merger.[473] If Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership desired to draw Croats in to the Chetnik Movement and work with anti-Ustaša elements amongst the Croatian people such as the JRP, they needed to satisfactorily answer these questions.

## Mihailović, the Chetnik Leadership, and the Croats and Muslims

By the beginning of autumn, Mihailović had organised the JVO High Command[474] and divided Yugoslavia in to regional commands.[475] The men assigned to these important positions were granted tremendous responsibility and trust, and Mihailović relied on them to obey his orders, follow his general policies, and provide him with accurate information. The complicated relationship between Mihailović and the leading figures in the Chetnik Movement influenced how the Croats and Muslims were viewed, and what policies were adopted towards them.

Many of the most important figures in the Chetnik Movement believed that the Croatian, Muslim, and Serbian people disliked one another and had no desire to live together, let alone cooperate. In a letter to Trifunović Birčanin

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[473] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[474] The High Command was transferred to Yugoslavia from Cairo in June. Mihailović established the Advance Section of the High Command (*Istaknuti Deo Vrhovne Komande*) some time in the second half of the year. Headed by Ostojić, it was placed in charge of operations in the NDH and was meant, presumably, to cement Mihailović's control over the Chetnik units in the NDH.
[475] The heads of the regional commands were: Major Petar Baćović (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), General Blažo Đukanović (Command of Montenegro), Major Karlo Novak (Command of Slovenia), Major Žarko Todorović (Command of Belgrade and the Northern Provinces), General Miroslav Trifunović (Command of Serbia), and Ilija Trifunović Birčanin (Command of West Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika).

written in June,[476] Jevđević wrote that although the Muslim intelligentsia was receptive to the idea of collaboration, the problem lay with the Muslim and Serbian "broad masses ... who hate one another infernally and where the conclusive idea has formed that there can never be a common life between them ever again."[477] Jevđević similarly reported to Baćović in July the existence of Muslim intellectuals throughout Hercegovina who considered themselves Serbs and were supporting his activities, but lamented that no change had occurred "towards the Muslims in Hercegovina in the broad [Serbian] masses ... [and that] ... in the peoples' soul there exists the unalterable awareness that there can no longer be a common life with them".[478] Such sentiments were communicated to Mihailović. In a letter from August, Baćović and Jevđević reported that the Bosnian and Hercegovinian Serbs "do not want to hear of cooperation with them [the Muslims] and have already formed the opinion that they must disappear",[479] and that in Dalmatia "the people's mood is exclusively Serb",[480] which was repelling Croats from the Chetnik Movement. According to Baćović and Jevđević, the lack of support for the Chetniks amongst the Croats was a result of the chauvinism of the Serbian populace. Trifunović Birčanin, on the other hand, declared that the fault lay with the Croats: "According to my deepest belief, the

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[476] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Ilija Trifunović, undated (probably from late June 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 397-405.
[477] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Ilija Trifunović, undated (probably from late June 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 404.
[478] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Major Petar Baćović, undated (probably from the second half of July 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 469.
[479] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 595.
[480] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 596.

vast majority of Croats have no desire to be where there are Serbs."[481] In a report for Mihailović penned on 1 November by Baćović, the mood of the Serbian peasantry was described as "uncompromising and vengeful".[482] At the end of November, Baćović and Jevđević wrote a particularly important assessment for Mihailović,[483] in which they discussed the tremendous difficulties they were experiencing in their policy of reconciliation with the Croats and Muslims. The Hercegovinian Serbs were described as "primitive"[484] and opposed to the Yugoslav idea, while Croat officers in the JVO and Muslim Chetniks were viewed with distrust.[485] Significantly, they wrote of Chetnik atrocities: "During operations in Bosnia, we were witnesses to the most bestial slaughter of children aged one and two years, not only by individuals but also by entire groups. Primeval instincts are beginning to predominate in the peoples' soul."[486] This document is of great importance because it demonstrates that Baćović and Jevđević were aware of serious war crimes being committed by units under their command, and that they passed this information on to Mihailović. They also expressed concern about what would happen at the moment when the Chetnik Movement triumphed: "It will be difficult to restrain the masses during the final

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[481] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 674.
[482] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[483] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 729-735.
[484] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 732.
[485] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 733.
[486] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 733.

settlement, so that the innocent do not pay along with the guilty".[487] Mihailović was highly dependent on the intelligence gathered and passed on to him by the regional commanders and others, and the opinions of these key figures in his movement inevitably shaped his views; at his trial, Mihailović lamented that his efforts to work with the Muslims were hampered by the mood of the Serbian people.[488] Such sentiments largely reflected what he had been told by his subordinates.

Despite such gloomy appraisals and forecasts, there were some hopeful signs. From the summer onwards, an ever-increasing amount of intelligence was received about the deteriorating position of the Ustaša regime. In late July, Baćović received a letter describing the situation in eastern Bosnia written by Captain Pavle Grubač (commander of the Višegrad Brigade, Drina Corps) based on his observations and talks with a sergeant in the Croat armed forces.[489] Repeating what he had been told by the Croat officer, Grubač wrote:

> He says that all Croats, except a small number, are Maček's followers. He says that the Green Cadre is strengthening every day and that they hope for the rapid defeat of the enemy. He says that they are well-organised and desire cooperation with the Serbs. He pleaded that I tell the rank and file not to kill *Domobrani* but rather to contact them and they would not fire a single shot. Maček's supporters fiercely hate the Ustaše … All younger officers are

[487] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 733.
[488] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 358-359.
[489] Letter by Captain Pavle Grubač (commander of the Višegrad Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 23 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 459-461.

> against the current order in Croatia and desire the creation of Yugoslavia.[490]

This information was conveyed to Mihailović; at the end of August, Baćović and Jevđević reported that the regular Croatian army was "in ruin [and that] most of it is flirting with the Partisans, although a small section is prepared to join us when we order them."[491] They also reported that they had advised the Muslims to "form Muslim units and for these units to enter the struggle against the Muslim and Catholic Ustaše",[492] as this was the only way they could "change the mood of the [Serbian] people".[493] Indeed, the idea that it was the responsibility of the Croats and Muslims to transform the disposition of the Serbs through their behaviour was one of the most salient features of Chetnik thinking and was a recurrent subject in their propaganda and written correspondence. In a detailed intelligence report from 1 November, Baćović outlined the situation in eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina: the state of the Croat armed forces was "worse and worse every day"[494] and desertion was "very common";[495] the NDH regime had lost the support of most Croats and it was maintained by German support more than anything else.[496] In Hercegovina, most of the Muslims were armed and,

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[490] Letter by Captain Pavle Grubač (commander of the Višegrad Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 23 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 460-461.
[491] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 595.
[492] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 595-596.
[493] Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 595.
[494] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[495] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[496] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.

thanks to the efforts of a number of Muslim intellectuals who considered themselves Serbs, were turning against the NDH government.[497] In eastern Bosnia, even though the Muslims were far more loyal to the Ustaša regime, they were tired of fighting.[498] Baćović believed that much could be accomplished on his territory, arguing that "the disorientation of the Muslim masses could be exploited in our interests if sufficient numbers of Serb orientated Muslim officers and intellectuals could be found."[499]

Far more pleasing to Mihailović's ears must have been news of the numerous approaches by Croats and Muslims, as well as examples of cooperation. Popovac's efforts demonstrated the existence of a fair number of Muslims who considered themselves Serbs, recognised Mihailović as the leader of Yugoslav resistance, and were willing to join the JVO. Baćović reported that a section of the Croat officer corps was prepared to cooperate with the JVO and that he had taken the "necessary measures so that this mood might be exploited."[500] On 15 December, a group of Croat Peasant Party members from Split sent King Peter a telegram through Jevđević in which they affirmed the loyalty of the people of Dalmatia to the crown.[501] One of the signatories was Ivan Petar Mladineo,[502] a member of the Split JRP, which suggests that it may have

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[497] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[498] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[499] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[500] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.
[501] Gizdić (1959b) p. 738.
[502] Gizdić (1959b) p. 738.

been a gesture by the new organisation to confirm its loyalty to the king and his minister in the homeland after just breaking with Trifunović Birčanin. On 29 December, Ostojić reported that numerous contacts had been established between the *Domobrani* and JVO at the former's instigation.[503]

Chetnik leaders, however, suspected the reasons for these approaches. Captain Vladimir Zečević believed that Popovac's "main aim is to protect the Muslims, not the struggle for the Serbian people and Serb aims."[504] Ostojić argued that numerous *Domobrani* approaches in Dalmatia were motivated by the desire "only to save their own heads and not from any deeper motives."[505] Mihailović, in response to questions from Prime Minister Jovanović about his activities amongst the Croats, replied:

> For now, collaboration with the *Domobrani* consists of a few expressions of sympathy and attempts at establishing contact. They have done nothing concrete yet. They are waiting for the end of the war so that they can eat the fruits of the battle that the Serbs have waged thus far ...[506]

Mihailović and much of the Chetnik leadership were rather sceptical of the sincerity of Croat and Muslim offers of collaboration.

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[503] Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 800.
[504] Report by Captain Vladimir Zečević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 24 August 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 566.
[505] Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 800.
[506] Telegram (Number 615) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 10 September 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 183.

As mentioned earlier, the notion that the Croats and Muslims had to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Chetnik leadership and Serbian nation was a core concept in Chetnik thinking. Ostojić wrote about Croat offers of cooperation and declared that "[w]e will provide them with the opportunity to prove themselves"[507] after the Chetniks had dealt with the Partisans, when it would be possible to "turn to new measures and accept them"[508] in to the JVO. This idea held sway over Mihailović and can be observed in detailed instructions sent to Jevđević in early October on what policies to adopt towards the Croats and Muslims in Bosnia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, and Lika.[509] Jevđević was ordered to explain to Yugoslav orientated Muslim leaders that

> only by organising under the command of our officers and fighting against the Ustaše and communists, as well as by maintaining a loyal attitude towards the Serbian populace, can the Muslims repair the shameful role that they have played since the fall of Yugoslavia.[510]

Furthermore, it was necessary for them to kill those Muslims who were "working against the Serbian people".[511] Regarding the Croats, Mihailović wrote:

> It is obvious to everyone that Yugoslavia will exist once again and that Croats must live in this Yugoslavia. The borders of the Croat unit and the rights that will be enjoyed by the Croats in this future

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[507] Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 800.
[508] Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 800.
[509] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 658-662.
[510] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 658.
[511] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 658.

> new state will depend entirely on them, that is, whether Yugoslav orientated Croats join our ranks and participate in the liquidation of Croat traitors, who worked against Yugoslavia for 23 years and massacred 600,000 Serbs from April last year to today. It is my desire, as well as that of our High Commander and government, that Yugoslav Croats finally realise that it is the twelfth hour for them to rise to arms and to demonstrate in this way that they desire to invest in the creation of a new Yugoslavia.[512]

Rather ominously, Mihailović wrote that "if the Croats remain inactive, no power will be able to rescue them from the vengeance of the Serbian people".[513] These instructions illustrate a great deal about Mihailović's thinking: he believed that the majority of Croats and Muslims had behaved wrongly towards the Serbian people since the April War, but that they could make amends by organising pro-Chetnik units, joining the JVO, and by liquidating traitors in their midst. Although Mihailović was convinced that 600,000 Serbs had been massacred to date, this was blamed on "Croat traitors"[514] rather than the Croatian nation as a whole; a very important qualification that demonstrates that he did not consider the entire Croatian nation responsible for the crimes in the Ustaše. Indeed, on 19 December he asked Jovanović to convince the Croat members of the exiled government to openly condemn the Ustaše and make a distinction between them and innocent Croats.[515]

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[512] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[513] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[514] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[515] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 19 December 1942, in Williams (2003) p. 111.

Other written correspondence between Mihailović and his closest subordinates further illustrates his national policy and views on the national question. In a telegram to Jovanović from 10 September, he outlined his policy towards the armed forces of the NDH: "This is our position towards the Croatian Army: destroy the Ustaše, undermine the *Domobrani*."[516] He issued orders to his subordinates to behave accordingly:

> Via Colonel Bosnić and Major Srnetić, undertake the most energetic drilling of the Croatian Army, with the aim of ensuring that entire units place themselves at our disposal, assist us by providing weapons and equipment, and allow them to be utilised in the battle against the communists and Ustaše.[517]

At the beginning of November, Mihailović gave Major Žarko Todorović an authorisation to "work on the organisation of units of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland in the [following] zones: Srem, Banat, Bačka, Slavonia and Croatia, as a delegate of the High Command"[518] with "wide authorisations in your activities".[519]

As the year progressed, it became increasingly obvious that the Chetnik Movement lacked a clear national policy. To be sure, numerous postwar programs had been formulated by Moljević, Vasić, and others, but a definitive

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[516] Telegram (Number 615) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 10 September 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 183.
[517] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[518] Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Major Žarko Todorović, early November 1942, in Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 170.
[519] Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Major Žarko Todorović, early November 1942, in Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 170.

program that Mihailović had adopted as official policy simply did not exist. This is perhaps best illustrated in a letter from October written by Trifunović Birčanin in which he asked Mihailović:

> (1) Are we fighting for Yugoslavia or Serbia?
> (2) If we are fighting for Yugoslavia, how will it be organised? Will the Cvetković-Maček *Sporazum* be the starting point for the future state organisation, as most Croats declare!?
> (3) Is the government supporting us or the communists?
> (4) What do you think about these problems and the work of the government?[520]

Trifunović Birčanin was asking questions that struck at the very heart of the entire Mihailović movement.

## Political Activities

When Mihailović arrived in Montenegro he did not have any political advisors with him. The Central National Committee was of little use, since its general secretary and most of its members were in Belgrade,[521] and communication with them was conducted exclusively by courier.[522] Although Vasić was charged with numerous political tasks – propaganda, studying the considerable number of postwar proposals that the High Command received, and providing Mihailović with advice and directives[523] – he accomplished very little,

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[520] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 676.
[521] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[522] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500.
[523] Telegram (Number 130) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Dragiša Vasić, 11 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 499; Telegram (Number 227) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Dragiša Vasić, 26 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 503.

producing only two leaflets between May and October.[524] Another problem was the fact that he was in Serbia,[525] whereas Mihailović and the High Command were in Montenegro. Conscious of the political weaknesses of his movement,[526] in the autumn Mihailović ordered Moljević, Vasić, and Žujović to the High Command,[527] and upon their arrival, they were appointed the Executive Committee of the Central National Committee.[528] Mihailović explained during his interrogation why he undertook this rather uncharacteristic action:

> I wanted them to come [to Gornje Lipovo] and as the representatives of the highest political body to attend consultations with me, to share the responsibility with me, and to take over all work on the elaboration of political questions and the movement's propaganda.[529]

Following its arrival, the Executive Committee discussed a number of questions concerning postwar Yugoslavia, such as "the arrangement of the state, the borders of the federal units, [and] territory that was to be annexed by Yugoslavia".[530] A printing press was established[531] and the High Command began

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[524] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 302.
[525] Vasić resided on the territory of the First Ravna Gora Corps, commanded by Captain Zvonimir Vučković (Telegram (Number 130) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Dragiša Vasić, 11 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 499; Telegram (Number 227) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Dragiša Vasić, 26 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 503).
[526] In a top secret report composed by Ostojić in early September, the "absence of propaganda" was named as one of the key weaknesses of the Chetnik Movement (Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 602).
[527] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 302; The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 499.
[528] Milovanović (1986) p. 273; *The Trial of Dragoljub Draža Mihailović,* p. 318.
[529] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500.
[530] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500.
[531] Karchmar (1973) p. 587.

publishing *Ravna Gora*, the official newsletter of the Chetnik Movement.[532] Mihailović seems to have given these men a great deal of independence in their work, and limited his involvement to the reading of their manuscripts and some suggestions.[533]

While Mihailović was busy reinvigorating the Central National Committee, the Montenegrin Chetniks were engaged in their own political activities. Some time in the autumn, the Montenegrin branch of the Chetnik youth organisation[534] met with Đurišić and a number of district commanders,[535] and convinced them of the need to hold a conference to "consider fundamental political and ideological questions."[536] A second meeting, held in October, was attended by the youth delegates, a number of civil leaders and professionals,[537] and some important

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[532] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500; Matić (1995) p. 69; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 318. The first issue of *Ravna Gora* came out on 1 February 1943 (Matić (1995) p. 69).
[533] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500. During the period from their arrival in the High Command in autumn 1942 to the High Command's retreat to Serbia in June 1943, Mihailović met the Executive Committee of the Central National Committee "only a few times" (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 302).
[534] Its official name was *Jugoslovenska Ravnogorska Omladina* (JURAO – Yugoslav Ravna Gora Youth) (Karchmar (1973) pp. 590-591). For information on the Yugoslav Ravna Gora Youth see Karchmar ((1973) pp. 590-592) and Tomasevich ((1975) pp. 187-188).
[535] Andrijevica District (Dušan Arsović), Berane District (Radosav Joksimović), Bijelo Polje District (Milan Bandović), and Kolašin District (Đorđe Lazarević).
[536] Zonjić (1975) pp. 49-50.
[537] Some of these included Mihailo Andrić, Đukan Anđelić, Milosav Babović, Vojo Bojičić, Vukašin Bojović, Jovan Boljević, Dušan Cemović, Drago Cerović, Batrić Ćorović, Božo Delević, Branko Drljević, Dmitar Đukić, Veljko Đurašković, Blažo Gojnić, Vojo Ivanović, Lazar Karadžić, Dragutin Kićović, Branko Lazarević, Jovo Lazarević, Otaš Medenica, Vlado Milošević, Vidak Mrdak, Mile Ostojić, Danilo Pavlović, Miladin Perović, Voja Pajović, Rista Pestorić, Dušan Radonjić, Mihajlo Radović, Gojko Šarović, Todor Tomić, Bećir Tomović, Milo Vasović, and Slobodan Zonjić (Zonjić (1975) p. 50).

Montenegrin officers,[538] and it was here that it was decided to hold a major political gathering with representatives from the whole of Montenegro.[539]

The conference held in Šahovići from 30 November to 2 December[540] was attended by approximately 1,000 delegates from Montenegro and the Sandžak,[541] as well as a number of officers.[542] The day began with a church service in honour of Unification Day, the day on which the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was created in 1918, after which Đurišić opened the meeting by telling the assembled men that the aim was to ensure "that the voice of the youth might be heard regarding the future of the state."[543] The president of the congress, Milan Bandović, told them that the "nation above all else and Serbdom must be more important than every other ideology."[544] Ostojić greeted the delegates in Mihailović's name. During the proceedings, the attendees[545] competed with one another in submitting more extreme and radical proposals, including: a Chetnik dictatorship ranging from one to twenty-five years; the radical redistribution of land amongst the peasantry; state control of banking, large industry, and the press; massive investment in education and health to improve the lot of the

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[538] Major Boža Joksimović, Major Đorđe Lašić, Major Zaharije Ostojić, Major Andrija Vesković, Captain Nikola Bojović, Captain Pavle Đurišić, Captain Milorad Joksimović, and Captain Vojislav Lukačević (Zonjić (1975) p. 50).
[539] Zonjić (1975) p. 50.
[540] See the Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 15-19 (#4) and the Resolutions of the Conference of Chetnik Intellectual Youth of Montenegro, Boka, and the Sandžak, 2 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 736-739.
[541] Zonjić (175) p. 50.
[542] Major Đorđe Lašić, Major Zaharije Ostojić, and Captain Pavle Đurišić (Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 15 (#4)).
[543] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 15 (#4).
[544] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 15 (#4).
[545] An incomplete list of the delegates can be found in Zonjić (1975) pp. 50-51.

peasantry; the subjection of the Catholic and Orthodox churches to state control; and a ban on women serving in the state bureaucracy.[546] The delegates said a fair deal about the Croats as well; one argued that it was necessary to "separate the Croatian people from their leadership ... [after which] ... the Croats themselves would be for our old unitary state."[547] Another argued for "cleansing amongst the Serbs, Croats, and minorities",[548] while a third supported "the spread of the Chetnik Movement amongst the Croats, which would teach them to think as we do."[549] Ostojić, a lonely voice of reason, reminded the assembly that

> Yugoslav orientated Croats exist, who are working in the spirit of our Chetnik Movement but that they have learnt to tolerate so that they are not very active even though our movement is working and will continue to do so.[550]

The resolution passed on 2 December[551] called for a unitary state in which only Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes would be allowed to live:

> 3. The future state needs to be unitary and in it Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will live in their regions on the principle of wide autonomy. All regions will be united by a common thread, so that the Yugoslav idea will be fuller.
> 4. On the territory of the future state, only Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will live. There can not be any national minorities.[552]

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[546] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* pp. 15-18 (#4).
[547] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 16 (#4).
[548] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 16 (#4).
[549] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 16 (#4).
[550] Minutes of the Šahovići Conference, 30 November 1942, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 16 (#4).
[551] Resolutions of the Conference of Chetnik Intellectual Youth of Montenegro, Boka, and the Sandžak, 2 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 736-739.

The Šahovići Conference was an ugly example of the worst aspects of the Montenegrin Chetnik character: extremism, intolerance, and national chauvinism.[553] That said, it must be remembered that the delegates at the congress were not elected nor could they claim to represent the Orthodox populace of Montenegro and the Sandžak, let alone public opinion. They were, at best, representatives of a particular political view from these parts.[554]

The relationship between Mihailović and the Šahovići Conference is ambiguous. Although the delegates declared their loyalty to him and cheered his name, he was not in attendance, nor were the three members of the Executive Committee of the Central National Committee, the highest political body in the Chetnik Movement, even though they were only a few kilometres away. They most certainly played no part in the discussions or the drafting of the resolutions, and it is thus difficult to argue that the declaration was binding on the Central National Committee, the JVO, or Mihailović. It is quite possible that Mihailović, Moljević, Vasić, and Žujović considered it a purely Montenegrin affair. At his trial, when asked if he supported the resolutions of the Šahovići Conference, Mihailović replied: "It was an absurdity. The only congress that matters for me is the one in Ba."[555] When pressed about Ostojić's presence at the gathering, Mihailović said: "They did what they liked. That entire group did what it liked."[556]

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[552] Resolutions of the Conference of Chetnik Intellectual Youth of Montenegro, Boka, and the Sandžak, 2 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 737.
[553] Karchmar (1973) described the conference as "another sad lesson in Montenegrin intolerance and extremism" (p. 413).
[554] I am indebted to Associate Professor Aleksandar "Saša" Pavković for making this point.
[555] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 368.
[556] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 368.

The fact that neither he nor the Executive Committee of the Central National Committee attended the conference lends credibility to Mihailović's statement.

## Preparing for the Reckoning

At the very end of the year, two events took place that were in many respects the crowning achievements of Mihailović's national policy towards the Croats and Muslims in 1942. In late December, a letter from the Croat Peasant Party leadership reached the High Command asking that a meeting be held so that Mihailović and the party might coordinate their efforts for the "liberation and unification of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in a single indivisible Yugoslavia."[557] Mihailović was asked to send a delegate who had military and political authority so that an accord might be signed.[558] In response, he appointed as his special ambassadors two Croats, Drago Matijašić and Stanko Tončić, who travelled to Zagreb.[559] The second event was a conference organised by the MNVO on 31 December in Kalinovik attended by a number of delegates primarily from Bosnia and Hercegovina. The assembly passed a resolution,[560] which declared the Muslims a "constituent and indivisible part of Serbdom"[561] and condemned the Ustaše, whose massacres were described as "the cause of all the

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[557] Letter by A. Z. for Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 23.
[558] Letter by A. Z. for Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 23.
[559] Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 173. Tončić was a teacher at the Bjelovar secondary school.
[560] The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 11. An English translation can be found in Appendix 6.
[561] The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 11.

evil in our people".[562] Those Muslims who had joined the Ustaša Movement or any military organisation other than the JVO were similarly censured. The MNVO was pronounced a constituent part of the Chetnik Movement, and its aims were articulated: to fight for the liberation of Yugoslavia and its reestablishment as a kingdom, "organised on the principles of democracy and social justice and in which Muslims will be equal citizens."[563] An executive committee was elected composed of Major Fehim Musakadić, Mustafa Pašić, and Popovac, and telegrams were sent to King Peter and Mihailović, in which the executive committee expressed its loyalty and best wishes.[564] Together with the numerous other examples of cooperation discussed, they constituted an enormous improvement on the previous year. It remained to be seen whether Mihailović would be able to further consolidate his national policy accomplishments and, perhaps more importantly, formulate a comprehensive national program in the new year.

Notwithstanding these and other military and political successes, Mihailović had cause for concern as the year drew to a close. The international Partisan propaganda offensive was in full-swing and a furious Mihailović could do little more than send angry telegrams to his government demanding that something be done about the glorification of the Partisans, who were, according

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[562] The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 11.
[563] The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 11.
[564] Telegrams from Major Fehim Musakadić and Ismet Popovac to King Peter II and Army General Draža Mihailović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 10.

to him, "nothing but communists composed of anti-Serb and anti-Yugoslav elements against whom we are all fighting for life and death".[565] Partly as a result of this campaign, the Chetnik Movement was getting a bad name outside of Yugoslavia; it was viewed as reactionary, collaborationist, and composed of opportunists with no political convictions.[566] Domestically, the Partisans held an assembly in the town of Bihać on 26 and 27 November, at which they formed AVNOJ, declared it the "highest political expression of the firm unity of the peoples of Yugoslavia",[567] and formed an executive council with numerous departments akin to ministries.[568] Perhaps more worrying was a telegram from Jovanović sent on 11 December:

> We have reports which [Juraj] Šutej received via Rome that Birčanin, Jevđević, and [Lieutenant Colonel Ilija] Mihić along with their units are in close relations with the Italians, that Mihić even has his staff in Lovran in Istria, and that they are butchering innocent Croats throughout Dalmatia to make room for the Italians tomorrow.[569]

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[565] Telegram (Number 935) from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 7 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 675 (Footnote 13).
[566] Žujović (1948) p. 9.
[567] *Rezolucija o Osnivanju Antifašističkog Veća Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije* (1942) p. 4. Although seventy-seven delegates were meant to attend the assembly (seventeen from Bosnia and Hercegovina, fifteen from Croatia, fourteen from Montenegro, fourteen from Serbia, eight from Slovenia, six from the Sandžak, and three from Vojvodina) only fifty-four did. The delegates from Slovenia and Vojvodina, and another twelve from other regions were unable to attend (Hoare (2006) p. 320). Although members of the KPJ dominated, there were members of other political parties as well as those who did not belong to any party.
[568] Administrative Affairs, Education, Health, Finance, Propaganda, Religious Affairs, and Social Affairs (Hoare (2006) p. 321).
[569] Telegram from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 11 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 964 (Footnote 4). Lieutenant Colonel Ilija Mihić was the commander of nationalist forces in Lika (Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 16 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 423-424).

If such news troubled Mihailović, he was at least partly assuaged by requests from the highest Allied staffs to undertake sabotage in Yugoslavia,[570] and the arrival of a British colonel at his headquarters.[571] These events, however, paled in comparison as it became ever more likely that the Allies would open a new front in the new year, quite possibly in Yugoslavia.[572]

All of these factors, as well as a number of others, coalesced in to a grand plan to destroy the Partisans. Their destruction would have solved most of Mihailović's problems; his main competitor would be eliminated, leaving the Allies with no choice but to support him, and control of the Dalmatian littoral and hinterland meant that the JVO would greet the Anglo-American liberators.[573] So Mihailović and his closest associates formulated a plan for their most ambitious military venture to date: a 'March on Bosnia' to destroy Tito and the Partisans.[574]

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[570] Telegram (Number 116) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 848; Telegram (Number 118) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 25 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 849; Telegram (Number 139) from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 November 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 850.
[571] On 25 December, Colonel Stanley Bailey, the new head of the British Mission, and Captain Kenneth Greenlees were parachuted on to Mount Sinjajevina (Bailey (1975) p. 69; Williams (2003) p. 91).
[572] Memorandum by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 22; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 167; Williams (2003) pp. 103-105.
[573] At his trial, Mihailović described his thinking at this time: "As early as winter 1942/1943 I was informed about the landing which was to be carried out on the Dalmatian Coast, or rather, not on the Dalmatian Coast, but on our Littoral. As a soldier, I estimated the possibility of a landing, and I came to the conclusion that the most favorable conditions for the landing were in Dalmatia, near Split, where there are several islands which would make the landing operations easier. At that time the Partisans began to attack Dalmatia. One thing was obvious, and that was that I should keep my positions in Dalmatia. Under such conditions, and in these circumstances, I had, in my opinion, to defend my positions in Dalmatia." (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 167).
[574] Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 9 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 750-752; Army General Draža Mihailović's authorisation for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 11 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 752-753; Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14,

Once this was achieved, the JVO would await the Allied landing and launch operations to liberate Yugoslavia; Mihailović and Ostojić even composed detailed plans to this effect.[575] Yet Mihailović and his chief of operations were planning ventures that the JVO might not be able to carry out. In early September, Ostojić had compiled a scathing secret report on the weaknesses of the JVO and especially its High Command.[576] At the end of the month, Radmilo Grđić reported on the serious problems of the Chetnik Movement in the Italian occupation zone.[577] Baćović wrote in November about the lack of discipline amongst the Chetniks of eastern Bosnia and Hercegovina.[578] Mihailović was taking an enormous gamble, but one that was apparently necessary given the anticipated Allied landing.

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Book 1, pp. 797-802; Order Number 1 by Army General Draža Mihailović for subordinate commanders, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 7-15.

[575] Memorandum by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 22; Army General Draža Mihailović's plan for the liberation of Yugoslavia, 29 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 9.

[576] Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 September 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 600-606.

[577] Report by Radmilo Grđić for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of September 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 653.

[578] Report Number 271 by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 November 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 3, Document 43.

## Chapter V

# 1943

Nineteen forty-three promised to be a tumultuous year for Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement. The Western Allies were expected to land in Yugoslavia,[1] thereby bringing the liberation of the country to its concluding stages. In response to this, Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership formulated a plan for the annihilation of the Partisans in their Bihać Republic (*Bihaćka Republika*)[2] to ensure that the Chetniks would be unchallenged masters of Yugoslavia when the Allies arrived.[3] Early 1943 was thus characterised by a number of military operations as the Chetnik leadership prepared the ground for the liberation of Yugoslavia and the final victory of the JVO. It was also characterised by a number of massacres of the Muslim population.

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[1] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 167
[2] See Map 9.
[3] Letter by Major Petar Baćović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 9 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 750-752; Army General Draža Mihailović's authorisation for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 11 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 752-753; Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 797-802; Order Number 1 by Army General Draža Mihailović for subordinate commanders, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 7-15.

## Čajniče in Crisis

Following the capture of Foča in August 1942 and the subsequent massacre of many of its inhabitants,[4] the Muslims of the neighbouring Čajniče District formed a militia.[5] Although its purpose was the protection of the Muslim populace, it terrorised the local Serbs,[6] resulting in tense relations between it and the nearby Chetniks.[7] Fighting broke out on 19 December, and the Čajniče and Foča JVO brigades were forced to retreat, leaving most of the district in the hands of the Muslim militia,[8] which looted and torched a number of Serbian villages, and raped and killed some of their inhabitants.[9] In response, Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković, the commander of the Čajniče Brigade (Drina Corps), pleaded with Major Petar Baćović to come to the aid of the unprotected Serbian population.[10] Fighting continued over the next few days and the situation worsened as both sides brought in reinforcements; about 1,500 Ustaše from the

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[4] See Chapter IV, "Chetnik Massacres".
[5] Letter by Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković (commander of the Čajniče Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 231, Folder 12, Document 30.
[6] Letter by Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković (commander of the Čajniče Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 231, Folder 12, Document 30.
[7] Letter by Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković (commander of the Čajniče Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 231, Folder 12, Document 30; Report by Selman Ibričević (president of the Čajniče District) for the *Veliki Župan* of the Great County of Vrhbosna, 28 July 1943, Dedijer & Miletić (1990) p. 364.
[8] Telegram (Number 1) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 31.
[9] The Muslim militia killed ten to fifteen elderly people, three or four women, and two children. The women who did not flee were raped (Letter by Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković (commander of the Čajniče Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 231, Folder 12, Document 30).
[10] Letter by Second Lieutenant Miloš Vučković (commander of the Čajniče Brigade, Drina Corps) for Major Petar Baćović, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 231, Folder 12, Document 30.

dreaded Black Legion (*Crna Legija*) had arrived in the vicinity by 26 December, and Chetniks under Captain Vojislav Lukačević were expected any day.[11]

On 1 January, Major Zaharije Ostojić telegrammed Mihailović to inform him of the situation.[12] He told Mihailović that the "Turks"[13] were planning another attack, and that he would draw up a plan for the "definitive liquidation of the Turks in the Čajniče District"[14] tomorrow, which he wanted Mihailović to authorise upon its completion. In order to justify the proposal, and quite probably to convince Mihailović to adopt it, Ostojić stated that the "*Sandžaklije* [inhabitants of the Sandžak] must be slaughtered, because if we do not do it to them, they will attempt to do it to us while the occupier still protects them."[15] Whereas Ostojić believed that an aggressive policy was necessary towards the Muslims of southeastern Bosnia and the Sandžak, he argued for contrasting behaviour towards those living in other parts of Yugoslavia, telling Mihailović that "[w]e must resolve the Muslim question in different ways in different regions."[16]

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[11] Report by Lieutenant Jovan Jelovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 26 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 793-794.
[12] Telegrams (Numbers 1-3) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 30-31.
[13] Telegram (Number 1) from Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 30.
[14] Telegram (Number 2) from Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 31.
[15] Telegram (Number 3) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 31.
[16] Telegram (Number 3) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 31.

Mihailović, however, did not authorise Ostojić's plan. Instead, he informed him that operations in the Čajniče District would be undertaken later in the month, following the arrival of Major Pavle Đurišić, and that Đurišić and Lukačević would formulate the plan of attack.[17] Interestingly, Mihailović blamed the Muslim militia's offensive on the Italians:

> The sincerity of the Aunties [a derogatory term for the Italians employed by the Chetniks] can be seen by their raising of the Turks against us around Čajniče and on the right bank of the Lim [River]. They still have not given you arms. They are common liars.[18]

Ostojić, however, was not willing to wait for the Montenegrins, and begged Mihailović to adopt his plan.[19] He appealed to his commander's fear and hatred of the Partisans, claiming that he had received a "report from a reliable person that the Turks of Čajniče are maintaining contacts with the communists from Bosnia ... [and that] ... in Bukovica they are hiding a group of twenty Reds."[20] But Mihailović would not budge, and the Muslims of Čajniče were spared.

Even though Ostojić's plan[21] was not implemented, it is worthwhile to note that the unit commanders were ordered to prevent war crimes:

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[17] Telegram (Number 10) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 1 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 38.
[18] Telegram (Number 73) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Petar Baćović, 6 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 42.
[19] Telegram (Number 3) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 2 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 31.
[20] Telegram (Number 60) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 32.
[21] Order Number 1 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for the commanders of the Drina Corps, Mileševo Corps, and Durmitor Brigade, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 16-26.

> (11) During the action, commanders will take the sternest measures to forbid all pillage, to prevent the killing of innocent men, women, and children, and to ensure the greatest order and discipline within their units so as to maintain the reputation of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland. Similarly, the burning of homes must be prevented.[22]

Here is evidence that Ostojić gave explicit orders against the harming of civilians.[23]

## The Lim River Massacre

In early January, Đurišić conducted an offensive against the Muslim militia on the right bank of the Lim River, centred on the Bijelo Polje District. It began on 5 January[24] and was completed five days later "precisely according to the agreed plan."[25] Thirty-three Muslim communities were torched, which Đurišić claimed occurred contrary to his instructions, but that it "followed the death of a number of our soldiers."[26] Far more appalling was the loss of life; whilst only fourteen Chetniks were killed and twenty-six wounded, three of whom were women, some 400 Muslim fighters were killed along with the terrible figure of 1,000 women and children. Livestock and valuables were plundered. Whilst this action was little more than an orgy of killing and theft, it was nonetheless

[22] Order Number 1 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for the commanders of the Drina Corps, Mileševo Corps, and Durmitor Brigade, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 26.
[23] Even though the plan was not implemented, the commanders of the Drina Corps (Captain Bajo Nikić), Mileševo Corps (Captain Vojislav Lukačević), and Durmitor Brigade (Captain Nikola Bojović) were provided with copies of the order (Order Number 1 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for the commanders of the Drina Corps, Mileševo Corps, and Durmitor Brigade, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 26).
[24] Letter by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 28.
[25] Report Number 23 by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 49.
[26] Report Number 23 by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 52.

selective in the communities that it targeted; the Muslims of the village of Kukulje, for example, offered to surrender their arms, but Đurišić rejected this offer, since this "village had always been peaceful".[27]

## The Capture of Bjelimići

Bjelimići is the name for a collection of sixteen Muslim villages in northern Hercegovina,[28] which had a population of 2,330 in early 1943.[29] It was one of the few remaining armed Muslim communities in Hercegovina not allied to the JVO, and a source of concern for the Chetnik leadership; Major Borivoje Radulović argued that it was strategically important because it could be utilised by the Ustaše as a base from which to launch incursions in to Hercegovina.[30] By December 1942, the Chetniks had decided to attack the villages, but Ismet Popovac dissuaded them from doing so on at least three occasions.[31] He and Major Fehim Musakadić wrote numerous letters to their acquaintances and influential personalities in Bjelimići pleading with them to expel the NDH officials and gendarme garrison.[32] In one such letter from 31 December, Popovac reiterated the need for Bjelimići to eject the NDH gendarmes and any individuals

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[27] Report Number 23 by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 50.
[28] The villages that comprise Bjelimići are Argud, Dindo, Doljani, Gradeljina, Luka, Ljubuča, Ljuta, Mokro, Ocrkavlje, Odžaci, Sitnik, Sopot, Svijenča, Tinje, Veluša, and Zabrđani.
[29] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.
[30] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.
[31] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Rašid *efendi* in Bjelimići, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 7, Document 17.
[32] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Rašid *efendi* in Bjelimići, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 7, Document 17; Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.

guilty of atrocities, and promised that twenty new gendarmes would be sent to maintain order.[33] In the event that this did not happen, Popovac warned that some 3,000 Chetniks, who had already begun converging on Kalinovik, would attack on 7 January.[34]

When the Bjelimići Muslims failed to acquiesce to the Chetniks' demands, Ostojić decided to conquer the region militarily. On 12 January, he gave Sergeant Jusuf Uzunović, who had previously been given command of all Muslim Chetnik units in Hercegovina, instructions regarding the capture of the villages.[35] To assuage the fears of the populace, MNVO units were to participate in the capture of the communities alongside the Chetniks; Uzunović was to form a battalion of 200 men, which would act as the vanguard. Although Ostojić hoped that a confrontation could be avoided, he ordered the use of force if resistance was encountered. The Bjelimići Operation was part of a greater plan, since Ostojić stated that the ultimate goal of the MNVO was to spread throughout all parts of Yugoslavia inhabited by Muslims and create armed units in these regions.[36]

When the offensive against Bjelimići was launched, no resistance was offered, and the Muslim Chetnik advance guard under the command of Second

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[33] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Rašid *efendi* in Bjelimići, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 7, Document 17.
[34] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Rašid *efendi* in Bjelimići, 31 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 7, Document 17.
[35] Order Number 2 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Sergeant Jusuf Uzunović, 12 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 14, p. 7.
[36] Order Number 2 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Sergeant Jusuf Uzunović, 12 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 14, p. 7.

Lieutenant Hamdija Čengić and Uzunović took the area on 19 and 20 January.[37] The soldiers were exceptionally well-behaved; there were only a few instances of small items being stolen by men from the Nevesinje Brigade (Nevesinje Corps).[38] The NDH armed forces, consisting of thirty *Domobrani* (including their commander) and eleven gendarmes (eight Croats and three Muslims), were captured.[39] The chief of the gendarmes, Sergeant Stojan Curić, was tried and shot for crimes that he had committed against Serbs; the others were sent to Kalinovik for interrogation.[40] Appraising the operation, Radulović deemed it a great accomplishment because the JVO and MNVO had gained the trust of the Muslim populace, which would subsequently aid the MNVO's expansion and strengthen Chetnik rule in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Radulović had nothing but the highest praise for Čengić and Musakadić, although he believed that Popovac was an opportunist who wanted to become the leader of the Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina after the Chetnik victory.[41]

Following the Bjelimići Operation, Ostojić sent Musakadić a congratulatory letter, praising the "great joint success of the Orthodox and

[37] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.
[38] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.
[39] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.
[40] Following their interrogation, the *Domobrani* were safely returned to Bjelimići (Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22).
[41] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 25.

Muslim Serb brothers."[42] Musakadić was ordered to begin working in neighbouring villages so that they would similarly join the MNVO, whilst Čengić was ordered to the territory of the Romanija Corps (Rogatica, Sarajevo, and Vlasenica districts) to organise the MNVO there.[43] Mustafa Pašić was named the chief judge of the MNVO High Command.[44] Although Radulović had discussed undertaking more actions with Musakadić, Ostojić told him that it was "too early",[45] and that it was necessary to observe the results of the Bjelimići Operation before taking further steps.[46] The events in Bjelimići were heard far and wide; they caused "great confusion"[47] amongst the Čajniče Muslims and convinced some of them to begin talks with the local Chetniks about laying down their arms.[48] The Chetnik leadership, however, had other plans for the hated Muslims of Čajniče.

## The Pljevlja Massacre

By the end of January, Đurišić and his Lim-Sandžak *Odred* were poised to attack the Muslim militia in southeastern Bosnia and northeastern Montenegro.

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[42] Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22 (Underlining in original).
[43] Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22.
[44] Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22.
[45] Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22.
[46] Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Major Fehim Musakadić, 23 January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 1, Document 22.
[47] Letter by Captain Jakov Jovović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, undated (late January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 8, Document 2.
[48] Letter by Captain Jakov Jovović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, undated (late January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 8, Document 2.

In his order prior to the operation,[49] Đurišic began by justifying the need to destroy the armed Muslims:

> The bestialities of the Muslims, communists, and Ustaše in the Čajniče, Foča, and Pljevlja Districts against the Serbian inhabitants have surpassed all boundaries.
>
> So that the Serbian inhabitants are once and for all saved from degenerates and traitors, action will be taken to destroy them.[50]

Order 12 refers to war crimes and is worth citing:

> (12) *Behaviour*. Do not attack the Italians. All Muslim combatants, Ustaše, and communists are to be killed. Women and children are not to be killed ... Burn Bukovica. The remaining villages are not to be burnt insofar as this is not tactically necessary.[51]

Significantly, the action was authorised by Major Mirko Lalatović, not Mihailović.[52]

The offensive against the Muslim militia began on 5 February[53] and by the night of 7 February Chetnik units had reached the Drina River, after which they began cleaning-up operations on the captured territory.[54] Đurišić reported that

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[49] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 121-127.
[50] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 121-122.
[51] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 126-127 (Italics in original).
[52] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 127.
[53] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 122, 123, 124, 125.
[54] Report by Major Pavle Đurišic for Army General Draža Mihailović, 13 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 182.

all Muslim villages in the three districts had been burnt so that not a single house remained standing. All property with the exception of fodder, grain, and livestock, which was stored for units who would remain to occupy the region and continue mopping-up operations, was destroyed. Chetnik losses were minimal: twenty-two killed (two accidentally) and thirty-two wounded. Đurišić reported that Muslim losses were 1,200 soldiers and 8,000 women, the elderly, and children.[55] This was hardly a military operation; it was a terrible massacre of civilians, even if all of the adult menfolk were part of the Muslim militia.

It should be noted that Đurišić's figures conflict with those reported later in the year by Selman Ibričević, the president of the Čajniče District,[56] as well as those tabulated after the war by the war crimes commission.[57] According to a report written by Ibričević in July, the Chetniks killed about 1,500 Muslims, primarily women and children.[58] This figure is very different from that in Đurišić's report,[59] which was written immediately following the conclusion of the operation and would not have given Đurišić sufficient time to count the victims. Ibričević's, on the other hand, was written more than half a year after the events, when a far clearer picture was available. The war crimes commission came to the

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[55] Report by Major Pavle Đurišic for Army General Draža Mihailović, 13 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 182.
[56] Report by Selman Ibričević (president of the Čajniče District) for the *Veliki Župan* of the Great County of Vrhbosna, 28 July 1943, Dedijer & Miletić (1990) pp. 364-365.
[57] Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284, 309-335, 343-354, 611-658.
[58] Report by Selman Ibričević (president of the Čajniče District) for the *Veliki Župan* of the Great County of Vrhbosna, 28 July 1943, Dedijer & Miletić (1990) pp. 364-365.
[59] Report by Major Pavle Đurišic for Army General Draža Mihailović, 13 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 182-185.

figure of 2,219,[60] which is probably the most accurate. Although it can not be said with any certainty precisely how many Muslims were massacred in southeastern Bosnia and the northern Sandžak by Chetniks under Đurišić's command in early 1943, the figure was undoubtedly large.

What was Mihailović's role in all of this? At his trial, he stated that the Muslim militias in the Lim River valley "were fighting troops which barred the passage through their territory."[61] This is indeed true, and like the adjacent region of southeastern Bosnia (the Čajniče and Foča Districts) was strategically important since it connected Bosnia, Hercegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, regions which constituted the heartland of the Chetnik Movement. Controlling this area permitted the free movement of troops towards the Partisan stronghold in western Bosnia.[62] For these reasons, Mihailović wanted "this terrain cleared up".[63] Following the destruction of the Muslim militia, he stated that the "link between Serbia and Montenegro through the Sandžak is now secure because the region of Foča was also cleansed last summer."[64] From a purely military perspective, the actions were justified and largely necessary.

The problem was that war crimes accompanied these operations. Although Mihailović wanted this strategically important region "cleared up … [he] … never

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[60] Pljevlja District: 1,370 (Knežević (1969); Tucaković (1995) pp. 611-658); Foča District: 400 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284); Goražde District: 229 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 309-335); Čajniče District: 220 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 343-354).
[61] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 384.
[62] See Map 9.
[63] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 361.
[64] Telegram (Number 647) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Radoslav Đurić, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 214.

thought that he [Đurišić] would clear it up in this way", [65] as he declared at his trial. Mihailović received Đurišić's reports and stated that he and Dragiša Vasić were "horrified by the reports of Pavle Đurišić; when he had to fulfil a task, he used to commit acts amounting to crimes."[66] From a contemporary telegram, however, it can be seen that Mihailović not only approved of the operations, but justified them:

> The Muslims, encouraged by the Italians and with their arms, attacked Serbian villages. Right under the nose of the Italians they attacked the village of Buđevo, south of Sjenica. Because of this, thirty-three of their villages on the right bank of the Lim [River] were destroyed. That was on Christmas. In the region of Čajniče, the Muslims, as Italian policemen, engaged in a long terror. Now they have paid dearly. The region of Čajniče is cleansed of them.[67]

The slaughter of innocent Muslim civilians was the price that was paid for the attacks by the Muslim militia against Serbian villages.

## Conflict in Dalmatia

The move by the Yugoslav nationalists in Split to form an organisation independently of Ilija Trifunović Birčanin faced many challenges.[68] Most importantly, they needed Mihailović's recognition and blessing. They also needed to neutralise Trifunović Birčanin and his men, although the two problems were not entirely unrelated. The latter problem did not appear as dangerous. The old

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[65] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 361.
[66] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 351.
[67] Telegrams (Number 646-647) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Radoslav Đurić, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 214.
[68] See Chapter IV, "The National Policy towards the Croats in the Autumn".

*vojvoda* was so ill that he could barely fulfil his duties,[69] and some of his closest associates were abandoning him; Dobroslav Jevđević transferred his support to the Yugoslav camp,[70] whilst Milan Šantić, commenting on Trifunović Birčanin's policies, bemoaned that "our lack of elasticity will force the Croats to join the red Partisan banner."[71] On 12 January, Radmilo Grđić sent a telegram to Mihailović informing him of the unification of "all Yugoslav groups in Split and Dalmatia in to the Yugoslav Revolutionary Movement under your leadership."[72] Mihailović was also told that a courier was bringing him a declaration signed by numerous leading Dalmatian personalities.[73]

The signatories of the Split Declaration declared their desire to create a new Yugoslavia, and their recognition of Mihailović as "the supreme commander of Yugoslav military forces and only representative of our legal government".[74] The Ustaše were condemned as "evildoers [who] are a minority amongst the Croats, [and] that the majority of Croats are not merely neutral towards them, but in fact fundamentally against them."[75] Although it was necessary to punish

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[69] Letter by Milan Šantić for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 27 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 119.
[70] Telegram (Number 205) from Ilija Trifunović Birčanin to Army General Draža Mihailović, 8 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 36; Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 18 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 73-79; Telegram (Number 398) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 1 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 201-202.
[71] Letter by Milan Šantić for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 27 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 120.
[72] Telegram (Number 363) from Radmilo Grđić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 12 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 68.
[73] Telegram (Number 363) from Radmilo Grđić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 12 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 68.
[74] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[75] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.

the Ustaše, it was argued that it would be preferable for Croats to undertake this rather than Serbs. A number of specific proposals were made: the naming of Grđić as political chief for Dalmatia; the creation of a political body composed of all "uncompromised Croats"[76] to launch a "revolution"[77] for the "moral, national, and social renewal"[78] of the Croatian people; the formation of a military organisation called the Yugoslav Legions (*Jugoslovenske Legije*) to operate in areas populated by Croats as part of the JVO and directly under Mihailović's command; and the implementation of radical reforms to remedy Yugoslavia's political and social ills.[79] The efforts of the Split nationalists, however, were in vain; Trifunović Birčanin enjoyed Mihailović's unreserved support.[80]

The Yugoslav group was presented with a new opportunity following the death of Trifunović Birčanin on 3 February.[81] Although he had named his heirs,[82] Mihailović appointed Baćović, Momčilo Đujić, and Captain Radovan Ivanišević to temporarily administer the Command of West Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika

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[76] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[77] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[78] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[79] Letter by Split nationalists for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 11.
[80] Telegram (Number 79) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Petar Baćović, 6 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 43; Telegram (Numbers 110-111) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Ilija Trifunović Birčanin, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 45.
[81] Telegram (Number 827) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 170.
[82] Silvije Alfirević and Sergije Urukalo were named political successors, and Captain Radovan Ivanišević and Captain Mladen Kostić military (Letter by Đuro Vilović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 23). That Trifunović Birčanin believed he had the right to name his heirs is highly indicative of the manner in which he viewed his position.

(*Komanda Zapadne Bosne, Dalmacije i Like*).[83] None of these men were political figures, and Đujić and Ivanišević held chauvinistic views.[84] Although the Yugoslav group probably had more popular support amongst the inhabitants of Dalmatia,[85] its leadership was composed of men who Mihailović did not trust or particularly like.[86] Despite the appointment of this ruling triumvirate, the civilian leaders and officers in Dalmatia and Lika squabbled over the question of leadership, which seriously hampered the functioning of the movement in these parts.[87]

Eventually, Mihailović appointed Mladen Žujović head of the Command of West Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika,[88] and he arrived in Split on 10 May.[89] Prior to his departure, Mihailović gave him detailed instructions to form a political committee composed primarily of Croats with only a minimal number of Serbs,[90] and to confer with Vladko Maček's representatives with the purpose of

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[83] Telegram (Number 474) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Petar Baćović, 5 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 205.
[84] In a letter to Uroš Drenović (commander of the Bosanska Krajina Corps), dated 16 July, Đujić spoke of "our political aim, which is the creation of an ethnically pure Serbian state" (Letter by Momčilo Đujić for Uroš Drenović, 16 July 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 815). Ivanišević was one of the author's of the *Proposal of the Dinaric Division* written in March 1942 which called for the creation of a nationally homogenous Great Serbia (Major Borivoje Radulović, Captain Radovan Ivanišević, and Captain Milo Rakočević, *Proposal of the Dinaric Division,* 12 March 1942, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) pp. 262-266).
[85] Letter by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 887.
[86] Telegram (Numbers 110-111) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Ilija Trifunović Birčanin, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 45; Telegram (Numbers 120-121) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 127-128; Telegram (Numbers 167-171) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Petar Baćović, 13 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 129-130;
[87] Letter by Captain Radovan Ivanišević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 276.
[88] Žujović (1943) p. 5.
[89] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 890 (Footnote 15).
[90] It seems that Žujović was meant to form a provincial committee of the Central National Committee for Dalmatia (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 328).

establishing direct contact between Maček and Mihailović.[91] Mihailović expressed his belief that the Dalmatian Croats were most imbued with the Yugoslav idea, and that they had played only a very small role in the Ustaša massacres; as such, they were to play an important function in the reconciliation of the Croats and Serbs.[92]

## Mihailović and the Croats and Muslims in Early 1943

At the very end of 1942, the Zagreb branch of the JRP sent a letter to the JVO Command of Croatia (*Komanda Hrvatske*) in Belgrade, in which it asked a number of questions that encapsulated Croat concerns about the Mihailović movement.[93] The Croats sought assurances that the Chetnik Movement was not "Great Serb"[94] in character, as well as a guarantee that there would be no collective punishment of the Croatian people.[95] A reply was penned on 2 February in which it was declared that the JVO was a Yugoslav rather than Great Serb movement, and that Chetnik units in the NDH were indigenous armed bands that were not part of the JVO.[96] Furthermore, it was argued that although the Serbian people considered the Croats to be collectively responsible for the Ustaša crimes, the JVO did not, and that the mood of the Serbian people could be changed if

[91] Žujović (1943) p. 5.
[92] Žujović (1943) p. 5.
[93] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[94] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[95] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.
[96] Letter by the Command of Croatia for the Zagreb JRP leadership, 2 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 14.

Croats participated in the Mihailović movement.[97] The JRP was urged to join the JVO, and its members were promised corresponding positions.[98] Finally, the need to create Croat JVO units was reiterated.[99] This information was passed on to Mihailović, who sent the following telegram to Major Žarko Todorović, the chief of the Command of Croatia, on 6 March:

> I have received your reports. You responded well to the JRP. Try to get the JRP to enter our organisation, and that this be done publicly … Your work and your reports are excellent. It can be clearly seen that Croatia is not heading down the road of communism; however, you must work hurriedly so that they clearly declare for us.[100]

General Miroslav Trifunović, the head of the Command of Serbia (*Komanda Srbije*), had a special representative for Croatia named Ranko Brašić.[101] On 3 January, Trifunović telegrammed Mihailović to inform him that Brašić had returned from talks in Croatia with men from the Croat Peasant Party leadership and NDH regime.[102] In early February, a number of Mihailović's delegates arrived in Zagreb for negotiations with the Croat Peasant Party, where they demanded that all activity in Croatia be subordinated to Mihailović's command.[103] The Croat

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[97] Letter by the Command of Croatia for the Zagreb JRP leadership, 2 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 14.
[98] Letter by the Command of Croatia for the Zagreb JRP leadership, 2 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 14.
[99] Letter by the Command of Croatia for the Zagreb JRP leadership, 2 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 2, Document 14.
[100] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Žarko Todorović, 6 March 1943, in Milošević (2005) p. 216.
[101] Telegram (Number 457) from General Miroslav Trifunović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 133 (Footnote 34).
[102] Telegram (Number 457) from General Miroslav Trifunović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 133 (Footnote 34).
[103] Telegram from August Košutić to Juraj Krnjević, 25 February 1943, in Jukić (1974) pp. 154-155.

Peasant Party told the emissaries that they would accept this only when Chetnik units in Dalmatia ceased collaborating with the Italians.[104]

At the beginning of the year, Mihailović informed Ostojić that winning over the Muslims was a "very important"[105] part of his national policy. He placed great hopes in the MNVO, especially in Musakadić, who was particularly liked and trusted by both Mihailović and Ostojić.[106] Mihailović described him as a "Yugoslav and Serb from head to toe",[107] and agreed with Ostojić's suggestion that he be named commander of "Muslim Chetnik units of the Yugoslav Army."[108] Mihailović was well served by the leadership of the MNVO, especially Popovac, whose energy and industriousness marked his work in 1943 as it had the previous year. He was particularly successful in mobilising the Muslims of Hercegovina to the Chetnik cause; German intelligence reported that he had "won a majority of the Muslims to this purpose"[109] in the Gacko, Konjic, Mostar, and Nevesinje districts.[110] An armed unit was formed in the Konjic District, where the Muslim citizens raised 100,000 lira for its use.[111] As he had the previous year, Popovac

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[104] Telegram from August Košutić to Juraj Krnjević, 25 February 1943, in Jukić (1974) pp. 154-155.
[105] Telegram (Number 93) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 8 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 45.
[106] Telegram (Number 93) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 8 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 45.
[107] Telegram (Number 367) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 28 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 139.
[108] Telegram (Number 367) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 28 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 139.
[109] Redžić (2005) p. 99.
[110] A top secret *Domobran* report from the period claimed that Popovac had "won over most of the Muslims" in the Konjic, Mostar, and Nevesinje Districts (Report (Number 389) by the Headquarters of the Sixth Infantry Regiment, 30 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume IV, Book 9, p. 469).
[111] Letter Number 10 by the commander of the MNVO Konjic Battalion for the Main Staff of the MNVO, 13 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 1, Document 41.

appealed to Chetnik commanders to prevent the robbing and mistreatment of Muslims.[112]

Early in the year, the High Command began publishing a new official newspaper called *Ravna Gora* after not having produced a central newsletter since November 1941.[113] Edited by Vasić, the first issue of *Ravna Gora* contained a map of postwar Yugoslavia according to Stevan Moljević's *Homogenous Serbia*;[114] hardly reassuring stuff for the non-Serbs. The chief Chetnik propagandists did not consider it prudent to conceal the movement's postwar aims, and apparently saw no distinction between its stated Yugoslavism and Serb expansionist goals.

## The Battle of the Neretva

During the final weeks of 1942 large contingents of Chetniks under Baćović arrived in the Dinara region of northern Dalmatia to aid the local nationalists in the destruction of the Partisans. Simultaneously, the Croats, Germans, and Italians were preparing for a final reckoning with the rebels, both communist and nationalist, codenamed Operation *Weiss*.[115] Although the Chetniks were to be utilised in the initial stages of the operation, the final phase

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[112] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Captain Vasilije Gutić (commander of the Nevesinje Brigade, Nevesinje Corps), 8 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 1, Document 33.
[113] Matić (1995) p. 69.
[114] *Ravna Gora,* Issue 1, 1 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 12. See Map 10.
[115] Milazzo (1975) p. 113.

envisaged their disarming and disbanding.[116] Whilst the Partisans had little difficulty dealing with the Chetniks in the Dinara area,[117] the offensive by the vastly more numerous and superior Axis forces which began on 20 January forced them to abandon their liberated region and move south towards Hercegovina. It was here that the famous Battle of the Neretva (*Bitka na Neretvi*) was fought in February and March between the main Chetnik and Partisan forces, a battle that in many respects decided the outcome of the struggle between the two movements.[118] Although the battle was a military event, it did have numerous important political aspects, particularly the efforts by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership to obtain the support of the Croats and Muslims in the zones of operation.

During the Battle of the Neretva, Mihailović issued a number of orders to his subordinates, especially Ostojić who he had earlier named commander of operations,[119] to convince Croats and Muslims, both civilians and military personnel, to support and join the JVO. These orders illustrate much about his thinking at the time. Mihailović believed that sizable numbers of Croats and Muslims were dissatisfied with the NDH regime, and on 1 February commanded Ostojić to "utilise the dissatisfaction of the Muslims and Croats towards

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[116] Milazzo (1975) p. 114.
[117] By the end of January, the Partisans had overwhelmed the Chetniks in the Dinara region (Milazzo (1975) p. 118).
[118] The best examination of the Battle of the Neretva in English can be found in Milazzo (1975) pp. 113-139. See also Tomasevich (1975) pp. 231-252.
[119] Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 11 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 752-753.

Pavelić."[120] Four days later, he ordered greater efforts to gain the support of the *Domobrani* and Muslims.[121] On 21 February, he bid Ostojić to "[k]eep working to win over the Muslims. Let Musa[kadić] work at full steam",[122] and to "[b]ore in to the *Domobrani* in Trnovo."[123] Mihailović considered the struggle with the Partisans as an opportunity for the Muslims to redeem themselves, as can be seen from a telegram to Ostojić from the middle of February: "Use the Muslims against the communists so that they can pass the test."[124] Recognising that the massacre in Čajniče had tarnished the image of the JVO, Mihailović ordered Ostojić to emphasise that the events in Čajniče were the result of attacks by the Muslim militia against the Chetniks, and "that it bears no relation to our relations with the other Muslims who approach us."[125] Furthermore, he expressed regret for the Čajniče massacre, and asked for absolution for the terrible crime: "Regarding Čajniče and the declared mistrust towards myself and Pavle [Đurišić], nothing remains for me to say other than that I beg for forgiveness."[126]

Mihailović also issued commands against war crimes during the Battle of the Neretva. On 9 February, he notified Ostojić that he had ordered the

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[120] Telegram (Number 408) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 1 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 202.
[121] Telegram (Number 484) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 5 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 206.
[122] Telegram (Number 681) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 21 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 334.
[123] Telegram (Number 682) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 21 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 335.
[124] Telegram (Number 617) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 213.
[125] Telegram (Number 484) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 5 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 206.
[126] Telegram (Number 525) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 8 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 208.

Montenegrins not to attack Muslims who were well-disposed towards the Chetniks on their march to the Neretva River.[127] Six days later, he reported that Đurišić was endeavouring to get his men to behave better towards the Muslims, and that Ostojić should make similar efforts with his own soldiers.[128] When pressed by Ostojić to approve an attack on the Ustaša stronghold of Fazlagića Kula in Hercegovina,[129] Mihailović agreed, but made it clear that indiscriminate killing was forbidden: "When your countrymen arrive, most severely forbid the killing of Turks and tell them that there are differences between them".[130] On 23 January, he told Ostojić: "Musakadić is to continue working, and you are to help him so as to prevent the killing of Muslims. Our entire work in Bosnia and Hercegovina is dependent upon this ... Court-martials and propaganda important."[131]

Two statements from the early spring perhaps best illustrate Mihailović's overall wartime policy. The first is from a speech given at a christening in Donje Lipovo on 28 February at which he declared that he considered the "Partisans, Ustaše, Muslims, and Croats"[132] to be his foremost enemies who would be dealt

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[127] Telegram (Number 536) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 9 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 209.
[128] Telegram (Number 617) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 213.
[129] Telegram (Number 1,331) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 245.
[130] Telegram (Number 682) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 21 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 335.
[131] Telegram (Number 740) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 338.
[132] Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 978.

with before the Germans and Italians.[133] The second is from a letter to Colonel Bajo Stanišić from 9 March, in which Mihailović expressed his views on the aim of the Chetnik struggle: "We are guided by the following principles: We work solely for ourselves and nobody else; our only concern is the interests of the Serbs in Yugoslavia."[134]

Ostojić's role as chief of field operations as well as his location in Kalinovik from where he directed operations meant that he was far better acquainted with events than Mihailović, who remained in Gornje Lipovo until the middle of March.[135] The information passed on by Ostojić thus played an important role in influencing Mihailović's thinking and policies. On 7 February, Ostojić expressed his concerns about the behaviour of Đurišić's Chetniks as they marched towards the Neretva: "I have formulated the plan for the movement of my countrymen from Čajniče to Prozor. I am anxious about their requisitioning along the way and the massacres as they pass through Muslim villages that are favourably disposed towards us."[136] A week later he asked Mihailović to intercede with Đurišić so that he would "most sternly forbid the murder and robbery of Muslims during their

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[133] It must, however, be stated that Mihailović's speech was "unofficial" according to Bailey (Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 976) and made under the influence of the "good deal of plum brandy [that] had been consumed by all present except the baby" (Bailey (1975) p. 75).
[134] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Colonel Bajo Stanišić, 9 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 399.
[135] Mihailović arrived in Kalinovik on the night of 18 March (Telegram (Number 2,510) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Major Mirko Lalatović, 18 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 543).
[136] Telegram (Number 901) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 7 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 232.

march to Konjic".[137] When the Montenegrins ignored such orders and massacred Muslim civilians on their way to the front, Ostojić complained to his commander.[138]

Many of the most important commanders issued orders against war crimes during the Battle of the Neretva. Ostojić, in his instructions to all subordinates for the defence of the Neretva River against the Partisan onslaught, was specific about the conduct that he demanded:

> (4) The behaviour towards the Muslims during the action is to be most correct in all aspects. Do not harm the Muslim populace, and employ skilful propaganda to draw the Muslims in to battle against the communists.
>
> Muslims from the Muslim National Military Organisation, like others who are brought or volunteer for the struggle against the communists, are to be utilised immediately in battle.
>
> Whilst passing through Muslim villages, any mistreatment of the population or theft is most sternly forbidden.[139]

Individual officers were given clear warnings: "I forbid that you rob or kill any Muslims on your way here. You are personally responsible to me."[140] Ostojić explained Chetnik policy regarding their Muslim allies: "Here, we behave differently because they are with us against the communists and Ustaše in

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[137] Telegram (Number 1,125) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 239.
[138] Telegram (Number 1,298) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 244.
[139] Instructions by Major Zaharije Ostojić for subordinate commanders, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 197.
[140] Telegram (Number 211) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Captain Marko Poleksić, 20 February 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 431 (#310).

battle."[141] Stanišić, who commanded a large contingent of Chetniks and was given temporary command of the defence lines along the Neretva,[142] issued Order Number 3 on 23 February, which contained the following:

> (1) Commanders are to bring to the attention of subordinate units that it is most severely forbidden to sing songs that are directed against Muslims and Croats;
> (2) It is only permitted to sing nationalistic and anti-communist songs; and
> (3) To bring to the attention of soldiers the need for friendly behaviour towards the residents of Bosnia and Hercegovina, so that the people feel the blessing of Chetnik authority following the terrible communist terror. In this way we can anticipate success in this holy campaign.[143]

The contents of the order were to be read to the soldiers whilst they were lined up.[144] Major Jovan Pantić, the commander of the Middle Column,[145] received Stanišić's orders and made them known to his subordinates. He also included a number of his own in response to the disappearance of five MNVO soldiers. Pantić argued that because these Muslims were "cooperating with the Chetniks

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[141] Telegram (Number 211) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Captain Marko Poleksić, 20 February 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 431 (#310).
[142] The JVO units along the Neretva River were divided in to three columns: (1) the Left Column, commanded by Major Blažo Gojnić, composed of the Nikšić Brigade (Nikšić Corps), Trebinje Brigade (Trebinje Corps), and Zeta Chetnik *Odred;* (2) the Middle Column, commanded by Major Jovan Pantić, composed of the Combined Brigade and Nevesinje Brigade (Nevesinje Corps); and (3) the Right Column, commanded by Captain Vojislav Lukačević, composed of the Konjic Group. Colonel Bajo Stanišić commanded the Left and Middle Columns (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 280 (Footnote 2)).
[143] Order Number 7 by Major Jovan Pantić for subordinate commanders, 25 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 2, Document 40.
[144] Order Number 7 by Major Jovan Pantić for subordinate commanders, 25 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 2, Document 40.
[145] The JVO units along the Neretva River were divided in to three columns: (1) the Left Column, commanded by Major Blažo Gojnić, composed of the Nikšić Brigade (Nikšić Corps), Trebinje Brigade (Trebinje Corps), and Zeta Chetnik *Odred;* (2) the Middle Column, commanded by Major Jovan Pantić, composed of the Combined Brigade and Nevesinje Brigade (Nevesinje Corps); and (3) the Right Column, commanded by Captain Vojislav Lukačević, composed of the Konjic Group. Colonel Bajo Stanišić commanded the Left and Middle Columns (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 280 (Footnote 2)).

and are well disposed towards Serbs, it is necessary to assist and protect them, not to behave towards them as towards bandits and looters."[146] He ordered the following:

> Whosoever commits any form of violence or banditry towards any and every soldier of the Islamic faith will be immediately placed before a military court, which is already operating, and which only passes death sentences.
>
> The people who we have come to aid, we should truly aid, and not kill, rape, or rob, as some individual Chetniks believe. The poet Njegoš, in those difficult days for the Serbian people, said of such robbers and killers: "He whose law is written by his cudgel, leaves behind [the] stench of inhumanity."[147]
>
> Let three of the Ten Commandments – "Do not kill", "Do not covet your neighbour's possessions", "Do not steal" – be your constant companions on this difficult yet honourable and glorious road of yours ...[148]

Two days later, he reiterated such commands in his order to attack the Second Proletarian Brigade in Drežnica, a town predominantly inhabited by Croats: "Towards the local inhabitants behave militarily and offer all possible protection, and in no way rob or mistreat them, since all wrongdoers will be most severely punished."[149] The commander of the Left Column, Major Blažo Gojnić, gave orders against war crimes and behaviour that would antagonise the local populace:

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[146] Order Number 7 by Major Jovan Pantić for subordinate commanders, 25 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 2, Document 40.
[147] "Kome zakon leži u topuzu, tragovi mu smrde nečovjestvom" (Petrović-Njegoš (1847) lines 1,155-1,156).
[148] Order Number 7 by Major Jovan Pantić for subordinate commanders, 25 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 2, Document 40.
[149] Order Number 11 by Major Jovan Pantić for the commanders of the Nevesinje Brigade and Combined Brigade, 26 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 283.

> (12) Behave correctly towards the population in line with already given oral and written orders. Whosoever sins against these orders will be turned over to a military court. The commanders of units and battalions are to pay particular attention to this.
> (13) It is forbidden to kill livestock for food.[150]

Baćović issued a flyer in December 1942 in which he made it quite clear what he wanted of his men: "I most resolutely demand that you be obedient and unquestioningly fulfill the orders of your superiors."[151] His orders are worth citing in their entirety:

> 1. Military discipline and order must be maintained at all costs.
> 2. Nobody OF THEIR OWN WILL OR WITHOUT THE ORDER of their superior is permitted to do anything of their own accord.
> 3. ANY FORM OF ROBBERY OR THE APPROPRIATION OF ANOTHER'S PROPERTY WILL BE PUNISHED BY IMMEDIATE DEATH.
> 4. NOBODY IS PERMITTED TO MISTREAT women, children, and unprotected inhabitants. Any individual who seems suspicious or commits a crime against the interests of our armed forces is to be taken to the nearest commander who will deal with them according to military law.
> 5. A military court martial has been established alongside the command which will MERCILESSLY JUDGE EVERYONE WHO BREAKS MILITARY LAW AND STAINS THE HONOUR OF A SERB CHETNIK AND SOLDIER.[152]

The multitude of explicit orders against war crimes and the accompanying threats of sanctions against transgressors challenge the view that Mihailović and the

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[150] Order Number 37 by Major Blažo Gojnić for subordinate commanders, 5 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 332.
[151] Order by Major Petar Baćović for subordinate commanders and soldiers, December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 5, Document 5.
[152] Order by Major Petar Baćović for subordinate commanders and soldiers, December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 5, Document 5 (Capitalisation and underlining in original).

highest JVO commanders did not attempt to discipline the troops under their command.

JVO commanders also issued orders directing their men to adopt a friendly attitude towards the non-Serbian populace. During operations in the predominantly Croat towns of Goranci and Mostar, Stanišić issued the following command:

> In the absence of [pack] animals, utilise and organise groups of carriers from the local population who will be guided by Chetniks. Prior to this, pay particular attention to [adopting] a brotherly [and] friendly attitude, and to [your] behaviour towards the inhabitants, so that the inhabitants feel the blessings of Chetnik rule.[153]

He also suggested to Major Borivoje Radulović that captured Croat Partisans be directed to his headquarters so that they might be "brought over to our side".[154]

Propaganda was employed during this period to win over the Croatian and Muslim population to the Chetnik cause. The National Committee in Split published an issue of *Krik iz Jama* in January containing an article titled "The Serb Chetnik Movement and the Croatian People",[155] which argued that the

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[153] Order Number 18 by Colonel Bajo Stanišić for subordinate commanders, 25 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 272.
[154] Telegram (Number 277) from Major Borivoje Radulović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 26 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 370.
[155] "Srpski četnički pokret i hrvatski narod", *Krik iz Jama,* January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 8.

> [h]onourable part of the Croatian people ... which has not sinned against the Serbian people, must prove that the root of brotherly feeling towards the Serbian people has not been pulled out, must prove that it mourns the bitter fate of those innocent Serb victims, and this can be proven if it cleanses itself of that Frankist scum, that scum which has for centuries soiled the name of the Croatian nation, shamed its history, and trampled its pride.[156]

The Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina printed an edition of *Vidovdan* the same month whose leading article was "A Message to all Honourable Croat-Yugoslavs".[157] It asked:

> honourable Croat-Yugoslav brothers, what are you waiting for? From which side do you expect the morning and victory? Are you waiting for someone to bring it to you? ... WHO WILL CONVINCE OUTRAGED SERB WOMEN, SISTERS, AND SERB ORPHANS THAT THE ATROCITIES ARE NOT THE WORK OF THE ENTIRE CROATIAN PEOPLE, but the work of traitors and mercenaries?
>
> Honourable Croats, ONLY YOU CAN DO THIS. Victory will not come to you unless you win it yourself. Nobody can preserve your honour unless you do it yourself.[158]

Croats could redeem themselves, the article argued, by placing themselves "under the Yugoslav flag, which is being bravely and proudly carried by the greatest soldier of the present, our leader, our knight, DRAŽA MIHAILOVIĆ ... The only place for honourable Croats is under his flag."[159] *Vidovdan* contained a similar

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[156] "Srpski četnički pokret i hrvatski narod", *Krik iz Jama,* January 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 8.
[157] "Poruka svim čestitim hrvatima-jugoslovenima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9.
[158] "Poruka svim čestitim hrvatima-jugoslovenima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9 (Capitalisation in original).
[159] "Poruka svim čestitim hrvatima-jugoslovenima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9 (Capitalisation in original).

article directed at the Muslims.[160] They were informed that the postwar Serb federal unit within Yugoslavia would encompass all regions inhabited by the Muslims and that they should not fear this. The aims of the Chetnik Movement were outlined: the unification of all Serbian lands in to one state in which everyone would enjoy "full personal and economic freedom … [and] … in which social justice will guarantee every honourable and honest citizen, worker, and entrepreneur a decent life." [161] It was only Muslims who had "sinned against Serb national interests"[162] who would be punished; the "[h]onourable, honest, and well-intentioned"[163] Muslims had nothing to fear. In early March, a leaflet was distributed throughout the Gacko District titled "To the Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina",[164] which called upon them to join the Chetnik Movement and fight together with the Serbs.[165] Another flyer titled "To the Muslims of the Gacko District",[166] produced by the MNVO, was also distributed at about the same time and urged the Muslims of Fazlagića Kula to accept Popovac's proposal.[167] Jevđević composed a leaflet for the Muslims around Trebinje calling upon them

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[160] "Poruka svim čestitim muslimanima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9.
[161] "Poruka svim čestitim muslimanima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9.
[162] "Poruka svim čestitim muslimanima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9.
[163] "Poruka svim čestitim muslimanima", *Vidovdan* (Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina), Issue 2, undated (January 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 9.
[164] *Muslimanima Bosne i Hercegovine*.
[165] Report by the Commander of the Sixth Gendarmerie Regiment (Mostar) for the NDH Gendarmerie Commander, 28 March 1943, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 494.
[166] *Muslimanima Sreza Gatačkog*.
[167] Report by the Commander of the Sixth Gendarmerie Regiment (Mostar) for the NDH Gendarmerie Commander, 28 March 1943, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 494.

to accept Serbian nationality and join the MNVO.[168] Another flyer written by Jevđević rejected accusations that the Chetniks were preparing a massacre of the Croatian and Muslim population, but that they were in fact protecting that very population.[169]

There were a number of cases in which the Chetniks behaved well towards the Croats and Muslims. The behaviour of the Nikšić Brigade (Nikšić Corps) and Zeta Chetnik *Odred* was described by their commander as characterised by "exemplary discipline and strict military behaviour [which] impressed our friends as well as our enemies."[170] In early March, six captured *Domobrani* were returned unharmed to the NDH forces by Radulović.[171] Baćović claimed that his Hercegovinians were so well-behaved during their march through Croat populated regions on their way to the Neretva that "everybody is pleased with our behaviour",[172] since it was "the opposite of Partisan propaganda, which claimed that we would massacre them all."[173] A Chetnik newspaper reported that the populace of the Imotski District (almost entirely Croatian) was so pleased with

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[168] Report by the Commander of the Sixth Gendarmerie Regiment (Mostar) for the NDH Gendarmerie Commander, 28 March 1943, in Dizdar & Sobolevski (1999) p. 494.
[169] "Stanovništvu hercegovine", undated (1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 4, Document 53.
[170] Report by Colonel Bajo Stanišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 5 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 319.
[171] Telegram (Number 305) from Major Borivoje Radulović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 2 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 379.
[172] Telegram (Number 2,005) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 434.
[173] Telegram (Number 2,005) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 434.

the conduct of the Hercegovinian Chetniks that they cheered them and offered them hospitality.[174]

Even so, a number of the ugly manifestations of Chetnik chauvinism and indiscipline manifested themselves. The worst offenders were, rather unsurprisingly, Đurišić's Chetniks. Following the massacres and pillaging along the Lim River in January, and in Pljevlja the following month, instead of going to the front as ordered by Mihailović,[175] they simply returned home with the booty.[176] Hard pressed by the Partisans along the Neretva,[177] a furious Ostojić sent his commander the following telegram on 20 February: "Till the day that I die I will not forget that it came to this critical situation because of the carrying off of loot".[178] When the Montenegrins finally decided to fulfil Mihailović's order, they took to massacring Muslim civilians on their march to the Neretva.[179] The main JVO force along the Neretva, on the other hand, seems to have been generally well-behaved, although there was at least one instance in which civilians were harmed; in early March, Chetniks under Lukačević's command

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[174] *Krik iz Jama,* Issue 15, 20 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 6, Document 3.
[175] Telegram (Number 638) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 213.
[176] Telegram (Number 638) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 213.
[177] On 18 February, Ostojić sent the following telegram to Mihailović: "As well as Pavle's [men], it is necessary for Bajo Stanišić to immediately sent 2,000 men to Bileća and Gacko. The defence of Hercegovina and destruction of the Communists depends on it." (Telegram (Number 1,224) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 241).
[178] Telegram (Number 1,296) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 243.
[179] Telegram (Number 1,298) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 244.

killed nine Muslim civilians and raped a number of Croat women.[180] Lukačević promised Ostojić that he would "shoot one of ours and probably replace some commanders."[181] In the Dinara region, Baćović's Hercegovinians mercilessly robbed Croatian and Serbian communities during the winter,[182] although given the pitiful conditions under which they were forced to exist,[183] this is perhaps understandable. Radulović described the men of the Nevesinje and Combined Brigades as a "great clutter of people without officers and leaders … [who] … primarily looted and burnt houses, and went to the front when it suited them."[184] When the Partisans breached the Chetnik defences at Jablanica, it was mainly due to the woeful defence put up by the troops stationed there; the men of the First and Second Durmitor Brigades (Durmitor Corps) simply abandoned their positions and returned home, looting Muslim and Serbian villages on the way.[185]

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[180] Report by Captain Vojislav Lukačević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 4 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 318.
[181] Report by Captain Vojislav Lukačević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 4 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 318.
[182] Report Number 273 by Momčilo Đujić for Captain Radovan Ivanišević, 28 February 1943, pp. 299, 300, 301-302. Đujić painted a depressing picture of this looting: "The soldiers immediately began to rob, and it was initially directed at Croatian villages in the vicinity of Promine, which had in no way sinned against the Serbs … They soon began to loot Serbian [villages] as well, even purely Chetnik ones in which they were billeted: they took and sold horses, cattle, and small livestock, blankets, provisions, and everything else that they could lay their hands on. People were beaten and robbed on the roads, often old people, who have placed one or more of their sons on the alter of the fatherland. Doors and window frames were removed from houses and burnt on the floor. These were not isolated incidents, but rather, unfortunately, an almost daily occurrence." (Report Number 273 by Momčilo Đujić for Captain Radovan Ivanišević, 28 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 301-302).
[183] By the middle of January, many of Baćović's men had succumbed to typhus (Telegram (Number 279) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 11 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 68). By the end of the month, they were described by the Italians as "tired, dirty, and shoeless" (Milazzo (1975) p. 118).
[184] Telegram (Number 243) from Major Borivoje Radulović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 22 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 362.
[185] Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 18 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 485-487; Telegram (Number 2,505) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 19 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 542; Telegram (Number 2,505) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 18 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 542; Report by Colonel Bajo Stanišić, undated (probably from April 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 637. To make a shameful situation even more so, the menfolk of

The strategically important bridge at Konjic fell to the Partisans without a single shot being fired.[186]

Even so, it was during the Battle of the Neretva that Mihailović had some of his most significant national policy successes, especially regarding the Muslims of Hercegovina, who played an important role during the operations. On 20 February, Ostojić reported that an ever-increasing number of Croats and Muslims were coming over to the Chetniks.[187] At least 1,000 Muslim Chetniks under Lukačević's command participated in a Chetnik offensive against the Partisans in late February and were given the important task of defending Mount Bjelašnica.[188] Two Muslim battalions became part of the Combined Corps when it was created on 10 March,[189] and participated in a bloody battle against the Partisans at Borci five days later.[190] Some 350 Muslim Chetniks fought as part of the Ostrog Corps under Captain Jakov Jovović, and Muhamed Popovac informed Ismet Popovac on 19 March that another 600 were expected to arrive in the next few days to join the unit.[191] Retreating before the Partisans, the Zeta Chetnik

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the pillaged villages were in Chetnik units fighting the Partisans along the Neretva (Report by Major Borivoje Radulović for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 18 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 487).

[186] Letter by Mujo Hodžić for Ismet Popovac, 23 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 2, Document 30.

[187] Telegram (Number 1,331) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 245-246.

[188] Instructions by Major Zaharije Ostojić for subordinate commanders, 23 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 223-224. The number of Muslims under Lukačević's command may have been as high as 1,200 (Telegram (Number 217) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Dobroslav Jevđević, 20 February 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 433 (#315)).

[189] Report Number 7 by Major Boško Petričević for Colonel Bajo Stanišić, 12 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 415.

[190] Report by the Main Staff of the National Army of Montenegro and Hercegovina, 28 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 519.

[191] Letter by Muhamed Popovac for Ismet Popovac, 19 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 172, Folder 4, Document 23.

*Odred* contacted the *Domobrani* in Gacko and Muslim militia in Fazlagića Kula proposing that they fight alongside the Chetniks, to which they agreed.[192] Following the Italian withdrawal from Gacko, the Chetniks entered the town which "raised the morale of the people, Chetniks, Muslims, and *Domobrani*. Everyone declared their resolve to fight shoulder to shoulder with us against the communists",[193] as reported by Stanišić. In early March, Hasan Zvizdić, the independent Muslim leader in the Sandžak,[194] approached Đurišić proposing a "brotherly agreement".[195] A notable accomplishment during the Battle of the Neretva was the decision by the Fazlagića Kula Muslims to surrender to the Chetniks on 30 March.[196]

Like their Orthodox comrades, the Muslim Chetniks were prone to indiscipline. In the middle of February, the Blagaj MNVO Battalion fled to the forests,[197] and the Konjic MNVO Battalion was either disarmed by the Partisans[198] or voluntarily joined them.[199] That said, there were quite a few examples of the Muslims proving themselves to be brave and capable soldiers. The best Muslim Chetnik unit was the Bjelimići MNVO Battalion led by Sergeant

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[192] Report by Colonel Bajo Stanišić, undated (probably from April 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 641.
[193] Report by Colonel Bajo Stanišić, undated (probably from April 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 642.
[194] See Chapter IV, "National Policy in the Spring".
[195] Report by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 19, Folder 2, Document 4.
[196] Telegram (Number 2,829) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 30 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 564.
[197] Telegram (Number 1,223) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 18 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 241.
[198] Telegram (Number 245) from Major Borivoje Radulović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 365.
[199] Letter by Major Borivoje Radulović for Ismet Popovac, 23 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 161, Folder 2, Document 9.

Jusuf Uzunović; Ostojić praised its fighting prowess in a telegram to Mihailović on 20 February,[200] and reported the important role it had played in the capture of Mount Bjelašnica.[201] On 23 and 24 February, the Bjelimići Muslims were defending the territory between Mount Bjelašnica and Mount Zlatar against the Partisans.[202] This information was passed on to Mihailović.[203]

The confrontation between the Chetniks and Partisans in Hercegovina in the spring of 1943 was a key event in Yugoslavia during the Second World War.[204] Both sides threw their largest, best armed, and best trained troops in to a colossal engagement for survival and supremacy in postwar Yugoslavia.[205] Although some JVO units fought with doggedness and ferocity – the commander of the Partisan Third Assault Division, Pero Ćetković, died from wounds sustained in a battle with Chetniks near Nevesinje[206] – Mihailović's army proved to be no match in this great contest for a host of reasons: poor leadership by Mihailović and the commanders; the absence of a clear chain of command; a lack of cooperation between commanders, occasionally degenerating in to conflict; poor communications; an appalling lack of discipline; low morale; a lack of automatic

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[200] Telegram (Number 1,297) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 243.
[201] Telegram (Number 1,327) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 244.
[202] Report by Captain Vojislav Lukačević for Major Zaharije Ostojić, 24 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 268.
[203] Telegram (Number 1,537) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 25 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 418.
[204] Hoare (2006) correctly called the Battle of the Neretva the "decisive test of the character and resilience of both guerrilla movements" (p. 329).
[205] It would seem that between 19,000 and 25,000 Chetniks participated in the Battle of the Neretva (Milazzo (1975) p. 138 (Footnote 153)).
[206] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 565 (Footnote 169).

and heavy weaponry; and an overconfidence in themselves coupled with a contemptuous dismissiveness of the Partisans.

The Partisan takeover of Hercegovina forced Mihailović to return to Montenegro in the middle of April.[207] A German offensive (Operation *Schwartz*) the following month decimated the Montenegrin units which had survived the Partisan onslaught;[208] Mihailović's protector, Đurišić, was captured on 14 May along with his Lim-Sandžak *Odred*,[209] compelling the general to flee to Serbia.[210] Mihailović's units in Hercegovina and Montenegro, in many respects his best, had been destroyed.[211]

## Mihailović, the British, and the Government-in-Exile

Concurrent with Mihailović's military defeats in Yugoslavia during the spring were a number of problems with his government and the British which blossomed in to serious political defeats in the summer. Although Mihailović was initially pleased with the arrival on Boxing Day 1942 of the new head of the British mission Colonel Stanley Bailey,[212] the relationship between the two became strained within a short space of time. The situation exploded on 28

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[207] Roberts (1973) p. 103; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737 (Footnote 66).
[208] Report by Major Đorđe Lašić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 14 May 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 140, Folder 1, Document 37; Report by Major Rudolf Perhinek for Army General Draža Mihailović, 19 June 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 787-797; Hoare (2006) pp. 338-342; Milazzo (1975) pp. 143-147; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 252-256. It has been estimated that Operation *Schwartz* disarmed and arrested some 7,000 Chetniks (Tomasevich (1975) p. 254).
[209] Bandović (1956) p. 300; Milazzo (1975) p. 144; Tomasevich (1975) p. 253.
[210] Bandović (1956) p. 301; Karchmar (1973) p. 526.
[211] Although the number of soldiers killed was probably not particularly large, great numbers were disarmed and arrested by the Axis forces, and many units simply fell apart. Efforts to mobilise men in these parts in the latter half of the year were a dismal failure (Milazzo (1975) pp. 137-140).
[212] Bailey (1975) pp. 69-70; Williams (2003) p. 102.

February 1943, when Mihailović gave a speech at a christening in Donje Lipovo attended by himself, his staff, and Bailey, where he sharply criticised British policy towards himself, his movement, and his country.[213] Some rather harsh things about the British were said,[214] which Bailey put down to Mihailović's frustration with the progress of the Battle of the Neretva, as well as the "good deal of plum brandy [that] had been consumed by all present except the baby".[215] Furthermore, Mihailović stated that "his irregular enemies were: the Partisans, Ustaše, Muslims and Croats. When he dealt with them, he would turn to the Germans and Italians."[216] The speech was "unofficial"[217] by Bailey's own admission, and Mihailović and most present agreed that the general had gone too far in what he had said.[218] Finally, it would seem that Mihailović's health and nerves were failing,[219] hardly surprising given the hardships and stresses he had endured over the previous two years.

When Bailey's report reached London, a minor diplomatic scandal occurred. The British prime minister, Winston Churchill, sent a letter to his

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[213] A Serbo-Croatian translation of Bailey's official report on the speech can be found in *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 976-979.
[214] During the speech, Mihailović claimed that the English were fighting in Yugoslavia "to the last Serb" and that they were attempting to "purchase Serb blood at the price of an insignificant supply of arms", but that he would not agree to "this shameful commerce typical of English traditional perfidy" (Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 976).
[215] Bailey (1975) p. 75.
[216] Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 978.
[217] Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 976.
[218] Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 978; Milovanović (1984) Volume I, p. 387.
[219] Report by Colonel Stanley Bailey (Serbo-Croatian translation), undated (probably from early March 1943), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 979.

Yugoslav counterpart, Slobodan Jovanović,[220] on 30 March[221] in which he wrote that the British government

> could never justify to the British public or to their own Allies their continued support of a movement, the leader of which does not scruple publicly to declare that their enemies are his allies – whether temporary or permanent is immaterial – and that his enemies are not the German and Italian invaders of his country, but his fellow Yugoslavs ...[222]

Not only was Churchill concerned about Mihailović's declaration about his foremost enemies, but also at the obvious disunity amongst the Yugoslavs, both at home and abroad, writing that he was

> seriously disturbed at recent developments in Yugoslav affairs and increasingly apprehensive in regard to the future unless steps are taken to effect a greater measure of unity, not only amongst the various elements of resistance within the country, and among the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but also among Yugoslav circles abroad.[223]

In response to the Lipovo incident and Churchill's strongly worded letter, Jovanović wrote to Mihailović on 5 April:

> I must inform you that your speech of 28 February, insofar as it has been correctly related, does not agree with not only the views of Britain but also of the Yugoslav government. The Germans and

[220] Churchill was acting as Foreign Secretary during Eden's visit to the United States (Wheeler (1980) p. 222). Part of the letter can be found in Tomasevich ((1975) pp. 292-293).
[221] The letter was dated 29 March (Tomasevich (1975) p. 291), and was delivered by George Rendel the following day (Wheeler (1980) p. 223).
[222] Letter by Winston Churchill for Slobodan Jovanović, 29 March 1943, in Tomasevich (1975) pp. 292-293.
[223] Letter by Winston Churchill for Slobodan Jovanović, 29 March 1943, in Tomasevich (1975) pp. 291-292.

> Italians who divided Yugoslavia and took our people's freedom are our first and primary enemies. Against them you should unite all fighting forces in Yugoslavia, putting aside our internal differences.[224]

In fact, the British had become quite concerned about Mihailović's national policy and ability to satisfactorily resolve the national question earlier. On 8 December 1942, Major Peter Boughey of the SOE told Ilija Jukić, a Croat minister in the government-in-exile, that he knew that "Mihailović was now working with the Italians for the establishment of a Great Serbia".[225] Boughey repeated this claim three weeks later to two other members of the exiled government and recommended Mihailović's dismissal.[226] On 6 March, Cairo SOE sent Bailey instructions regarding his dealings with Mihailović. Although Mihailović was "still the man to back",[227] SOE believed that it was necessary to guide him to "(a) be discreet in his Italian contacts; (b) remove certain undesirables from his entourage; (c) adopt a more liberal and constructive policy; [and] (d) hold out a hand to the Croats."[228] The problem, according to SOE, was that Mihailović was being "badly advised by extreme Great Serbs",[229] and that he should instead listen to British advice regarding the selection of political advisors. Furthermore, Mihailović should make the greatest efforts to convince the Croats and Slovenes of his willingness to cooperate with them, not only in the present, but in the postwar state as well. Although Cairo SOE argued that the Partisans had

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[224] Letter by Slobodan Jovanović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 5 April 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 966.
[225] Jukić (1974) pp. 137-138.
[226] Tomasevich (1975) p. 290.
[227] SOE (Cairo) memorandum, 6 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 983.
[228] SOE (Cairo) memorandum, 6 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 983.
[229] SOE (Cairo) memorandum, 6 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 982.

"adopted a constructive attitude towards the racial differences between Serbs, Croats and Slovenes",[230] it was "doubtful whether Communism has a sufficiently wide appeal to enable them to succeed in bringing about the union of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on a federal basis".[231] A month later, George Rendel, the British ambassador to the Yugoslavs, described Vasić as Mihailović's "evil genius",[232] and the official Chetnik newsletter *Ravna Gora* as "bad as it can be".[233] Whilst Cairo SOE still supported Mihailović, the same can not be said of certain leading bureaucrats in London. At a meeting on 16 April, Michael Rose, an official in the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, expressed his concerns about the aims of the Chetnik Movement:

> By "Serbian lands" Mihailović understands very much what [Konstantin] Fotić means by the term: and it certainly includes the whole of Bosnia. If we now agree that Mihailović has the right to Bosnia, we are in fact selling the Croats straight out to the Serbs. This in itself may not matter from the point of view of the future settlement since there will be no definite commitment on our side. The difficulty arises from the fact that there must be many loyal Croats operating in "Serbian lands", and that these will certainly not relish being virtually handed over to Mihailović who has publicly stated that he would like to hang Maček.[234]

Mihailović, Rose concluded, was "a thoroughly bad choice for the leadership of Yugoslavia."[235]

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[230] SOE (Cairo) memorandum, 6 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 983.
[231] SOE (Cairo) memorandum, 6 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 983.
[232] Letter by George Rendel for Douglas Howard, 12 April 1943, United Kingdom National Archives, FO 536/31, 378562.
[233] Letter by George Rendel for Douglas Howard, 12 April 1943, United Kingdom National Archives, FO 536/31, 378562.
[234] Minutes by Michael Rose, 16 April 1943, in Wheeler (1980) p. 220.
[235] Minutes by Michael Rose, 16 April 1943, in Wheeler (1980) p. 220.

The British and exiled Yugoslavs, acting on information they had received, questioned Mihailović about the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians by nationalist units. On 25 February, Jovanović asked if it was "true that Croatian communities are being destroyed by Jevđević's Chetniks, who are protected by the Italians?"[236] Mihailović responded by stating that

> Jevđević is not a military leader, thus he could not have destroyed any Croatian communities. On the contrary, all of his efforts have been directed towards influencing the people not to exact vengeance upon the Croatian population for the bestialities of the Ustaše ...[237]

Cairo SOE sent Bailey a telegram on 1 May, which was passed on to Mihailović four days later, regarding rumours that had reached the Turkish government about the slaughter of Muslims in Bosnia by Chetnik units, and orders by Mihailović to "kill all wealthy Muslims in Bosnia, but especially in the Sandžak",[238] as well as his plans to expel the survivors to Turkey after the war. Insofar as these reports were correct, the British considered it necessary for Mihailović to "soften his stance"[239] towards the Muslims. Simultaneously, Jovanović penned a letter on the same subject, and drew Mihailović's attention "to all of the negative consequences that the stirring up of hatred between the

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[236] Telegram from Slobodan Jovanović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 25 February 1943, in Milovanović (1986) p. 311.
[237] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 2 March 1943, in Milovanović, (1986) p. 311.
[238] Telegram from SOE (Cairo) to Colonel Stanley Bailey, 1 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 996.
[239] Telegram from SOE (Cairo) to Colonel Stanley Bailey, 1 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 996.

Orthodox and the Muslims might have."[240] The letter ended with Jovanović's "hope that you will continue with your conciliatory policy towards the Muslims and that you will find a way to quell all rumours that suggest otherwise. Your answer is required urgently."[241] Mihailović was well aware of these accusations; earlier he had sent the following telegram to his government:

> A tendentious leaflet is being distributed throughout western Bosnia purportedly signed by myself which speaks of the destruction of all Muslims. Please deny this over Radio London as a German-Ustaša fiction. We already have Muslims in our ranks and happily accept them under the condition that they punish the evildoers who massacred our people with the Ustaše ... It is necessary to deny this lie immediately.[242]

Such rumours could do little to improve Mihailović's image outside of Yugoslavia.

Mihailović was delivered a serious blow on 21 April, when SOE parachuted its first missions to the Partisans.[243] Although it took some time for the agents[244] to establish radio contact with Cairo,[245] when they did, they reported that the Partisans controlled all of the territory west of the Ibar River, that is, "Bosnia,

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[240] Letter by Slobodan Jovanović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 968.
[241] Letter by Slobodan Jovanović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 969.
[242] Telegram (Number 376) from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 26 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 555-556.
[243] Two missions composed of Canadian-Yugoslavs parachuted in to Yugoslavia on that day: one near Šekovići in eastern Bosnia, and the other near Brinja in Lika (Williams (2003) p. 134; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 997 (Footnote 2)).
[244] Most of the agents belonged to communist organisations or were sympathetic to them (Williams (2003) pp. 130-134).
[245] Radio contact with Cairo was established on 16 May (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 997 (Footnote 3)).

Hercegovina, Montenegro, Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slovenia".[246] Supposedly, there was "no trace"[247] of Mihailović's units in these regions. In response to the reports by these missions, as well as other sources, the British Middle East Command sent Bailey a telegram in which Mihailović was requested to gather his most loyal officers and soldiers and head to Mount Kopaonik immediately, since the command believed that "Mihailović does not represent a fighting force of any significance west of Kopaonik. His units in Montenegro, Hercegovina, and Bosnia are already annihilated or else in close cooperation with the Axis."[248] A furious Mihailović declared that he would not "accept such insults any more".[249] The British, in whom Mihailović had placed so much hope, had not only expressed grave misgivings about his military and political capabilities and goals, but had established contact with his Partisan arch rivals.

On top of his military defeats in Yugoslavia and the change in British policy came the fall of the Jovanović government. Faced with numerous difficult problems,[250] the prime minister tendered his resignation on 17 June. A new

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[246] Telegram from SOE (Cairo) to Foreign Office (Serbo-Croatian translation), 25 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 997.
[247] Telegram from SOE (Cairo) to Foreign Office (Serbo-Croatian translation), 25 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 997.
[248] Telegram from British Middle East Command to Army General Draža Mihailović, 26 May 1943, in Deakin (1971) p. 188.
[249] Telegram (Number 1,598) from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 1 June 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 745.
[250] The most important problems were: "the proposed marriage of King Peter to the Greek Princess Alexandra ...; the issue of a government declaration on postwar reorganization of the country and policies of the government; the strong opposition of the Croatian ministers to practically every proposal that the Prime Minister made and their insistence that at least one ambassadorial post, either in London or Washington, be given to a Croat, and that a special budget for Banovina Croatia to be used at the discretion of Ban Šubašić be approved; Šubašić's refusal to communicate with the government and his insistence on maintaining direct relations with the king; the controversial propaganda activities of Ambassador Fotić in Washington; British pressures to move the government to the Middle East; and the mounting difficulties with the

government was formed nine days later headed by Miloš Trifunović, a member of the Radical Party. Trifunović, however, was not the man to solve the troubles he had inherited, and his government fell after only six weeks (26 June – 10 August).

## The Return to Serbia

Following the military disasters in Hercegovina and Montenegro, Mihailović returned to Serbia in the middle of May.[251] Although it is not possible to precisely ascertain what he was thinking at the time, he must surely have had some grave doubts about the character, strength, and resilience of his movement; it was obvious that something was seriously wrong with his organisation if it collapsed so easily under Partisan pressure.[252] Whilst the defeats exposed the military deficiencies of the Chetnik Movement, they also demonstrated that its political foundations were just as flawed. It is hard to imagine that Mihailović did not engage in some reflection on the nature of his movement after such cataclysmic events.

Upon his return to Serbia, Mihailović began to play a more active role in the political direction of his movement, gradually steering it away from the

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British over the policies of Mihailović and his Chetniks." (Tomasevich (1975) p. 304). See also Pavlović (1959) pp. 1-16. Only a few days before Jovanović's resignation, the cabinet had unanimously agreed on a declaration of wartime and postwar aims (Foreign Relations of the United States – Diplomatic Papers, 1943, Volume II, pp. 1,012-1,013).

[251] Bandović (1956) p. 301; Karchmar (1973) p. 526; Roberts (1973) p. 103; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737 (Footnote 66).

[252] Karchmar (1973) wrote that the "events in Montenegro and Herzegovina had shown that the structure of the Četnik state, which had appeared so well grounded, disintegrated very easily under Partisan pressure; obviously there was something wrong with a political approach which produced such unstable results." (p. 600).

chauvinistic ethos that had characterised it during his stay in Montenegro. One of his first moves was to reestablish contact with Vojislav Vujanac who was ordered to increase the membership of the Central National Committee with "representatives from all regions."[253] On 14 May, he authorised Đura Đurović, a lawyer and member of the Democratic Party,[254] to begin work amongst the Muslims and minorities, and provided him with instructions. Đurović was ordered to

> establish contact with the representatives of the national Muslims in our land, in the first place the members of *Gajret*, and to bring them in to contact and close collaboration with the representatives of the national Muslims who actively work in our organisation, with: Fehim Musakadić, Dr. Ismet Popovac, and Mehmed [*sic*] Pašić ...[255]

Mihailović explained to Đurović that it was necessary for the "Muslims and minorities ... [to] ... work together, within the scope of our organisation, to punish their own offenders, and thus cleansed, within our ranks, to demonstrate their loyalty towards H. R. M. King Peter II and Yugoslavia."[256] The two met in late May and held discussions.[257] Obviously impressed by Đurović, on 10 July Mihailović gave him the important task of organising a news agency called Democratic Yugoslavia (*Demokratska Jugoslavija*) whose material would be

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[253] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Vojislav Vujanac, 28 May 1943, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 29.
[254] Milovanović (1986) p. 338.
[255] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Đura Đurović, 14 May 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 12-13.
[256] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Đura Đurović, 14 May 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 12-13.
[257] Milovanović (1986) p. 339.

broadcast from a radio station in the High Command.[258] Two days later, it emitted its first program titled Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains (*Glas Slobodnih Jugoslovenskih Planina*).[259] The name of the radio station and its program content were distinctly Yugoslav. On 3 August, the following was broadcast:

> Out of blood and tears, through suffering and battle, Yugoslavia will be resurrected, better, larger and happier than it was, organised on the principles of full democracy and social justice.
>
> The fundamental human freedoms, proclaimed by the Atlantic Charter: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear, will be guaranteed in the renewed Yugoslavia for all of its residents.
>
> In free Yugoslavia, a free Serbia will develop, which will encompass all Serbian lands, a free Croatia and a free Slovenia. Organised on a federal basis, with the central government retaining only those truly joint affairs, the new Yugoslavia, as the union of three South Slavic peoples, will have all the prerequisites for a happy, progressive, and cultured life.[260]

A broadcast three days later was addressed primarily at the Croats, and called upon them to reject both the communists and Ustaše, who were described as "frightfully destructive forces"[261] within the Croatian nation, and to join the JRP

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[258] Milovanović (1986) p. 338. Đurović later became a member of the Central National Committee (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 902 (Footnotes 4 & 6)), and its general secretary half way through 1944 (Milovanović (1986) p. 339).

[259] Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, 12 July 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 1. The Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains emitted programs on an almost daily basis throughout August, September, October, and November (Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, various dates, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Documents 3, 4 & 5).

[260] Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, 3 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 3.

[261] Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, 6 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 3.

as had a number of young Croats.[262] The next day, the Muslims were warned that the Partisan Movement was anti-religious at heart and that its public manifestations of respect for Islam were merely a ploy to attract the Muslims.[263] Pavelić and the Ustaše, and Tito and the Partisans were regularly condemned in these broadcasts, and listeners were reminded that Mihailović was the official leader of Yugoslav resistance, recognised as such by the Yugoslav government-in-exile and the Allies. Perhaps as much as half of the content produced by the radio station was directed at non-Serbs, a clear indicator of the recognition that the Chetnik Movement had to attract them if it wanted to demonstrate that it was not a chauvinistic Serb organisation and successfully challenge the Partisans.

At about this time, a number of important changes took place in the political wing of the Chetnik Movement that eventually led to the formation of two blocs within it which would compete for Mihailović's favour and supremacy. The middle of 1943 witnessed Moljević's rise to a position of power and influence within a new political body that had been forming within the Chetnik Movement. With Žujović's transfer to Dalmatia to assume Trifunović Birčanin's role,[264] Moljević and Vasić remained in the High Command.[265] A power struggle between the two took place in which Moljević emerged the victor, a task made easier by a

[262] Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, 6 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 3.
[263] Voice of the Free Yugoslav Mountains, 7 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 3.
[264] See "Conflict in Dalmatia" in this chapter.
[265] Farkaš (1956) p. 308.

disagreement between Mihailović and Vasić over a personal matter,[266] as well hostility between their immediate families.[267] Moljević now set about building a political counterpart to the military organisation, which he called the Ravna Gora Movement (*Ravnogorski Pokret*), and elaborating its ideology, *Ravnogorstvo*.

The Ravna Gora Movement was a loose association of intellectuals, strongly influenced by Moljević, whose members were spread out amongst the JVO and controlled the propaganda produced in the corps and brigades. Furthermore, it consisted of the officers and soldiers who sympathised with the movement and its ideology. The Ravna Gora Movement was not structured like a political organisation, nor did it function like one; it never held a conference or congress, nor did it adopt a constitution, nor elect its officers.[268] It was only very small; its membership probably did not exceed a couple of hundred members, primarily because Moljević never attempted to give it a mass membership.[269] Its members generally held similar views and recognised Moljević as the most important ideologue in the movement and followed the political line established by him.[270]

The ideology elaborated by Moljević and others, *Ravnogorstvo*, was marked most pronouncedly by a faith in the Serbian nation. Its primary aim was to liberate and unify all lands considered Serbian in to a new state, which would

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[266] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 501; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 319.
[267] Topalović (1968) p. 21.
[268] Karchmar (1973) p. 584.
[269] Karchmar (1973) p. 584.
[270] Karchmar (1973) called Moljević the "father and chief formulator" of *Ravnogorstvo* (p. 581).

be cleansed of all individuals and groups deemed detrimental to the interests of the Serbian nation. One of the key articles on *Ravnogorstvo* described its aims as such:

> Our national aspirations are clear; doubtless, in fact. We want to unite all Serbian regions in to a tightly linked whole. We want Serbs to be the undisputed masters of their home after this war – to freely, without intruders and other non-Serb elements that have entered in to the Serbian national body through historical errors and chance – to freely develop their intellectual, moral, national, and work capabilities.[271]

There was often talk of the moral regeneration of the Serbian nation and state, which had supposedly been corrupted during Yugoslavia's brief existence. Another tenet of *Ravnogorstvo* was a pervasive and rabid hatred of communism, primarily because it threatened to divide Serbdom. Alongside the frequent promises of democracy and individual freedoms were statements of the need for a strong authoritarian government to institute the Ravna Gora Revolution (*Ravnogorska Revolucija*) after the war. On the economic front, land expropriated from undesirable national groups that were to be expelled after the war would be redistributed amongst Serbian peasants,[272] and cooperatives would be formed to improve agricultural production.[273] Indeed, *Ravnogorstvo* was very much concerned with raising the standard of living of the peasantry.[274] The state

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[271] "Na svome putu", *Ravna Gora,* Issue 3, 1 March 1943, in Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 155-156.
[272] *Socialno Politički Program Ravnogorksog Četničkog i Narodnog Pokreta,* 12 April 1943, in Martinović-Bajica (1956) pp. 220-223; "Seljak domaćin ima da bude čuvar slobode i demokratije u Jugoslaviji i na svemu Balkanu", *Sve za Srpstvo,* Special Issue, December 1943, in Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 291-296.
[273] *Socialno Politički Program Ravnogorksog Četničkog i Narodnog Pokreta,* 12 April 1943, in Martinović-Bajica (1956) pp. 220-223; Topalović (1967) p. 18.
[274] "Budućnost našeg sela", *Odjek Slobodnih Planina,* Issue 2, 25 October 1943, in Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 290-291.

would control capital and industry,[275] and the lot of workers would be improved through cooperatives and unions.[276] *Ravnogorstvo* might be most simply described as an ideology that sought the liberation, unification, and renewal of Serbdom.[277] From July onwards, Moljević became Mihailović's constant companion and attempted to steer the Chetnik Movement toward adopting *Ravnogorstvo* as its official ideology.[278]

By the time Moljević had defeated Vasić in the struggle for leadership of the Ravna Gora Movement, another organisation, composed of politicians from the prewar parties, was forming that would challenge Moljević and the Ravna Gora Movement for political predominance in the Chetnik Movement. Interestingly, it was Mihailović who contacted the politicians, when on 3 March he ordered Petar Milićević, an important intelligence officer in the Command of Belgrade,[279] to establish contact with politicians, public figures, and intellectuals with the aim of attracting them to his movement.[280] Milićević immediately got to work, and contacted a number of intellectuals, members of the Serb Cultural Club and *Sokol* association, politicians from the Democratic, Radical, Republican, and Socialist parties, and reserve officers.[281] He explained to the politicians that it was

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[275] "Ravna gora i radnici", *Polet,* Issue 23, 2 September 1944, in Nikolić & Vesović (1996) pp. 318-321.
[276] "Misli i linije za naš narodni program", undated, in Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 297-303.
[277] "Jugoslovenska ravnogorska omladina", *Glas Ravnogorske Omladine,* Issue 1, 1 March 1943, in Matić (1995) p. 158.
[278] Karchmar (1973) p. 581.
[279] A number of Milićević's intelligence reports can be found in Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Boxes 12 & 15B.
[280] Report Number 19 by Petar Milićević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 May 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 26.
[281] Report Number 19 by Petar Milićević for Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 May 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 26; Topalović (1967) p. 9.

necessary for democratic political parties to familiarise themselves with Mihailović and his movement and to help it, and that Mihailović had rejected the authoritarian and anti-democratic ideology which had previously characterised the movement.[282]

One of the figures who would play a leading role in the politicians' bloc was Živko Topalović, the head of the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia.[283] Topalović, like many other politicians, had a rather negative opinion of Mihailović, his entourage, and his entire movement, believing that their aim was to "destroy the politicians, forbid political parties, and introduce a military dictatorship".[284] Within a few weeks, representatives of the Democratic, Independent Democratic, Radical, and Socialist parties[285] held a meeting at which they discussed Mihailović's offer. They were soon joined by representatives of the Agrarian Union and Republican Party.[286] Although the work of the politicians was characterised by a great deal of negotiating and hesitation, and a fair amount of idleness,[287] they eventually agreed that the bargaining with Mihailović would be pursued collectively and formed a permanent multi-party committee composed

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[282] Topalović (1967) p. 9.
[283] Topalović (1967) p. 9. The following discussion is based on the postwar memoirs of Živko Topalović, which seem to be the only source available on the formation of the politicians' bloc and its negotiations with Mihailović. Unfortunately, Topalović tends to over-represent his role in the process. Despite this, his memoirs were employed extensively by Karchmar ((1973) pp. 600-602) and Nikolić ((1999) Volume II, pp. 357-362).
[284] Topalović (1967) p. 9. Topalović also feared that the victory of the Chetnik Movement would be followed by "new massacres of Croats and Slovenes, and with concentration camps for all democratic elements" (Topalović (1967) p. 11).
[285] The political representatives at the meeting were Branislav Ivković (Democratic Party), Aleksandar Popović (Independent Democratic Party), Stevan Trivunac (Radical Party), and Živko Topalović (Socialist Party) (Topalović (1967) p. 41).
[286] Topalović (1967) p. 43.
[287] Topalović (1967) pp. 39-48, 69-73. At one point, negotiations broke off for two months.

of two members from each party with Topalović was president.[288] A set of preconditions for cooperation were formulated.[289] Mihailović was to limit himself to military matters, and it was necessary for him to reject the idea of a postwar dictatorship or collective punishment, as well as the idea of creating an independent Serbia.[290] He was to denounce the Ravna Gora Movement and its ideology.[291] A new political body composed of the prewar Serb opposition parties, the Croat Peasant Party, and other parties which had participated in the United Opposition was to be formed.[292] Most importantly, and in diametric opposition to Moljević and the Ravnagoraists, the politicians declared as one of their "guiding principles ... [that] ... in Yugoslavia there exists and will exist a great national and religious motley and mixture of peoples. All of these groups are directed to live in a common state".[293] Yugoslavia would be reconstituted as a federation composed of Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia, whilst Bosnia and Hercegovina would probably become the fourth federal unit.[294] The status of Macedonia, Montenegro, and the minorities also needed to be determined.[295] The politicians' concept of postwar Yugoslavia saw it as a multinational democratic federation.

It is not too difficult to understand why Mihailović initiated contact with the political parties. He was acutely aware that his movement was viewed as

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[288] Agrarian Union: Sredoje Brkić and Jovan Zdravković; Democratic Party: Branislav Ivković and Mihailo Kujundžić; Independent Democratic Party: Aleksandar Popović and Adam Pribićević; Radical Party: Milutin Kopša and Petar Milojević; Republican Party: Nikola Đonović and Vojislav Vujanac; Socialist Party: Aleksandar Pavlović and Živko Topalović (Topalović (1967) pp. 69-71).
[289] Topalović (1967) pp. 42-46.
[290] Topalović (1967) pp. 42-43.
[291] Topalović (1967) p. 42.
[292] Topalović (1967) pp. 44-45.
[293] Topalović (1967) p. 45.
[294] Topalović (1967) p. 45.
[295] Topalović (1967) p. 45.

authoritarian with dictatorial aspirations; in early March, he had received a letter written by Jovan Đonović,[296] the government-in-exile's special delegate for the Middle East, in which it was revealed that the Chetnik Movement was considered to be reactionary, collaborationist, and composed of opportunists with no political convictions, and urged that something be done immediately to remedy the situation.[297] Despite the fact that they had fallen out, Vasić deemed it necessary to write to Mihailović after the fall of the Jovanović government and plead that steps be taken to counter the view that the Chetnik Movement was authoritarian and reactionary.[298] It should be noted that Mihailović did not consider himself anti-democratic; in a letter dated 10 August to Colonel Stanley Bailey, he wrote:

> Regarding my views on democracy, I have provided even too much evidence; my views, as well as those of the Central National Committee, have been given to you so far in numerous radiograms.
>
> All accusations regarding some Serb chauvinism or military dictatorship I reject with indignation, as they emanate from those for who democracy is a mask that conceals their aims.[299]

Similarly, he did not consider himself a Serb chauvinist.

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[296] Žujović (1948) p. 9. The letter was dated 27 February 1943 (Letter by Dragiša Vasić for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from late June 1943), in Milovanović (1986) p. 316).
[297] Žujović (1948) p. 9.
[298] Letter by Dragiša Vasić for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from late June 1943), in Milovanović (1986) pp. 315-318.
[299] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Colonel Stanley Bailey, 10 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 906.

## Mihailović Takes the Lead

Although he had contacted them in the spring,[300] the politicians had produced few tangible results by the end of the summer, and it became obvious to Mihailović that he needed to play a more active role in the political workings of his movement if he wanted to accomplish anything. The latter half of the year witnessed some fundamental changes as a number of new figures joined Mihailović's entourage of political advisors, and clear statements were made to his commanders and the peoples of Yugoslavia regarding the national policy he had adopted.

When Mihailović returned to Serbia he appointed a number of Croats and Muslims as his political advisors in the High Command, giving him an insight in to the hopes and fears of these communities and providing them with a voice they had not had up until this point. Đuro Vilović had already arrived in March whilst the High Command was in Montenegro,[301] where he became an important figure in the propaganda section[302] and one of Moljević's strongest supporters.[303] He was, however, hostile towards the Catholic Church,[304] and it is questionable how well he served Croat interests; Žujović had a terribly negative view of him and telegrammed Mihailović at the end of May to warn him to "[k]eep Vilović on the

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[300] Topalović (1967) p. 9.
[301] The Interrogation of Stevan Moljević by OZNA (Bosnia and Hercegovina), 20 September 1945 (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence).
[302] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 14.
[303] The Interrogation of Stevan Moljević by OZNA (Bosnia and Hercegovina), 20 September 1945 (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence).
[304] Bošković (2006).

sidelines in political matters because he is blinded by his hatred".[305] The Croatian people were given a more representative voice in late summer with the arrival of Vladimir Predavec,[306] an engineer and the son of a former deputy president of the Croat Peasant Party.[307] He was soon joined by Zvonimir Begić[308] and a number of other Croats.[309] By the end of September, Mihailović had a group of Croats in the High Command who could plead their people's case directly to him. It should be noted that he was well aware that there were Croats other than those already in his organisation who were opposed to the Ustaše; in November he sent a telegram to the exiles informing them that Yugoslav orientated Croats in Dalmatia were being terrorised by the Partisans and Ustaše.[310]

Towards the end of summer, a number of Muslim leaders, the most prominent being Uzeiraga Hadžihasanović, an important figure in the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation, deemed it necessary to have a Muslim in the JVO High Command to represent Muslim interests.[311] The task was given to Mustafa Mulalić, a Hercegovinian Muslim journalist[312] and former representative in the

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[305] Telegram (Number 4,580) from Mladen Žujović to Army General Draža Mihailović, late May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 724-725 (Footnote 16).
[306] Pavlowitch (2008) p. 196.
[307] Karapandžić (1958) p. 436; Tomasevich (1975) p. 400 (Footnote 9).
[308] Begić arrived some time before 26 September (Telegram (Number 2,123) from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 26 September 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 199).
[309] Telegram (Number 2,123) from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 26 September 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 199.
[310] Telegram (Number 163) from Army General Draža Mihailović to General Petar Živković, 10 November 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 15-16.
[311] Tucaković (1995) p. 156. According to Tucaković, the Muslim representative was chosen by Hadžihasanović, Abdulah *efendi* Handžić, the *imam* of Belgrade, and a number of prewar bureaucrats (Tucaković (1995) p. 156). Hadžihasanović explained his reasoning to Avdo Humo, a leading Bosnian Partisan, during the war: "I advised Mulalić in Belgrade to join Draža's staff in order to dull the Chetnik blade in their relation towards the Muslims." (Humo (1984) p. 790).
[312] Karchmar (1973) p.

national assembly,[313] who had organised a Muslim centre in Belgrade to collaborate with the Chetnik Movement.[314] Mulalić reached the High Command some time in the autumn[315] and became the spokesperson of the Yugoslav Muslim community.[316] He reported to one of his collaborators that there was much "good will"[317] in the High Command and that steps had been taken to discipline "irresponsible elements".[318] Even though he was not in the High Command, Ismet Popovac was still in regular contact with Mihailović by mail; in the middle of August, he pleaded with him to issue "strict instructions"[319] regarding the behaviour of JVO units towards the Muslim populace.[320] Mulalić and Predavec were able to speak directly to Mihailović and campaign for the interests of their people. Mihailović, for his part, could hope that their presence would provide further evidence of his commitment to working with the Croats and Muslims to create a multinational state after the war.

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[313] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 26-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59.
[314] Konjhodžić (1965) pp. 60-61.
[315] Tucaković (1995) claimed that Mulalić reached the High Command in late early November (p. 157).
[316] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić, undated (probably from the end of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 32.
[317] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Šukrija Kurtović, 4 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 6, Document 20.
[318] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Šukrija Kurtović, 4 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 6, Document 20.
[319] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 19 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 37.
[320] Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 19 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 37. A similar plea was made to Baćović, with the additional request that the instructions be made public (Letter by Ismet Popovac for Major Petar Baćović, 18 August 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 222, Folder 6, Document 37). Popovac was murdered two days later (Daily Report by the Commander of the NDH Dubrovnik Gendarmerie Command, in Seferović (1999) p. 138).

Two of Mulalić's letters from the latter part of the year shed some light on his motivations, and on the Chetniks' policy towards the Muslims. In a letter dated 4 November, he wrote of the need for Muslims to align themselves with the Mihailović movement since it would emerge victorious at the end of the war, and to concentrate on securing religious autonomy so as to ensure themselves a place in postwar Yugoslavia.[321] In another letter, he revealed that postwar Yugoslavia would be a federation based on three tribal components; according to Chetnik thinkers, the "Muslims will not be considered a national grouping",[322] and as such did not have the right to their own federal unit. Instead, they would find themselves in the Serb federal unit.[323] Although Mulalić was not entirely pleased with this, he believed that it was necessary for Muslims to accept this reality and for Muslim leaders to secure the best possible outcome for their people by collaborating with the Chetnik Movement.[324] He emphasised the need to prepare "Serb public opinion for a brotherly reconciliation with the Muslims."[325] Mulalić believed that the guarantee of religious autonomy and civic rights would be sufficient to ensure that Muslims enjoyed a happy existence in the future Yugoslavia.[326]

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[321] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Šukrija Kurtović, 4 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 6, Document 20.
[322] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.
[323] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.
[324] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.
[325] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.
[326] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.

In the autumn, important changes occurred in Chetnik propaganda. A great deal more of it began to be produced for the Croats and Muslims, and, unlike such material produced earlier, much of it carried Mihailović's signature. In September, Mihailović composed a statement, published in the form of propaganda flyer titled "To the Croatian People",[327] in which he called upon Croats to

> unite around the Yugoslav flag that is being heroically carried by the units of the Yugoslav Army throughout our common fatherland. All honourable Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes should unite under this flag, because, I am convinced, a better and happier future awaits us under it.[328]

Mihailović argued that the external and internal enemies of Yugoslavia had divided its citizens and were "tirelessly spreading the false news that the Chetniks are preparing a terrible vengeance for the slaughter of Serbs in Croatia and other parts."[329] This leaflet was the first official public statement by Mihailović directed at the Croatian nation, and was widely distributed.[330] At about the same time, Predavec composed a leaflet titled "The First Message to the Croats".[331] In it, the crimes of the Ustaše were condemned, and the Croat fear that "the innocent will have to pay for the terrible sins and crimes of these foreign servants"[332] was acknowledged. Predavec argued that it was the responsibility of all Croats to

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[327] "Hrvatskom narodu", September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 47.
[328] "Hrvatskom narodu", September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 47.
[329] "Hrvatskom narodu", September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 47.
[330] One copy in the archive bears the seal of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* ("Hrvatskom narodu", September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 47).
[331] "Prva poruka hrvatima", Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Documents 9.
[332] "Prva poruka hrvatima", Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Documents 9.

prevent this by "returning to your king, strengthening the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, so that in this way you might contribute your part even in the final battle for the restoration of a more beautiful, better, and democratic Yugoslavia."[333] The "holy example of our martyr brother Croats who because of their unswerving Yugoslav stance were persecuted and killed by the Ustaše"[334] was held up as an example. Predavec argued that the presence of "large numbers of Croats in the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland will demonstrate to the last sceptic that all Croats are not, nor can they be held, responsible for the actions of this criminal minority".[335] On 21 November, the Central National Committee called upon "seduced"[336] Muslims to join the JVO and Ravna Gora Movement to fight for "Serbdom and Yugoslavia".[337]

Mihailović also took steps to establish greater control over the Chetnik Movement and curb the excesses of the commanders, especially in the nationally mixed regions of Bosnia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, and the Sandžak. Whilst his earlier appointments were little more than the recognition of the situation as he had found it after abandoning Serbia in June 1942,[338] a year later he sent out his trusted officers to seize control.[339] Žujović was given command of Dalmatia, Lika, and western Bosnia in May.[340] The autochthonous Bosnian Chetnik command

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[333] "Prva poruka hrvatima", Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Documents 9.
[334] "Prva poruka hrvatima", Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Documents 9.
[335] "Prva poruka hrvatima", Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Documents 9.
[336] "Ravna Gora poziva nas u borbu za Srpstvo i Jugoslaviju", 21 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 9.
[337] "Ravna Gora poziva nas u borbu za Srpstvo i Jugoslaviju", 21 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 9.
[338] See Chapter IV, "Mihailović's Arrival in Montenegro".
[339] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 328.
[340] See "Conflict in Dalmatia" in this chapter.

structure in central and western Bosnia[341] was renamed the Command of West Bosnia (*Komanda Zapadne Bosne*) and entrusted to Major Slavoljub Vranješević in September.[342] At the end of the year, the Sandžak (the Bijelo Polje, Nova Varoš, Pljevlja, Priboj, Prijepolje, and Sjenica districts) was removed from the control of the bloodthirsty Đurišić, transformed in to a separate regional command named the Command of Old Ras (*Komanda Starog Rasa*), and given to Captain Vojislav Lukačević,[343] an officer with an excellent record in his dealings with the Muslims.[344] Mihailović also sent out delegates and inspectors of the High Command, men with the authority to make decisions, direct local commanders, and examine administrative, financial, and disciplinary matters.[345] Mihailović had, rather belatedly, recognised the need to put his own men in positions of power rather than hope that the indigenous commanders would obey him.

Mihailović and his officers issued orders which aimed to attract Croats and Muslims to the Chetnik Movement. On 7 November, he sent an important telegram to all commanders in which he ordered them to "[c]all in to our ranks all Muslims and all Croats of correct behaviour."[346] Captain Rudolf Perhinek, the High Command's delegate for Montenegro,[347] was careful to include orders

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[341] See Chapter IV, "The Bosnian Chetniks and their Policies".
[342] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 205, Folder 1, Document 32.
[343] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 5 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 2, Document 6.
[344] See Chapter IV, "Ismet Popovac and the Beginning of Cooperation with the Muslims".
[345] Karchmar (1973) p. 536.
[346] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for all subordinate commanders, 7 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 1, Document 19.
[347] Karchmar (1973) p. 536.

against the harming of civilians in his instructions to attack the Second Proletarian Division in Bijelo Polje on 8 October:

> 3. Towards the Muslims in the town everyone must be especially considerate. Nothing must be undertaken that might disturb the present good relations with the Muslims.
> 4. Theft must be prevented by the shooting of those who would through theft ruin our work.[348]

On 21 October, Major Radomir Cvetić, the commander of the Javor Corps, warned his soldiers to "not touch the peaceful Muslim population"[349] during the assault on the Partisans near Prijepolje and Nova Varoš.

By the autumn, a great deal of effort was going in to attracting Croats as it had become obvious that large numbers of them were going over to the Partisans.[350] Mihailović received favourable reports about the conditions in Croatia and Slavonia; one stated that the vast majority of Croats despised the Ustaše and considered Maček their leader and true representative.[351] It went on to explain why they were joining the Partisan Movement:

> Today the Croats would willingly join Draža Mihailović, that is, the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, but they are fearful that the movement is Great Serb. Ninety per cent of *Domobran* officers

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[348] Instructions by Captain Rudolf Perhinek for subordinate commanders, 8 October 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 32.
[349] Major Radomir Cvetić (commander of the Javor Corps) to subordinate commanders, 21 October 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 69.
[350] Karchmar (1973) p. 130. As early as the autumn of 1942, German intelligence reported that desertions from the *Domobrani* to the Partisans were assuming serious proportions (Milazzo (1975) p. 106).
[351] Report by Lieutenant Colonel Živojin Đurić for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the autumn of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 2, Document 27.

> could be utilised at the given moment, but because of the abovementioned suspicion in the sincerity of Draža Mihailović, it is just as easy for them to join the Partisans if they are not convinced of the correctness and sincerity of the Yugoslavism of the JVO.[352]

To facilitate work amongst the Croats, a Command of Slavonia (*Komanda Slavonije*) was established and entrusted to Colonel Aleksandar Nikolić.[353] Despite the unfavourable geography, a number of JVO units operated in the vicinity of Novska.[354] Although small, the Partisans deemed them a sufficient threat to warrant the creation of the Hajduk Veljko Anti-Chetnik Battalion on 25 August.[355]

## Mladen Žujović in Dalmatia

When Žujović arrived in Split in May to assume command of western Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Lika, he was shocked by what he discovered. The National Committee,[356] through its Serb chauvinism, laziness, and wastefulness, had alienated most of the intelligentsia and population of Dalmatia.[357] Many people who were sympathetic to Mihailović found it difficult to believe that he was affiliated with the committee, whose most chauvinistic members were Silvije

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[352] Report by Lieutenant Colonel Živojin Đurić for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the autumn of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 2, Document 27.
[353] Letter by Colonel Aleksandar Nikolić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 11 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, pp. 373-376.
[354] These JVO units had been organised in the summer by Major Dušan Janjić (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)).
[355] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3).
[356] See Chapter IV, "Ilija Trifunović Birčanin and the Croats of Dalmatia".
[357] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 887-888.

Alfirević, Sergije Urukalo, and Đuro Vilović.[358] Following an inspection of the Dinaric Chetnik Division (*Dinarska Četnička Divizija*), Žujović described it as "poorly formed, poorly armed, undisciplined, and lazy".[359] Although there were a large number of Croat officers in Dalmatia and Lika who were sympathetic to Mihailović, they refused to join the local Chetnik units.[360] Having learnt of Mihailović's new delegate, representatives of the Croat Peasant Party approached Žujović and asked him questions about his aims and views.[361]

Žujović set about improving the situation. Militarily, he made it clear to the Chetnik commanders that their units were part of the JVO and that it was necessary for them to reorganise the units according to Order Number 5,[362] and to adopt JVO insignia.[363] A number of Croat officers were convinced to join the JVO, and were organised in to a "conspiratorial army".[364] By the end of July, the Split-Šibenik Chetnik *Odred* had been formed primarily from Croat students from Split, and it grew later in the year when a group of eighty Croat students joined the unit.[365] A meeting of "constructive and patriotic"[366] Croat and Serb intellectuals and public figures from Split and local commanders was held in late

[358] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 888.
[359] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 887.
[360] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 890.
[361] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 741 (Footnote 80).
[362] See Chapter IV, "Military Organisation".
[363] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 889.
[364] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 890.
[365] Report on the situation in northern Dalmatia, undated (probably from 1944), Croatian State Archive, Record Group 495: Dinaric Chetnik Region, 16-55.
[366] Telegram (Number 4,683) from Mladen Žujović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737 (Footnote 64).

May where all agreed to fulfill any tasks given to them by Mihailović.[367] The general expressed his satisfaction with Žujović's work and ordered him to form a permanent standing committee and to entice members of the Croat Peasant Party and Independent Democratic Party to join.[368] He suggested that it would be a good idea to establish contact with *Domobran* officers as well.[369] Žujović did indeed form a political organisation named the Patriotic Forum (*Patriotski Forum*) composed mostly of Croats as well as some Serbs.[370] Although Alfirević, Urukalo and another Serb chauvinist, Jakša Račić, were meant to be the Chetnik representatives,[371] the other members would not have any business with these men and they were excluded.[372] Whilst Žujović was unable to convince the Croat Peasant Party to participate in this committee, it did promise that its members would obey orders given by Žujović in his capacity as regional commander.[373]

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[367] Telegram (Number 4,683) from Mladen Žujović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737 (Footnote 64).
[368] Telegram (Number 2,283) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Mladen Žujović, 29 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737.
[369] Telegram (Number 2,283) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Mladen Žujović, 29 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 737.
[370] The General Secretary was Nenad Grisogono, a Croat lawyer. The Executive Committee was composed of Niko Bartulović (Croat writer), Duje Ivanišević (Croat trader), Vladimir Matošić (Croat lawyer and former parliamentarian), Marko Stojanac (Serb school inspector), and Zvonko Šimunić (Croat lawyer and *Sokol* elder). The remaining members were Aćim Čavlina (Catholic Serb businessperson), Ivo Čičin-Šain (Croat trader), Roko Čulić (Croat trader and *Sokol* member), Vjekoslav Lauš (Slovene former bank director), Jovo Margotić (Serb pharmacist), Niko Markov (Serb bank director), and Zvonko Murat (Croat bureaucrat) (Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 891; Statement by Nenad Grisogono in response to an article in *Vjesnik* (Zagreb) dated 15-16 December 1970, December 1970 (I am indebted to Vivian Grisogono who kindly provided me with a copy of the statement)).
[371] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 891.
[372] Statement by Nenad Grisogono in response to an article in *Vjesnik* (Zagreb) dated 15-16 December 1970, December 1970 (I am indebted to Vivian Grisogono who kindly provided me with a copy of the statement)).
[373] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 890-891.

Even so, he continued through the Patriotic Forum to work towards an agreement with the Croat Peasant Party.[374]

Žujović's efforts were hampered by his internment from late May until the middle of June, and by his absence from Split following his release when he commanded troops in a number of battles against the Partisans in the Dinara region.[375] Whilst he was away very little was done, so that by the end of the summer he lamented that most of Dalmatia and Lika were in Partisan hands.[376] When Italy surrendered on 8 September, a Yugoslav volunteer unit was formed in Split which, together with local Partisans, defended the city against the Germans and Ustaše.[377] The arrival of the Partisan First Proletarian and Ninth Dalmatian divisions forced the nationalists to either join the Partisans or flee to Chetnik territory.[378] Mihailović's efforts to establish control over Dalmatia and implement his policies had failed; thereafter this territory was controlled by an indigenous commander, Momčilo Đujić, a man with a decidedly chauvinistic view of the national question.[379]

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[374] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 892.
[375] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 892.
[376] Report by Mladen Žujović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 6 August 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 892.
[377] Report for Nenad Grisogono, undated (probably from the end of September 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 3, Document 31.
[378] A report from the time paints a picture of Partisan efficiency, organisation, and military prowess. They restored order to the town after the Italian surrender, organised the populace, spread propaganda, evacuated great quantities of foodstuffs and other supplies to the mountains, eliminated their political opponents, all whilst defending Split from the Germans and Ustaše for a fortnight (Report for Nenad Grisogono, undated (probably from the end of September 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 3, Document 31).
[379] In a letter to Uroš Drenović (commander of the Bosanska Krajina Corps), Đujić spoke of "our political aim, which is the creation of an ethnically pure Serbian state" (Letter by Momčilo Đujić for Uroš Drenović, 16 July 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 815).

## The Bosnian Chetniks

In central and western Bosnia, the numerous officers that Mihailović had sent in the second half of 1942 to assert their authority over the nationalist units were gaining the upper hand over the indigenous civilian commanders by the spring of 1943. The officers sought to integrate the units in to the command structure of the JVO and to ensure that Mihailović's will was carried out. In March, the High Command sent instructions to its delegate for western Bosnia, Captain Borivoje Mitranović, in which it ordered him to "[a]ttract Muslims and *Domobrani* and afterwards destroy Ante Pavelić's state".[380] Mitranović was informed about a number of national policy successes: the capture of Bjelimići, the presence of *Domobran* officers in the staff of the Romanija Corps, the participation of 1,000 Muslim Chetniks in the Battle of the Neretva, and the naming of Major Fehim Musakadić as commander of all Muslim Chetniks throughout Yugoslavia.[381] This order and the accompanying information were conveyed by Mitranović to the commanders, both civilian and officer,[382] who began to take more active steps to attract the Croats and Muslims in to the Chetnik Movement. Whilst inspecting units in his capacity as military instructor for western Bosnia, Second Lieutenant Luka Đukanović explained to commanders, soldiers, and the Muslim and Serbian populace the "new political

[380] Letter by Captain Borivoje Mitranović for Sergeant Jovan Mišić, 23 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 505.
[381] Letter by Captain Borivoje Mitranović for Sergeant Jovan Mišić, 23 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 504-505.
[382] Letter by Captain Borivoje Mitranović for Sergeant Jovan Mišić, 23 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 503.

course that the High Command wishes".[383] He issued a proclamation for the Muslims explaining the new policy, which left a "good impression"[384] on them. On the same day that Mitranović sent out his order, Rade Radić, the chief of the Bosnian Chetniks,[385] sent the following instructions (Order 112) to all *odred* commanders in Bosnia:

> (1) Towards the Muslims, every Chetnik should behave attentively and brotherly, and under no circumstances should they confuse religion with nationality
> (2) Every Chetnik should, through his work and deeds, try to win over ever more Muslims so that they join Chetnik ranks, or at least to convince them to support the Chetnik struggle
> (3) All units will publish the necessary proclamations and news for the Muslims in their vicinity, and call upon Muslims to join Chetnik ranks ...[386]

Four days later, Radić issued more detailed instructions to his subordinates.[387] He argued that the Muslims were disenchanted with the Ustaše and had realised that the Allies would win the war, and it was thus necessary for the Chetniks to adopt a "common and correct stance"[388] so that Muslims would join them rather than the Partisans. Commanders were ordered to hold regular meetings with Muslim leaders to convince them that the Chetniks did not desire the destruction of the entire Muslim population, but only those individuals who had committed

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[383] Report by Second Lieutenant Luka Đukanović for Captain Borivoje Mitranović, 16 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 705.
[384] Report by Second Lieutenant Luka Đukanović for Captain Borivoje Mitranović, 16 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 705.
[385] See Chapter IV, "The Bosnian Chetniks and their Policies".
[386] Order Number 112 by Rade Radić for all *odred* commanders in Bosnia, 25 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 10, Document 8.
[387] Order Number 123 by Rade Radić for all *odred* commanders and rear commanders in Bosnia, 29 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 10, Document 10.
[388] Order Number 123 by Rade Radić for all *odred* commanders and rear commanders in Bosnia, 29 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 10, Document 10.

atrocities against Serbs. Order 112 was repeated and was followed by a final appeal to invest the maximum effort in to establishing good relations with the Muslims. Commanders were reminded of the need to convince their soldiers to pursue the new policy.[389] Radić also issued orders against the robbing, killing, and mistreatment of Croats and Muslims. On 30 March, the Borja *Odred* was given orders "to behave towards the Muslims in a nice and honest fashion … [and to] … not rob Muslim villages, etc."[390] Two weeks later, he instructed all *odred* chiefs to adopt correct behaviour towards the Croatian and Muslim population both on the territories covered by the command (central, northeastern, and western Bosnia) and beyond.[391]

A conference attended by a number of officers and most of the Bosnian commanders[392] was held in Kulaši on 2 and 3 May where a number of pressing

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[389] Order Number 123 by Rade Radić for all *odred* commanders and rear commanders in Bosnia, 29 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 10, Document 10.
[390] Order by the Command of the Borja *Odred* for unit commanders, 30 March 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 213, Folder 4, Document 19.
[391] Rade Radić's instructions to *odred* commanders, 14 April 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 603.
[392] In attendance were: Captain Stevan Botić; Savo Božić (commander of the Trebava *Odred*); Lieutenant Dušan Dukić (chief of staff of the Motajica *Odred*); Mirko Džombić (delegate of the Obilić *Odred*); Nikola Forkapa (commander of the Motajica *Odred*); Branko Kovačević (commander of the Vučijak *Odred*); Dušan Kurtinović (delegate of the Vučijak *Odred*); Vasilije Lalić (assistant commander of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi*); Branislav Lazičić (propaganda chief of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi*); Ilija Malić (delegate of the Borja *Odred*); Vukašin Marčetić (commander of the Manjača Regiment); Milan Marić (assistant commander of the Trebava *Odred*); Jovo Mišić (commander of the King Peter II *Odred*); Captain Borivoje Mitranović (delegate of the High Command); Captain Slavko Pčelar (military instructor in the Borja *Odred*); Captain Manojlo Pejić; Major Đuro Popović; Luka Radić (rear commander of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi*); Rade Radić (commander of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* and commander of the Borja *Odred*); Brane Radošević (delegate of the Manjača Regiment); Lazar Tešanović (commander of the Obilić *Odred*); Major Slavoljub Vranješević (chief of staff of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi*); Rajko Zakonović (chief of staff of the Trebava *Odred*); and Ljubomir Zec (delegate of the King Peter II *Odred*) (Minutes of the military-political conference of the Command of Bosnia Chetnik *Odredi, odred* commanders, and *odred* delegates, 2 & 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 659-660).

issues were discussed, and important resolutions passed.[393] The sixth item on the meeting agenda was "our stance towards the Germans, Croats, Muslims, and minorities."[394] Mitranović stated that the

> High Command has ordered [us] to avoid conflict with all of our enemies, and to take advantage of them as much as possible. The High Command now considers our greatest enemy to be the Partisans. We should not provoke the Germans or fight them openly, as it is too early. It has been ordered to treat the *Domobrani* much better, so that they come over to us during battle. It has also been ordered that we be tolerant and prudent towards the Muslims ...[395]

The delegates unanimously agreed to "act towards the Germans, Croats, Muslims, and Partisans according to the orders of the High Command, as presented by brother Captain Mitranović ... in his speech."[396] The Bosnian Chetnik leadership thus adopted as its official policy one which attempted to draw Croats and Muslims in to its ranks through good behaviour towards them.

One way in which the new policy manifested itself was in propaganda and contacts with the Croat Peasant Party. On 19 June, the Bosanska Krajina Corps printed an appeal to their "Catholic, Muslim, and Orthodox brothers"[397] in Mrkonjić Grad pleading for bedding material for wounded Chetniks. Captain

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[393] Minutes of the military-political conference of the Command of Bosnia Chetnik *Odredi, odred* commanders, and *odred* delegates, 2 & 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 659-695.
[394] Minutes of the military-political conference of the Command of Bosnia Chetnik *Odredi, odred* commanders, and *odred* delegates, 2 & 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 660.
[395] Minutes of the military-political conference of the Command of Bosnia Chetnik *Odredi, odred* commanders, and *odred* delegates, 2 & 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 691-692.
[396] Minutes of the military-political conference of the Command of Bosnia Chetnik *Odredi, odred* commanders, and *odred* delegates, 2 & 3 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 693.
[397] "Apel na braću katolika, muslimane i pravoslavce u gradu Varcar Vakufu", 19 June 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 227, Folder 4, Document 17.

Milorad Momčilović, the commander of the Romanija Corps, ordered his subordinate commanders on 20 July to print and distribute a propaganda flyer titled "Yugoslavs" amongst the Croatian and Muslim populace, particularly the *Domobrani*.[398] Eight days later, he gave detailed instructions regarding the content of propaganda: the term Yugoslav Army would replace Chetnik; Croats and Muslims were to be ordered to join the JVO; the Ustaše, communists, traitors, and certain politicians were to be declared enemies who would be liquidated; Mihailović is not a Great Serb; talk of collective punishment of any ethnic group is a lie; the new Yugoslavia will be better than the old; only Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Muslims will be permitted to remain in the new Yugoslavia; and the people will decide the form of government.[399] The Command of West Bosnia and the Central Bosnian Corps produced propaganda directed at the Croats and Muslims.[400] A German intelligence report written in April by the German consul to the NDH, Dr Winkler, provides an interesting insight in to the mood of the Muslims at this time. Winkler believed that they could be categorised in to three groups: (1) a small pro-Partisan faction, (2) a small pro-Ustaša faction, and (3) a large autonomist faction which had no confidence in the NDH, was friendly towards the Germans, and was prone to "expansionist Serb views".[401] Given that German intelligence was usually more accurate than otherwise,

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[398] Order Number 489 by Captain Milorad Momčilović for subordinate commanders, 25 July 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 8, Document 40.
[399] Order (Number 502) by Captain Milorad Momčilović for unknown and instructions for propaganda work, 28 July 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 8, Document 43.
[400] Letter by the Chief of the Propaganda Section of the Command of West Bosnia (Branislav Lazičić) for the Command of the Central Bosnian Chetnik Corps, 25 February 1944, Archive of the Republic of Srpska, Collection of Documents of the Central Bosnian Chetnik Corps, III/174; "Braćo Muslimani! Braćo Domobrani!", undated (1944), Archive of the Republic of Srpska, Collection of Documents of the Central Bosnian Chetnik Corps, II/52.
[401] Winkler, "The political situation of the Bosnian Muslims", April 1943, in Redžić (2005) p. 180.

Winkler's report suggests that Chetnik approaches towards the Bosnian Muslims had not a small chance of bearing fruit. In December, Vranješević, the Commander of West Bosnia,[402] and his political advisor, Branislav Lazičić, met with an "important leader of the Croat Peasant Party"[403] and discussed the need for closer cooperation in the struggle against communism and the occupier. Following the talks, the Croat Peasant Party representative traveled to Zagreb to confer with the party leadership.[404]

## The Road to Ba

As the year drew to a close, it became increasingly obvious to Mihailović that he needed to organise a major political manifestation. One of his most important motives was the desire to demonstrate that he did not have dictatorial aspirations; at his trial he stated that he "never wanted to be represented as a man who wished to be a dictator. That was one of the reasons for ordering this congress".[405] Another reason was his desire "to share responsibility"[406] with others for the future of Yugoslavia. On 15 November, his trusted advisor Đurović pleaded with him to make an unambiguous public statement renouncing any

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[402] On 21 September, Mihailović ordered the establishment of the Command of West Bosnia which encompassed all of central and western Bosnia (that is, all of Bosnia west of the Bosna River) and named Major Slavoljub Vranješević as its head (Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 September 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 206, Folder 1, Document 32). This terminated the Command of the Bosnian Chetnik *Odredi* and the power of its head, Rade Radić.
[403] Telegram (Number 12,787) from Captain Borivoje Mitranović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 December 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 207.
[404] Telegram (Number 12,787) from Captain Borivoje Mitranović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 December 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 207.
[405] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 321.
[406] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 321.

dictatorial ambitions.[407] Although Mihailović intended to hold a congress on Unification Day (1 December),[408] it was postponed, it would seem, primarily because the politicians dragged things out.[409]

Mihailović was impelled to act by two important events. The first was the second session of AVNOJ held in Jajce on 29 November, at which the Partisans made a number of radical and far-reaching declarations. AVNOJ was proclaimed the highest executive and legislative body in Yugoslavia[410] and a new government was formed headed by Tito.[411] The government-in-exile was stripped of its powers and King Peter was forbidden from returning until the question of the monarchy was resolved.[412] Just as significantly, AVNOJ declared Yugoslavia a federation of six equal republics (Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia),[413] named its constituent peoples (Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes),[414] and guaranteed the rights of national minorities.[415] Only a few days after the AVNOJ session, Mihailović was delivered

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[407] Letter by Đura Đurović for Army General Draža Mihailović, 15 November 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 8.
[408] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 308.
[409] Karchmar (1973) p. 602; Topalović (1967) p. 109.
[410] *Deklaracija Drugog Zasjedanja Antifašističkog Veća Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije,* (1943) p. 4.
[411] Named the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Nacionalni Komitet Oslobođenja Jugoslavije*), its president was Tito, and its three deputy presidents were Edvard Kardelj, Božidar Magovac, and Vladislav Ribnikar. The secretaries (ministers) were: Tito (Defence), Josip Smodlaka (Foreign Affairs), Vlada Zečević (Internal Affairs), Vladislav Ribnikar (Information), Edvard Kocbek (Education), Ivan Milutinović (Economy), Dušan Sernec (Finance), Sreten Žujović (Transport), Milivoj Jambrišak (Health), Todor Vujasinović (Reconstruction), Anton Kržišnik (Social Policy), Frane Frol (Justice), Mile Peruničić (Food), Rade Pribićević (Construction), and Sulejman Filipović (Forests and Mines) (Decision Number 8 by the Presidency of AVNOJ, 30 November 1943).
[412] Decision Number 2 by the Presidency of AVNOJ, 29 December 1943.
[413] Decision Number 2 by the Second Session of AVNOJ, 29 November 1943.
[414] Decision Number 2 by the Second Session of AVNOJ, 29 November 1943.
[415] Decision Number 2 by the Second Session of AVNOJ, 29 November 1943.

another, far more important, blow following the conclusion of the Teheran Conference attended by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin, at which it was decided to support the Partisans "by supplies and equipment to the greatest possible extent".[416] Mihailović and his army were not even mentioned.

Probably in response to AVNOJ, the politicians decided to make their move.[417] On 10 December,[418] a delegation consisting of Vladimir Belajčić (Democratic Party),[419] Branislav Ivković (Democratic Party),[420] Aleksandar Popović (Independent Democratic Party),[421] and Živko Topalović (Socialist Party)[422] left Belgrade, authorised to have direct talks with Mihailović and come to an agreement with him.[423] Two days later, they arrived in the High Command and a conference was held attended by Mihailović, Moljević, a number of officers, and the politicians. Mihailović agreed to most of the politicians' demands: he renounced all dictatorial aspirations as well as the collective punishment of any national group; agreed that Yugoslavia would be reconstituted as a federation; and assented to the creation of a new political body, independent of the JVO, to which he promised to give all political power.[424] Its founding congress would take

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[416] Declaration of the Three Powers at Teheran, 1 December 1943.
[417] Mihailović speculated that this might indeed have been the case (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 320-321). Topalović (1967) wrote that "[a]fter a two month break from work, the representatives of the parties met again" (p. 69), but does not give the reason for the sudden activity. It is fair to assume that AVNOJ played its role.
[418] Topalović (1967) p. 76.
[419] Composition of the Central National Committee, July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 16. He was also the president of the Association of Sport and *Sokol* Youth Societies (*Savez Sportskih i Sokolskih Omladinskih Društava*) (Topalović (1967) p. 44).
[420] Ivković was the secretary of the Democratic Party (Topalović (1967) p. 69).
[421] Topalović (1967) p. 71.
[422] Topalović (1967) p. 73.
[423] Topalović (1967) p. 73.
[424] Topalović (1967) pp. 109-111.

place in late January.[425] Despite the wishes of the politicians, Mihailović insisted that the Ravna Gora Movement be allowed to participate in the new organ. Interestingly, Moljević had nothing to say at the meeting.[426] Mihailović now had the support of much of the leadership of many of the leading prewar political parties.[427]

Although Mihailović failed to organise a congress for Unification Day as planned, he did commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the creation of Yugoslavia by issuing two official statements. The first was a leaflet titled "Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes".[428] It was a scathing critique of the interwar period, described as a time when

> [p]olitical parties, in their struggle for power, often placed the interests of their party before those of the state, and many political people [placed] their own [interests] ahead of the people's. Social life was characterised by the attainment of wealth by the strong at the expense of the weak ...[429]

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[425] Topalović (1967) p. 109.
[426] Topalović (1967) pp. 114, 115.
[427] Although the leader of the Democratic Party, Milan Grol, was outside of Yugoslavia, a meeting of party's executive committee overwhelmingly supported cooperation with Mihailović (one hundred of the 120 members) and chose Mihailo Kujundžić (the party's deputy president) and Branislav Ivković (the party's secretary) as its representatives. Similarly, the leader of the Independent Democratic Party, Srđan Budisavljević, was abroad, but important figures in the party leadership agreed on the need to participate in the talks and designated the well-known Adam Pribićević as that party's representative. Although the leader of the Radical Party, Aleksandar Stanojević, was in Serbia and supported cooperation, he was far too old to take an active role in these events and instead appointed Milutin Kopša and Petar Milojević as his party's representatives. The executive committee of the Socialist Party gave its support, and chose the president of the party, Živko Topalović, and Aleksandar Pavlović, as its delegates (Topalović (1967) pp. 69-70).
[428] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[429] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.

It went on to ask Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes to remember those who had been killed in the present war, and to take an oath to "severely and according to the law punish"[430] all who had committed "bestialities … against Serbs and Yugoslav orientated Croats and Slovenes … irrespective of which armed units they served in, or which rank they held, or where they have removed themselves".[431] Even so, great care would be taken to ensure that the innocent did not suffer along with the guilty; the punishment of "the aged, women, and children"[432] was forbidden. Turning to the postwar arrangement, Mihailović wrote that the

> Kingdom of Yugoslavia must be renewed on a new, stronger, and healthier foundation. Her borders have been guaranteed by the honourable word of our allies … Within these borders, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, each on their own territory, will find sufficient space for their development and progress, and for each to arrange their home as they see fit.[433]

It was necessary for the life of the peasantry and proletariat to be dramatically improved so that their labour would ensure them a "life befitting a person, and a better and happier future for their offspring."[434] Politically, it was imperative that state affairs be "entrusted to the best amongst the best to ensure that the recent past is not repeated".[435] This was only possible if the people were given "freedom

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[430] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[431] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[432] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[433] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[434] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[435] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.

of speech and full freedom of choice",[436] and if the people became the "source and confluence of all political power in the land, [and] if we institute full [and] genuine democracy".[437] The leaflet was signed by Mihailović and the Central National Committee.

The second document was an order directing all male Yugoslav citizens of military age to join the JVO.[438] Recognising that numerous armed forces – the *Domobrani* and Partisans were specifically mentioned – had been created since the April War and that they were "composed of citizens of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia who as such are subject to the law of military service and bound to submit to authorised military authorities",[439] Mihailović gave the following orders in his capacity as Chief of Staff of the High Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland and Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce:

> (1) All armed forces composed of or led by citizens of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia upon its territory are to place themselves under the command of the High Command of the Yugoslav Army and submit to its orders;
> (2) The ranks of officers in these forces which have not been gained legally are not recognised, and the officers retain the rank held by them on 6 April 1941;
> (3) The failure to obey this order under (1) will attract consequences from the law on military punishment and the law on the structure of the army, navy, and airforce of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia;

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[436] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[437] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 13.
[438] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 14.
[439] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 14.

> (4) Every act of assistance offered to those armed forces which do not submit to the High Command of the Yugoslav Army will be deemed, according to legal regulations, an act of aggression against the Yugoslav Army and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.[440]

Mihailović's mixture of appeals to legality and threats of sanctions were clearly an effort to convince those Yugoslavs who were in the NDH armed forces and Partisans to join the JVO.

As the year drew to a close, the High Command continued to produce propaganda, much of it directed at the *Domobrani* who Mihailović hoped to, as he stated at his trial, "bring over to my side".[441] A leaflet from December called upon them to "return to the road of honour, the road that leads to freedom".[442] They were informed that the

> only place for all *Domobrani* and true honourable Croats is in the units of the Yugoslav Army which is leading a bloody battle for the freedom of all Serbs, all Croats, and all Slovenes and for the resurrection of Yugoslavia.
>
> All for King and Fatherland! All for the freedom of our people! All under the command of General Mihailović in to battle for Yugoslavia! Long live the king! Long live Yugoslavia![443]

Another propaganda document, probably written at about the same time and addressed to all *Domobran* officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, called upon them to "return to their Yugoslav flag, so that you might greet our

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[440] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 14.
[441] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 192.
[442] "Poruka đenerala Mihailovića domobrancima", December 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 16.
[443] "Poruka đenerala Mihailovića domobrancima", December 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 17.

allies' army and the resurrection of Yugoslavia as friends rather than enemies. In this way, everybody can rehabilitate themselves."[444] It ended with the following command:

> I order all officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the Yugoslav Army who are in Croat *Domobran* units to immediately report to my commanders and delegates who are authorised and instructed to accept under the Yugoslav flag all those who have not bloodied their hands with their brothers' blood.[445]

A few days later, another leaflet appeared written by Vladimir Predavec and bearing his signature calling upon the *Domobrani* to heed Mihailović's order and together with their "Serb and Slovene brothers, and our virtuous allies, in brotherly cooperation, to make your contribution to the renewal and construction of a common state."[446] On 25 December Mihailović issued an order to all corps commanders for the creation of Ravna Gora Peoples' Committees (*Ravnogorski Narodni Odbori*) whose task would be to ensure that "our propaganda covers the entire country and all of the people".[447] Propaganda was to emphasise "[f]reedom of religion, freedom of honest and truthful speech, freedom of association and agreement, freedom of employment, and freedom of honest work and wealth

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[444] "Hrvatskim domobranima", undated (probably from the end of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 4.
[445] "Hrvatskim domobranima", undated (probably from the end of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 4.
[446] "Domobrani!", undated (probably from the end of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 5.
[447] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for subordinate commanders, 25 December 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 225.

accumulation".[448] Mihailović also sent instructions to various *Domobran* officers with whom he had been acquainted before the war.[449]

Propaganda was also produced for the Muslims. Perhaps the most important leaflet from this period was titled "To the Muslims of Bosnia, Hercegovina, and Old Ras-Sandžak".[450] Thematically, it was quite different from the propaganda produced earlier. The subject of Muslim 'sins' against the Serbs is conspicuously absent; instead, the emphasis is on the positive aspects of the wartime relationship such as the numerous Muslim resolutions of 1941, the work of Second Lieutenant Hamdija Čengić, Major Fehim Musakadić, Mustafa Pašić, and Ismet Popovac, and the "warm brotherly ties and cooperation between Muslim and Orthodox Serbs"[451] in Bosanska Krajina, central Bosnia, Posavina, the Sandžak, and Sarajevo. Muslims were "building the foundations"[452] of their future in Yugoslavia through their present participation in the JVO, a Yugoslavia that would be characterised by "equality before the law which we will write together according to the principles of democracy, … parliamentarianism, [and] civic freedom."[453] It ended with the promise that "[y]our poor will be our poor; your problems will be our problems. Together we will protect them and resolve

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[448] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for subordinate commanders, 25 December 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 227.
[449] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 191-192; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 290-291.
[450] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.
[451] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.
[452] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.
[453] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.

them. Social justice will be the same for both of us, just as we both have one God."[454]

Two documents from December provide an insight in to Mihailović's thinking at the end of the year. On 3 December, he sent a telegram to all corps commanders in which he reported that the "Yugoslav communists have promised Kosovo to Albania so as to draw Albanians in to their units against the Serbs",[455] and that Tito's aim was to "secure the present borders of the Independent State of Croatia by creating a Croat and Muslim majority at the expense of the Serbs".[456] He warned that Tito would "tomorrow surely promise South Serbia to the Bulgarians and Bačka and Banat to the Hungarians so as to reduce Serbia to the Belgrade *pašaluk*."[457] The idea that the Partisans would divide the Serbian nation and minimise the borders of Serbia haunted Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership; the AVNOJ declarations, with their talk of six individual republics and five constituent nations, seemed to confirm these worst fears.

The other document is a secret report for the higher commanders detailing the military situation in Europe.[458] Mihailović argued that it was necessary to

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[454] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.
[455] Telegram (Number 268) from Army General Draža Mihailović to all corps commanders, 3 December 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 245 (#131 ).
[456] Telegram (Number 268) from Army General Draža Mihailović to all corps commanders, 3 December 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 245 (#131 ).
[457] Telegram (Number 268) from Army General Draža Mihailović to all corps commanders, 3 December 1943, *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 246 (#131 ).
[458] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, pp. 254-260.

"create normal relations between Serbs and Croats",[459] as this was an "important and decisive element for our affirmation before the Allies".[460] Chetnik propaganda was to demolish the lie that Tito was spreading amongst the Allies that he had united the Croats and Serbs. Greater efforts were to be made in attracting Croats, although it was necessary to consider the "understandable sensitivity"[461] of those Serbs whose loved ones had been killed by the Ustaše. Whilst it was imperative to punish the guilty "harshly and justly",[462] Mihailović reminded his commanders that the "Croat collective is not guilty of those crimes".[463] Finally, it was essential to emphasise the "necessity of a common existence, ... the identicalness of our fate, and especially emphasise the good and honourable stance of Croats in individual regions in the worst moments of 1941".[464]

Mihailović had hoped that 1943 would be the year in which he defeated the Partisans and triumphantly awaited the Allies in Yugoslavia. Instead, it was a year during which the Chetnik Movement stumbled from one disaster to another. Nothing came of the expected Allied landing, and the grand plan to destroy the Partisans had backfired in the most unexpected manner; instead of the Chetniks

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[459] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 259.
[460] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 259.
[461] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 260.
[462] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 260.
[463] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 260.
[464] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for higher commanders, undated (probably from the end of December 1943), *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 260.

crushing the Partisans, it was Tito's army which inflicted a decisive military victory against the nationalist forces. With his Hercegovinian and Montenegrin units devastated by the Germans and Partisans, Mihailović was forced to return to Serbia at the beginning of the summer. The government-in-exile continued to demonstrate its absolute lack of usefulness and relevance. By the end of the year, the Great Allies had abandoned Mihailović in favour of Tito and the Partisans, who crowned their domestic military victories and international political successes with a spectacular political manifestation at which they declared a new Yugoslavia, and themselves its masters.

Although the year began with the expectation that the Chetnik Movement would draw the Muslims to its cause through the MNVO and come to an agreement with the Croat Peasant Party to gain the support of the Croats, it was marked by two horrendous massacres of the Muslim populace in southeastern Bosnia and the Sandžak. Despite these terrible events, by the end of the year Mihailović could tabulate his national policy accomplishments with a fair amount of satisfaction: the bloodless capture of Bjelimići in January; the establishment of numerous Muslim Chetnik military and political organisations throughout Hercegovina within the framework of the MNVO; the creation of the JRP in Croatia and Dalmatia; the numerous conferences held with delegates of the Croat Peasant Party organised by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership; and the arrival of Mustafa Mulalić and Vladimir Predavec in the High Command to act as *de facto* representatives of the Muslim and Croatian nations respectively.

Alongside these national policy achievements were a number of other political and military ones. By year's end, Mihailović had placed his men in charge of the regional commands of western Bosnia and the Sandžak, thus bringing the JVO under tighter control. He began to play a far greater role in the political direction of his movement, and attempted to demonstrate that neither he nor his organisation had dictatorial or Serb chauvinistic goals. As part of this effort, he contacted some of the leading prewar political parties in the spring and came to an agreement with them whereby he would renounce all political aspirations and hand power over to a political body composed of politicians. Spurred to action by the AVNOJ declarations, Mihailović and the politicians agreed to hold a congress of their own to demonstrate to the Yugoslavs and the entire world that Mihailović and his movement were democratic. It would remain to be seen if this would be successful.

# Chapter VI

# 1944-1945

## The Saint Sava Congress

On 1 January 1944, Mihailović sent a telegram to all of the commanders informing them that "a great people's congress [of delegates] from the entire country will be held towards the end of January … in Serbia",[1] and that

> [e]ach district of our entire kingdom is to send two delegates from the most prominent and influential people. These representatives are to be selected by the Ravna Gora Committees, whose formation we have already ordered in villages, municipalities, and districts.[2]

The congress held in the village of Ba at the foothills of Ravna Gora between 25 and 28 January was the most important political event in the history of the

[1] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to all subordinate commanders, 1 January 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 42.
[2] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to all subordinate commanders, 1 January 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 42.

Chetnik Movement.[3] By 26 January, most of the deputies had arrived and a preconference was convened, which was, in many respects, the most consequential episode of the entire congress, as it witnessed the showdown between the politicians and the hard-core Ravnagoraists who had not supported Mihailović's initial decision to approach the politicians,[4] and had attempted to convince him to abandon his plans right up to the beginning of the assembly.[5] The preconference was attended by Mihailović, eight politicians representing the Democratic, Independent Democratic, Radical, and Socialist parties,[6] and six of the leading figures in the Ravna Gora Movement, headed by Stevan Moljević.[7] Mihailović gave a short speech in which he declared, according to one of the participants, that he was "democratically disposed, [and] that his aim was to assemble all democratic forces in the country and to deny all accusations leveled at him that he is the bearer of any absolutist tendencies."[8] He begged the attendees to avoid confrontation and to come to an agreement, after which he left the room.[9] Despite this appeal, the meeting degenerated in to bitter arguing and was suspended after Aleksandar Aksentijević, a Ravnagoraist, drew a revolver

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[3] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 56. Tomasevich (1975) called it "by far the most important political manifestation of the Chetnik movement during the entire war" (p. 339).
[4] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 331.
[5] Letter by the Belgrade branch of the Central National Committee for Army General Draža Mihailović, January 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 43.
[6] Vladimir Belajčić (Democratic Party), Branislav Ivković (Democratic Party), Dimitrije Lazarević (Radical Party), Adam Pribićević (Independent Democratic Party), Radović (Independent Democratic Party), Vasa Ristić (Radical Party), Milica Topalović (Socialist Party), and Živko Topalović (Socialist Party) (The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44).
[7] Aleksandar Aksentijević, Đura Đurović, Stevan Moljević, Mustafa Mulalić, Vladimir Predavec, and Đuro Vilović (The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44).
[8] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.
[9] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.

and threatened Branislav Ivković, one of the representatives of the Democratic Party.[10]

When the conference resumed, it was chaired by Mihailović whose authority ensured that it proceeded in an orderly fashion and made a number of significant decisions.[11] Having decided to support the politicians over the Ravnagoraists,[12] Mihailović forced the latter to accept a number of decisions which they would have found rather unpalatable: the politicians and Ravnagoraists would have an equal number of delegates at the congress; the resolution prepared by Živko Topalović would be presented at the congress for verification rather than the one prepared by the Central National Committee; and a new political organ, named the Yugoslav People's Democratic Union (*Jugoslovenska Narodna Demokratska Zajednica*), would be created as the highest political body in Yugoslavia.[13] The right of deputies from the KPJ and Yugoslav National Party to attend the congress, which the politicians supported, but which was opposed by the Ravnagoraists, was similarly decided in the politicians' favour.[14] Despite the desire of the politicians that the fate of the monarchy be decided after the war, Mihailović insisted that the assembly support King Peter and the Karađorđević dynasty, a position that was accepted.[15] Finally, the conference agenda was also agreed upon.[16] Mihailović had sided with the

[10] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.
[11] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.
[12] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 502.
[13] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.
[14] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, pp. 44-45.
[15] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 44.
[16] The Interrogation of Branislav Ivković, 1945, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 45.

politicians on almost every issue of any significance, marking his clearest break with Moljević and the Ravna Gora Movement to date.

The congress was held on 27 January, and since it coincided with the feast day of the famous medieval Serbian archbishop, Saint Sava, it was named the Saint Sava Congress (*Svetosavski Kongres*), although it was just as often referred to as the Ba Congress (*Baški Kongres*). It was attended by 274 delegates,[17] some of whom were quite well known.[18] Dragiša Vasić opened the congress with a speech,[19] which was followed by the election of a president (Topalović), six deputy presidents (Radomir Janković, an agricultural cooperative member from Boljevac in Serbia; Velimir Jojić, a former parliamentary deputy of the Democratic Party from Andrijevica in Montenegro; Anton Krejči, a former parliamentary deputy of the Yugoslav National Party from Maribor in Slovenia, who was the authorised representative of the leading prewar Slovene political parties; Dimitrije Lazarević, a member of the Main Committee of the Radical Party from Belgrade; Mustafa Mulalić; and Vladimir Predavec), secretaries,[20] and

[17] *Knjiga o Draži,* Volume II, p. 22; Petranović & Zečević (1987) Volume I, p. 824; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 324 (Footnote 19). Some Chetnik sources claim that over 300 delegates attended the Saint Sava Congress ("Svetosavki kongres u slobodnim jugoslovenskim planinama", undated, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 18; Tomasevich (1975) p. 399; *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 324 (Footnote 19)), but it would appear that this figure includes the members of the Hercegovinian delegation who arrived a few weeks later because of bad weather (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 324 (Footnote 19)).
[18] Dulić (2005) is not a little unfair in dismissing the congress delegates as "second-level intellectuals" (p. 294).
[19] Vesović & Nikolić (1996) p. 58.
[20] Zvonimir Begić, from Glina (Kordun); Ivo Kirbin, a former parliamentary deputy of the Democratic Party from Maribor (Slovenia); Vidak Kovačević, a lawyer from Hercegovina; and Velimir Krivošić, a journalist from Sarajevo (Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 1, Document 16).

a verification committee.[21] Speeches were delivered by Jojić, Krejči, Mihailović, Moljević, Mulalić, Predavec, and Topalović.[22] Although Mihailović's speech was short, he made a number of important statements, including a promise to "remain loyal to the constitutional and legal order of Yugoslavia",[23] and a declaration of his belief that it was the "exclusive right of a freely and democratically elected people's agency to organise the state according to the constitution."[24] As he had done numerous times before, he rejected the accusations of dictatorial aims and collective punishment:

> I deny, most energetically and with nausea, the tendentious accusations, irrespective of where they emerge, that the army and I have any dictatorial aspirations or designs.
>
> I deny, most energetically and with nausea, the malevolent accusations of collective punishment of anyone.
>
> The question of the treatment of war criminals has been determined at inter-Allied conferences whose decisions are binding upon us. In addition, our laws are sufficient guarantee for everyone that justice will be satisfied. Accordingly, the innocent can not suffer, since they will enjoy my personal protection as well as that of our army. Neither I nor the army will tolerate any self-willed actions during the transfer to peacetime.[25]

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[21] Vladimir Jovanović, Andra Poleti, and Rade Stojanović (Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 1, Document 16). Poleti had been active in the prewar Belgrade University democratic youth organisation (Tošić (2006) pp. 229-265).
[22] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 25-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59; Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 18.
[23] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 25-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59.
[24] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 25-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59.
[25] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 25-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59.

The succinct speech ended with "Long live the democratic Yugoslav people! Long live the Kingdom of Yugoslavia!"[26] Significantly, neither Serbs nor Serbia were mentioned.

Following the speeches, the resolution composed by Topalović was presented to the delegates, who accepted it unanimously. In an effort to demonstrate that the congress deputies represented the Yugoslav people, the resolutions began by listing the political and non-political organisations to which they belonged:

> Representatives of the Ravna Gora Movement, representatives and members of all democratic parties in Yugoslavia which in regular and irregular times received the trust of the vast majority of the people (except for the Croat Peasant Party, with whose legal representatives it was not possible to establish contact because of the occupier's violence), representatives of all the great peoples' non-political, cultural, sport, heroic, social, and other organisations, which similarly assemble the vast majority of people, particularly youth ...[27]

The fear that Mihailović would assume the role of dictator after the war was addressed by the second resolution which

> welcomes and emphasises the statement by the commander of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, General Mihailović, that he and his army respect the exclusive right of a freely and democratically

[26] The Opening, Decisions, and Final Resolution of the Saint Sava Congress, 25-28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 3, Folder 3, Document 59.
[27] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.

> elected people's agency to organise the state according to the constitution.[28]

There was a statement calling for the unity of Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes. The congress authorised an Organisational Committee to coordinate with the abovementioned groups to expand the Central National Committee. The most important resolution, however, was the fourth, which was related to the shape of the postwar South Slav country. Yugoslavia was to be renewed as a state, and its territory would be increased by the inclusion of regions inhabited by Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes beyond its prewar borders. It would be organised on a federal basis with a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy headed by the Karađorđević dynasty. A Serb unit within the federation, which would "assemble the entire Serbian people",[29] would be created, as would similar units for the Croats and Slovenes. Finally, the state would undergo radical economic and social reforms.

The Resolutions of the Saint Sava Congress (*Rezolucije Svetosavskog Kongresa*) are especially important to understanding the national policy of the Chetnik Movement because they were officially supported by Mihailović, unlike the numerous other programs produced earlier. As such, the national policy formulated at Ba became the official policy of the Chetnik Movement from January 1944 onwards. The conference and resolutions demonstrated perhaps the most serious and genuine attempt to adopt a constructive Yugoslav solution

[28] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.
[29] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.

to the national question by Mihailović and his movement. The congress leadership was in many ways representative of the Yugoslav peoples; it contained men who belonged to most of the largest prewar political parties, and could claim, not without a little justification, to embody the people's will as expressed through their freely elected parliamentary deputies. It was also nationally mixed, containing three Serbs, as well as a Croat, Montenegrin, Muslim, and Slovene; a representative from almost each of the South Slav nations whose homeland was Yugoslavia.[30] Similarly, the resolutions had much to commend them. Most importantly, they supported the creation of a federal Yugoslavia. There was a commitment to draw the federal units' borders in a "democratic manner".[31] The resolutions were vehement in their support of democracy, and the right of the people to decide their fate. It appeared that Mihailović and his movement had adopted a Yugoslav orientated approach to solving the national question.

Even so, both the congress and its resolutions were problematic for a number of reasons. The assembly was hardly democratic since its delegates were selected by the district Ravna Gora Committees[32] or invited by the High Command.[33] Nor were the resolutions debated or discussed by the attendees; instead, they were presented to the delegates who could either accept or reject them. It is questionable how nationally representative the conference was given

[30] See Appendix 7.
[31] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.
[32] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to all subordinate commanders, 1 January 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 42.
[33] List of Delegates at the Great Chetnik Congress held on 25, 26, 27 and 28 January 1944, undated, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15B, Folder 4, Document 28.

that the Croat Peasant Party did not participate, something almost incomprehensible given its importance in prewar Yugoslav politics and the great hopes placed in its influence over the Croatian nation by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership. Similarly, the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation was wholly unrepresented. Probably more importantly, the congress can not be viewed as representative of the numerous nations that lived in Yugoslavia, for whilst the congress leadership was multinational in character, the vast majority of deputies were Serbs.[34] Mulalić and the handful of Croats and Slovenes appear to have been little more than window dressing. The smaller nations – the Albanians, Germans, Hungarians, and Macedonians – were wholly unrepresented. This might not have mattered had the assembly produced a political platform that appealed to the majority of Yugoslavs, but it does not seem to have accomplished this. Regarding the resolutions related to the nature and shape of postwar Yugoslavia, their most obvious and greatest problem was the ambiguity of the borders of the proposed federal units. Unlike the AVNOJ resolutions, no specific regions were named. Instead, three national units would be created, each of which would unite all of the members of the three constituent nations (Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes). It was not explained how each unit could possibly encompass a single nation given that so many regions of Yugoslavia were nationally mixed; in fact, they were impossible to create without favouring one nation's claims over a certain territory or resorting to massive population movements. Although the resolutions declared

[34] Of the 265 names on an incomplete list of delegates who attended the congress, only seven were non-Serbs (Zvonimir Begić, Jakov Bunclih, Anton Krejči, Mustafa Mulalić, Franjo Parte, Vladimir Predavec, and Đuro Vilović) (List of Delegates at the Great Chetnik Congress held on 25, 26, 27 and 28 January 1944, undated, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15B, Folder 4, Document 28).

that the borders would be drawn in a "democratic manner",[35] it was not explained who would determine this and in which manner. Whilst this ambiguity was partly due to the enormous difficulties in delineating Yugoslavia on a national basis, one suspects that it was to a certain extent intentional as it would allow the borders to be drawn in the interests of the Serbian nation after the war, especially if the JVO proved victorious, which Mihailović and others hoped. Furthermore, the resolutions mentioned only three South Slav nations, thus failing to satisfy the national aspirations of the Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims who accounted for approximately fifteen per cent of the state's populace.[36] The numerous minorities, who constituted another fifteen per cent of the population,[37] were not even mentioned, leaving their fate in question. Nevertheless, Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership took the political platform outlined in the Saint Sava Congress Resolutions, with their promise of a new and better federal Yugoslavia, to the Yugoslav people.

## Building a New Yugoslavia

Partly because of its vagueness, it was necessary to elaborate upon the resolutions of the Ba Congress. Two weeks after the assembly, Mihailović, Moljević, and Vasić penned a letter to the Central National Committee in which they expressed their belief that the Muslims were Serbs, and that all of them

[35] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.
[36] See Appendix 7.
[37] See Appendix 7.

would reside within the Serb federal unit after the war.[38] An article in *Pomoravlje*, the official newspaper of the Great Morava Group of Corps,[39] from June "outline[d] … the Croatian ethnic territory which will comprise the Croatian people's unit in our future federal and democratic Kingdom of Yugoslavia."[40] This unit was to be created on the basis of a simple principle, that "the Croatian ethnic entirety encompasses all those regions upon which Croats live."[41] To "properly determine"[42] the borders it was "necessary … to examine history as the most certain guide".[43] The article was primarily a historical analysis of the Croatian people's struggle for an independent state in which the regions inhabited by Croats in the early Middle Ages were mentioned: Coastal Croatia (Dalmatia and Istria) and Pannonian Croatia (from the Danube and Drava rivers to the Neretva River). The article concluded by arguing that the Croatian nation had fought a long and arduous battle to "maintain its abovementioned ethnic entirety".[44] If these regions were indeed to become part of the postwar Croat unit, then it would not have been too dissimilar to the republic created by the Partisans in 1945, except for the addition of western Hercegovina.

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[38] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović, Stevan Moljević, and Dragiša Vasić for the Central National Committee, 12 February 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 49.
[39] Matić (1995) p. 94. During the spring of 1944, in response to the threat of a Partisan invasion of Serbia, Mihailović ordered the creation of a number of large operational formations by amalgamating two or more corps, called Groups of Corps (*Grupe Korpusa*) (Karchmar (1973) pp. 552-553).
[40] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 192.
[41] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 192.
[42] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 192.
[43] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 192.
[44] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 195.

Although not mentioned at Ba, the Chetniks foresaw population movements as an integral part of their solution to the national question. The national composition of the three national units was to be homogenised, as explained in article in another Chetnik newspaper, *Za Otadžbinu*,[45] in which the author argued that the creation of "compact ethnic entities"[46] could be achieved through the "principle of population exchanges … [which] … will provide a just resolution"[47] to the question of a common existence for Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes. A number of secret proposals for dealing with the numerous national minorities[48] that advocated assimilation and expulsion were produced during the summer and forwarded to Mihailović.[49] One, which advocated expelling the Albanians, Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians,[50] appears to have been approved by Mihailović since he ordered the "collection of information about the amount of land possessed by the minority groups"[51] after having read the document. A propaganda brochure from May, titled *The Aims of the Ravna Gora Movement*,[52] explained that the expulsion of minorities who had "sinned against Yugoslavia"[53] was a key component of the Chetnik Movement's national policy.

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[45] *Za Otadžbinu* was the official newspaper of the Command of East Serbia (Matić (1995) p. 94).
[46] "Federativna demokratska Jugoslavija: Ujedinjeno srpstvo", *Za Otadžbinu,* Issue 1, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 210.
[47] "Federativna demokratska Jugoslavija: Ujedinjeno srpstvo", *Za Otadžbinu,* Issue 1, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) p. 210.
[48] See Appendix 7.
[49] Milenko Filipović, *Misli o Manjinskim Problemima Uopšte,* 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 41; Milenko Filipović, *Savremeni Etno-Politički Problemi kod Srba,* 23 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 8.
[50] Milenko Filipović, *Savremeni Etno-Politički Problemi kod Srba,* 23 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 8.
[51] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for the Committee of Experts, 29 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 2.
[52] *Ciljevi Ravnogorskog Pokreta,* 6 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 4, Folder 3, Document 17.
[53] *Ciljevi Ravnogorskog Pokreta,* 6 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 4, Folder 3, Document 17.

## Convincing the Croats

Politically, it was seen as more important than ever to establish contact with Vladko Maček and the leadership of the Croat Peasant Party, and get them to throw their support behind the Yugoslav People's Democratic Union.[54] Mihailović's intelligence officer for Croatia, who went by the *nom de guerre* of Spira,[55] sent a steady stream of reports throughout the summer describing the situation there, and the results of the numerous attempts to come to an agreement with Maček and the Croat Peasant Party leadership.[56] Spira reported that since Maček's internment, August Košutić was the real head of the party, and that although only half of the party membership had remained loyal to Maček and the ideals of the party, it led the Croatian "people with greater authority than earlier".[57] The intermediary between the Croat Peasant Party and JVO was a somewhat mysterious figure named Danilo Bjelanić, who had spoken with Košutić and a number of other former parliamentary deputies of the party in early April.[58] They expressed their pleasure with Mihailović's statements regarding his commitment to democracy and rejection of collective punishment, but would not commit themselves to a formal agreement, which led Spira to

[54] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović, Dragiša Vasić, and Stevan Moljević for the Central National Committee, 12 February 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 48.
[55] It was not possible to ascertain Spira's identity.
[56] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 11 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 24; Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 17 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 48.
[57] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 11 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 24.
[58] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 11 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 24.

conclude: "We have the impression that the Croat Peasant Party's policy is one of waiting."[59]

On 17 June, Spira composed another report for the High Command in which he related the results of a subsequent talk between Bjelanić and Košutić.[60] Bjelanić proposed that the Croat Peasant Party seize power in Croatia at the time of the German-Ustaša collapse, but Košutić was understandably hesitant about speaking with a man who he did not know, and who did not possess any proof that he was one of Mihailović's emissaries. The report ended with a request that Bjelanić be allowed to visit the High Command where he would outline the situation in Croatia, and that he be given an authorisation to conduct discussions with the Croat Peasant Party on behalf of the Chetnik Movement. Spira had nothing but praise for Bjelanić, describing him as a "sincere true patriot ... [and] ... promoter of the normalisation of relations between Serbs and Croats"[61] who would be ideal as Mihailović's military and political representative for Croatia.[62] Bjelanić did indeed visit the High Command where he was given a written authorisation by Mihailović on 28 June to "implement the military and political organisation on the territory of Croatia, and to begin actions with the aim of strengthening and unifying the struggle of the Croats and Serbs against the

[59] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 11 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 24.
[60] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 17 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 48.
[61] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 17 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 2, Document 48.
[62] Report by Spira for the JVO High Command, 17 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 16, Folder 1, Document 23.

common enemy".[63] In addition to this authorisation, he was given another one which permitted him to accept *Domobrani* officers and soldiers who had abandoned the NDH armed forces and to create JVO units composed of them.[64]

The success of Mihailović's efforts to expand and strengthen his organisation in Croatia and Slavonia was highly dependent on the men given this task. In Slavonia, for example, little was accomplished[65] because the head of the Command of Slavonia, Colonel Aleksandar Nikolić, and most of his staff idled away their time in the comfort of Belgrade.[66] It was only in May that Mihailović ordered him to go to Slavonia.[67] Mihailović had greater success with his chief of the Command of the Northern Provinces (*Komanda Severnih Pokrajina*), General Svetomir Đukić, who reported in February that he had established contact with Maček and was in possession of a letter written by him containing preliminary points for discussions with Mihailović and the JVO.[68] The Saint Sava Congress had allayed some of Maček's fears of a postwar dictatorship and punishment of the Croatian nation.[69] Maček had requested that Mihailović appoint a Croat general named August Marić the commander of the

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[63] Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Danilo Bjelanić, 28 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 1, Document 2.
[64] Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Danilo Bjelanić, 28 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 1, Document 2.
[65] By 13 May, the armed forces of the Command of Slavonia comprised thirteen officers, eleven non-commissioned officers, and 90 soldiers (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)).
[66] Telegram (Number 2,983) from Major Vladimir Komarčević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 27 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 431.
[67] Telegram (Number 706) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Colonel Aleksandar Nikolić, 7 May 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 638.
[68] Telegrams (Number 2,745) from General Svetomir Đukić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 22 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 427.
[69] Telegrams (Number 2,745) from General Svetomir Đukić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 22 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 427.

*Domobrani*.[70] Some time in the spring, General Matija Parac, a Croat officer who had joined the NDH armed forces at the beginning of the war before withdrawing to Belgrade,[71] decided to join the JVO,[72] making him the highest ranking Croat officer in Mihailović's army.

Propaganda continued to be directed at the Croats. In February, the High Command produced a leaflet that rejected rumours that the JVO was planning a "terrible vengeance"[73] against the Croatian nation, and emphasised that only the guilty would be punished according to Yugoslav law.[74] In June, Parac issued an appeal to the *Domobrani* to join the JVO and assured them that Mihailović's army did not engage in nor plan for "revenge or collective retaliation".[75] Parac's proclamation cited Mihailović's speech at the Ba Congress, something that was commonly employed in Chetnik propaganda; a booklet published some time in 1944, titled *Ravna Gora: The Resurrection of a New Yugoslavia*, contained the speech as well as the Resolutions of the Saint Sava Congress, and chapters on the postwar shape of Yugoslavia and the question of the punishment of war criminals.[76] In November, Mihailović's entire speech was distributed in the form

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[70] Telegrams (Number 2,746) from General Svetomir Đukić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 22 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 427.
[71] Pavlowitch (2008) p. 238.
[72] Proclamation by General Matija Parac for the *Domobrani,* June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 7, Document 18.
[73] "Hrvatskom narodu", 21 February 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 19-20.
[74] "Hrvatskom narodu", 21 February 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 19-20.
[75] Proclamation by General Matija Parac for the *Domobrani,* June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 7, Document 18.
[76] *Ravna Gora: Uskrsnuće Nove Jugoslavije,* undated (probably from 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 225, Folder 3, Document 25.

of a propaganda flyer bearing the signature of another Croat general who had joined the JVO, Brigade General Dragutin Kuzmić.[77]

Mihailović's two-pronged effort to gain the support of the Croats, especially the *Domobrani,* through calls upon them to join the JVO and attempts to cooperate with the Croat Peasant Party suffered from two fatal flaws which he does not seem to have grasped. The approaches to Maček and his party were based on the assumption that they still commanded the respect of, and had influence over, the majority of Croats as they had before the war, an assumption that was questionable given the great changes wrought by the war, the radicalisation of the Croatian masses, the fracturing of the party, and Maček's almost total political paralysis throughout the conflict. Josip Cvijetić, a Croat member of the Central National Committee, warned at its second plenary session in late June when the subject of cooperation with the Croat Peasant Party was discussed that both Maček and his party no longer possessed the political clout they had in 1939,[78] but it seems that nobody in the Chetnik leadership heeded this warning. Similarly, Mihailović's attempts to mobilise the *Domobrani* and other Croats were crucially hampered by his failure to create the necessary military framework, especially in Croatia and Slavonia, to accept these men; JVO units in these parts were miniscule,[79] insufficient numbers of officers were

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[77] "Izjava Draže Mihajlovića", November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 158, Folder 1, Document 40.
[78] Excerpts from the Second Plenary Session of the Central National Committee, 28-30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 13.
[79] In the middle of May, the entire composition of the armed forces of the Command of Slavonia was a mere thirteen officers, eleven non-commissioned officers, and 90 soldiers (*Zbornik* Volume

apportioned to them, and those who were given the task proved themselves to be cowardly, incompetent, and lazy.

## Mobilising the Muslims

In April, Mihailović produced an important document in which were outlined the principles of his Muslim policy, along with detailed instructions for a number of Muslim figures in Sarajevo who were charged with implementing this policy.[80] Mihailović stated that his aims were to "realise the sincerest rapprochement of Serbs and Muslims … [and] … remove all hurdles to a harmonious and happy life in our new reborn state – the democratic and federal Kingdom of Yugoslavia".[81] He then went on to name forty Sarajevo Muslims, mostly bureaucrats, politicians, and religious leaders, who he hoped would implement the policy. The instructions began by recognising the Muslims as indigenous inhabitants of Yugoslavia with the right to an individual identity:

> (1) The Muslims are our natives, our blood, and our language. They possess the sacred and inviolable right to life and to development in their patrimony.
> (2) We do not seek to force any national characteristics upon the Muslims as long as they indentify themselves with a foreign faith. We wish for them to be guaranteed a peaceful and tranquil life in full Islamic individuality, in the manner that satisfies them, and according to their assessment of the ideal conditions for the maintenance of their faith and the raising of their moral, cultural, social, and material situation.

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14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)). Furthermore, it would appear that these men were not in Slavonia, but in Serbia.

[80] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 21-29.

[81] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 21.

(3) We wish to help the Muslims to create a healthy civic consciousness, to love their country, and to invest their spiritual and physical strength, in brotherly recipricocity with the Orthodox, in to the interests of their state.[82]

In postwar Yugoslavia Muslims would have full freedom of worship and Islam would be a recognised faith. It was suggested that the Muslims would find themselves in the Serb federal unit after the war, where they would have full religious autonomy. The state would provide the Islamic religious community with funding based on the number of believers in a given district and would support the establishment of Sarajevo as a great Islamic centre for the whole of Europe, while cooperation with other Islamic communities throughout the world would be encouraged. Religion would be a part of the state school curriculum, and religious schools would be autonomous. Muslims would enjoy all the improvements that would result from the postwar reforms and would be guaranteed all civic and legal rights, as well as the opportunity to participate in all state organs.[83]

Mihailović also provided instructions on how the Muslims were to be organised to participate in the struggle for the liberation of Yugoslavia.[84] Politically, it was necessary to create a Muslim People's Committee (*Muslimanski Narodni Komitet*) to unite all Muslims, with its headquarters in Sarajevo and with regional centres in Banja Luka, Belgrade, Kosovska Mitrovica, Mostar, Novi

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[82] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 22.
[83] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 22.
[84] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 24-29.

Pazar, and Tuzla. This committee would be part of the Central National Committee and would appoint one member from Sarajevo and each regional centre to represent the Muslims in the Central National Committee. One of its tasks would be to formulate ideas about the future state.[85] In May, Mulalić urged his Muslim associates to work harder and faster on the establishment of Muslim political organisations and military units.[86] By July, at least one of Mihailović's recommendations had been implemented; seven Muslim representatives were in the Central National Committee.[87] Although Mihailović did not grant Muslims the status of a separate nation, such as enjoyed by the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes – quite probably fearing that this would be the first step in granting them their own federal unit – he nonetheless recognised them as a separate group and, perhaps most importantly, declared that a national identity would not be forced upon them. Whereas previously Muslims had been declared part of the Serbian nation by Chetnik ideologues as a key justification for the inclusion of Muslim inhabited regions in to postwar Serbia, Mihailović had adopted the position that they were not necessarily Serbs of the Islamic faith. This change of opinion, however, does not seem to have altered his commitment to include the Muslims in the Serb federal unit.

Mihailović also took concrete steps to ensure that his new policy was implemented on the ground. He sent out special delegates to nationally mixed

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[85] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 25.
[86] Telegrams (Numbers 625-626) from Mustafa Mulalić to Mehmed Alija Tarabar, 2 May 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 632.
[87] There was one representative from Bosanska Krajina, two from Bosnia, one from Hercegovina, one from the Sandžak, and two from South Serbia (Tucaković (1995) p. 160).

regions whose task it was to improve the situation between Muslims and Serbs. One of his emissaries in the Sandžak, named Luburić, reported on the murder of four Muslims in the Sjenica District.[88] Mihailović ordered Captain Radomir Cvetić, the commander of the Javor Corps, to investigate the incident, locate the guilty, and punish them.[89] Cvetić was also to organise the return of the bodies of the victims to their families.[90] In April, the Advance Section of the High Command forbade all attacks on Croats and Muslims in Chetnik propaganda.[91] Similarly, in June Major Petar Baćović ordered JVO corps commanders in the Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina to form Ravna Gora National Committees in Muslim communities under the leadership of respected local Muslim figures, and to forge stronger links with the Muslims of eastern Bosnia.[92]

By the summer, a fair number of Muslims were involved in the political wing of the Chetnik Movement, centred on the Central National Committee. The committee had seven Muslim delegates from Bosanska Krajina, Bosnia, Hercegovina, the Sandžak, and South Serbia by July.[93] The important function of intelligence officer of the Executive Committee of the Central National

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[88] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Captain Radomir Cvetić, 9 August 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 39.
[89] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Captain Radomir Cvetić, 9 August 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 39.
[90] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Captain Radomir Cvetić, 9 August 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 39.
[91] Order by Second Lieutenant Gojko Borota (assistant commander of the Romanija Corps) for brigade commanders, 21 April 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 224, Folder 1, Document 1.
[92] Order by Major Petar Baćović for subordinate commanders, 4 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 223, Folder 10, Document 1.
[93] Bosanska Krajina (1), Bosnia (2), Hercegovina (1), the Sandžak (1), and South Serbia (2) (Tucaković (1995) p. 160).

Committee was fulfilled by Lieutenant Osman Topić, a teacher from Bihać,[94] and one of the committee's couriers was Muharem Zaimović.[95] The most important Muslim figure in the Chetnik Movement, Mulalić, continued in his efforts to convince Muslim public figures that Mihailović and his movement would protect Muslim interests; in May, he explained to one of his associates in Zenica, Mehmed Alija Tarabar: "Regarding Islamic issues, do not be concerned as they are under the protection of the greatest son of the Serbian people, General Draža Mihailović. He sends his brotherly greetings, and through you greets all honest Muslims."[96] Some time in the summer, the High Command began to publish *Istok*, its official bulletin for the Muslims.[97] In an article in the fourth issue titled "The Muslims and the Balkan Union", Moljević wrote that the postwar Balkan Union would encompass five Balkan states – Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia – all of which had Muslim populations of varying sizes, and that such a union could not be considered without the Muslims.[98]

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[94] Travel pass for Lieutenant Osman Topić, 14 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 31.
[95] Travel pass for Muharem Zaimović, 30 August 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 2, Document 16.
[96] Telegrams (Numbers 625-626) from Mustafa Mulalić to Mehmed Alija Tarabar, 2 May 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 632. Tarabar had protected Serbs from Zenica during the Ustaša persecutions of 1941 (Statement by Ljubo Kalinić, 6 March 1943, in Dedijer & Miletić (1989) p. 299).
[97] Matić (1995) pp. 80-81.
[98] Stevan Moljević, "Muslimani i balkanska unija", *Istok,* Issue 10, 5 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 16. This was actually the fourth issue (Matić (1995) p. 80).

## Defeats Abroad and at Home

On 25 May, Mihailović was delivered a serious blow when King Peter, under British pressure, dismissed the government of Božidar Purić[99] which had succeeded the short-lived government of Miloš Trifunović (26 June 1943 – 10 August 1943). The British wanted the Yugoslavs to break with Mihailović and support Tito. Since no Serb politician could be found willing to form government without Mihailović,[100] the king agreed to support the British candidate, Ivan Šubašić,[101] a Croat and the former ban of the Croat *Banovina*, who was sworn in on 1 June as a one-man government.

Mihailović's supporters abroad, however, had informed him earlier about the possibility of the formation of a government hostile towards him. On 4 April, Purić sent a telegram warning that the British intended to oust him and install a government that would come to an agreement with Tito:

> The king and I strongly oppose this. Do not believe what you hear over the radio. I am saying all of this because there is a possibility that our communications may be interrupted. In case of any combination without you as Minister of the Army, the king and I think that you should continue in the country as the only free member of the government with the slogan: "The king is captive, long live the king".[102]

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[99] Karchmar (1973) p. 673.
[100] Karchmar (1973) pp. 673-674.
[101] It seems that the British had been pushing for Šubašić's appointment for quite some time since Churchill had apparently informed Tito as early as 9 May that Šubašić would become head of government (Tomasevich (1975) p. 310).
[102] Telegram from Božidar Purić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 April 1944, in Đonović (1959) p. 24.

This new development troubled Mihailović and the Central National Committee sufficiently for it to hold a plenary session on 30 June where it passed the Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union (*Statut Jugoslovenske Demokratske Narodne Zajednice*).[103] The statute established the organs of the political body that had been established almost half a year earlier at the Saint Sava Congress: the People's Congress, the Central National Committee, and committees at various administrative levels (County, District, Municipality, and Village).[104] It was envisioned that the People's Congress (*Narodni Kongres*) would be akin to a national assembly since it would contain representatives from each district, five representatives each from Belgrade, Ljubljana, and Zagreb, seven members from each County Committee, and the entire Central National Committee; its aim was to "represent the entire country".[105] Furthermore, it had the "right to pass necessary measures with the aim of temporarily organising all relations within the country, inasmuch as it is possible and according to needs, especially in the intervening period to the sitting of the future national assembly."[106] Given the difficulties in actually convening such an assembly under wartime conditions, the Central National Committee strengthened its role as the "people's leadership"[107] by creating five committees not unlike ministries devoted to (1) political-

[103] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.
[104] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.
[105] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.
[106] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.
[107] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.

constitutional affairs, (2) legislative and judicial affairs, (3) economic-financial affairs, (4) social and health affairs, and (5) propaganda.[108]

The same day that the Central National Committee passed this statute, Mihailović created an advisory body called the Committee of Experts (*Odbor Stručnjaka*).[109] This "auxiliary professional organ of the High Command and Central National Committee … [was charged with] … undertaking examinations, giving opinions, and producing necessary plans and proposals on all non-military matters."[110] The Committee of Experts was composed of six committees: (1) foreign affairs, (2) legislative affairs, (3) economic and fiscal affairs, (4) nationality questions and propaganda, (5) social affairs, and (6) economic reconstruction.[111] It is not clear why Mihailović created this new advisory body, especially given that the Central National Committee had formed a similar body the same day. These moves, undoubtedly a result of the formation of the Šubašić government, were the first serious steps taken by the Chetnik Movement towards the creation of an alternative government in the homeland.

A number of momentous events in the late summer and early autumn, however, made it necessary to postpone and eventually abandon the implementation of these plans: the Partisans launched their invasion of Serbia

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[108] Statute of the Yugoslav Democratic People's Union, 30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 14.
[109] Tomasevich (1975) p. 405.
[110] Statute of the Committee of Experts, undated (30 June 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 7, Folder 2, Document 28.
[111] Statute of the Committee of Experts, undated (30 June 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 7, Folder 2, Document 28.

and rapidly demonstrated their military superiority over the JVO;[112] on 12 September, King Peter called upon all Yugoslavs to rally to Tito's banner;[113] and the Red Army overran eastern Serbia. Partly because of the Partisan-Soviet conquest of Serbia,[114] and partly because of the arrival of an American mission in late August[115] which convinced Mihailović that an Allied landing in Dalmatia was imminent, he decided to abandon Serbia and move west.[116] In late September, he crossed the Drina River in to Bosnia, accompanied by the High Command, Central National Committee, a number of JVO corps, and the American mission.

## Mihailović in Exile

When Mihailović and his entourage arrived in the region of Semberija in northeastern Bosnia, a land of fertile plains and rolling hills whose population was predominantly Muslim and Serbian, they were welcomed by the local commander, Captain Steven Damjanović of the Majevica Corps.[117] The General set about repairing the damage inflicted upon him and his movement, and adjusting to the new situation he found himself in. Since Mihailović placed great importance in the trappings of legitimacy granted him by the monarchy and government-in-exile, Chetnik propaganda declared the king's speech a falsification[118] in order to ameliorate the harm it had done. Mihailović continued

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[112] Karchmar (1973) p. 819; Milazzo (1975) pp. 175-177; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 415-417.
[113] *Knjiga o Draži,* Volume II, pp. 118-119.
[114] Milazzo (1975) p. 175.
[115] Karchmar (1973) p. 818; Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 242.
[116] Karchmar (1973) p. 819; Milazzo (1975) p. 177.
[117] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 September 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 3, Document 29.
[118] "Braćo domobrani!", undated (probably from the middle of September 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 1, Document 34; "Poruka đenerala Mihailovića povodom govora

to sign documents with his former titles, Minster of the Army, Navy, and Airforce, and Chief of Staff of the High Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, and those surrounding him continued to refer to him as such. In an effort to raise morale, propaganda leaflets were distributed announcing that Allied support to the Partisans had ceased, and that the Americans would soon arrive in Yugoslavia to ensure free elections.[119]

Mihailović also set about strengthening the relationship between his army and the Muslims of northeastern Bosnia.[120] On 29 September, he issued an order in the form of a propaganda leaflet that lauded the "great reconciliation of the Serbian and Muslim populace"[121] in the region, and congratulated the Muslims and Serbs on their "great national consciousness, discipline, and obedience."[122] A former parliamentarian from Bijeljina, Muhamed Preljubović, was accepted in to the Central National Committee,[123] and accompanied Mihailović on his numerous tours throughout the area.[124] Mulalić contacted a powerful independent Muslim leader in the Gračanica region, Ibrahim Pjanić, and told him that Mihailović "desires only a sincere brotherly agreement with us Muslims … and the resolution

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kralja Petra drugog od 12 septembra 1944 godine", *Nebojša,* Issue 9, 17 September 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 253.

[119] Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 16, Folder 2, Document 15.

[120] See *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, p. 345. The other JVO corps in the region, the Trebava Corps, led by the Orthodox priest Savo Božić was also on very good terms with the local Muslim populace, which was rewarded by the presence of a fair number of Muslims in the corps. (Đokić (1966)).

[121] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 September 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 3, Document 29.

[122] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 September 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 3, Document 29.

[123] The Interrogation of Aleksandar Aksentijević, undated (probably from 1945), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15B, Folder 3, Document 1, pp. 97-100.

[124] Telegram (Number 341) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Stevan Damjanović, 18 January 1945, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 286.

of all our political, social, cultural, and economic problems".[125] At the end of November, Mulalić held talks with another independent Muslim leader named Islamović in an attempt to convince him to join the JVO.[126]

Mihailović toured a number of Muslim communities in the Kladanj and Vlasenica Districts in November where he gave speeches and conferred with the Muslim leadership.[127] The day before the important Islamic religious festival of Kurban Bajram,[128] Mihailović sent the following congratulatory telegram to all Yugoslav Muslims:

> On the morning of the victory of the ideal of freedom, Muslim brothers welcome their great holiday of Kurban Bajram. Congratulating them on these great days of brotherly love and understanding, I sincerely wish that they [celebrate the] following [Kurban Bajram] in a liberated, democratic, and federal Yugoslavia.[129]

Mihailović attended prayers in a mosque on the first day of the festival, after which he gave a speech to the assembled worshippers, telling them that the "JVO is defending and fighting for the resolutions of the Saint Sava Congress".[130]

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[125] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Ibrahim Pjanić, undated (probably from October 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 1, Document 36.
[126] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Mato Matičević, 29 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 7, Document 39. Islamović's identity could not be ascertained.
[127] Vojin Andrić's diary, 14 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 7, Document 36, pp. 1-2.
[128] Known as *Eid al-Adha* in Arabic, it falls on the tenth day of the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar.
[129] Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to the Muslims of Yugoslavia, 25 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 2, Document 1, p. 53.
[130] "Đeneral Mihailović govori u džamiji", undated (probably from late November 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 2, Document 1, p. 53.

Mulalić also gave a speech.[131] During the three days of the festival, Mihailović and his entourage visited a number of Muslim communities where he gave speeches and conferred with Muslim leaders.[132] When the JVO captured Gradačac in late January, he gave a speech in the town hotel to local residents in which he spoke about the problems of the old Yugoslavia and the need to remedy them.[133] Mihailović declared:

> Yugoslavia existed. She will exist once again, but without any links to the past. The well-known and dark Croatian question will no longer be an issue. With the creation of the future federal democratic Yugoslavia this question will no longer be relevant. The Serb federal unit will solve its own internal problems. The Croat federal unit will solve its own internal problems. The Slovene federal unit will solve its own internal problems … The Muslims must have the same rights as the Orthodox; it is only necessary that both sides are sincere …[134]

Mihailović expressed his belief that the Muslims between Bileća and Gevgelija would "gravitate towards Serbia",[135] and in the necessity of holding a fair election after the war under Allied supervision to determine the final shape of Yugoslavia.[136]

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[131] "Đeneral Mihailović govori u džamiji", undated (probably from late November 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 2, Document 1, p. 53.
[132] "Đeneral Mihailović govori u džamiji", undated (probably from late November 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 2, Document 1, p. 53.
[133] Speech by Army General Draža Mihailović in Gradačac, 29 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 15.
[134] Speech by Army General Draža Mihailović in Gradačac, 29 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 15.
[135] Speech by Army General Draža Mihailović in Gradačac, 29 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 15.
[136] Speech by Army General Draža Mihailović in Gradačac, 29 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 15.

Similarly, Mihailović continued in his efforts with the Croats. Some time in the autumn, a second Croat general, Dragutin Kuzmić, joined the JVO and was named Commander of the Croat *Odredi* of the JVO.[137] Always a stickler for legality and a firm believer in the power of legitimacy, Mihailović signed an order abolishing the NDH armed forces and ordering its officers to exclusively obey instructions emanating from the JVO High Command.[138] It seems that Mihailović's efforts to attract the *Domobrani* were bearing fruit: Lieutenant Mato Matičević, an officer in the Vareš region, had conferred with Mihailović and gone over to the JVO with his unit.[139] Another Croat officer, Second Lieutenant Ivan Mudrić, commanded another Croat JVO unit.[140] Propaganda was produced for the *Domobrani* rejecting the authenticity of the king's speech and advising them not to join the Partisans, but rather to cooperate with the JVO.[141] In November, Mihailović's entire speech at the assembly in Ba was distributed in the form of a propaganda flyer and signed by Kuzmić.[142] Kuzmić congratulated those *Domobrani* who had joined the JVO in a leaflet from the end of November.[143] Numerous propaganda leaflets printed in November and December called upon *Domobrani* and Croats more generally to join Mihailović's army and emphasised

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[137] Proclamation by General Dragutin Kuzmić, 25 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 6, p. 32.
[138] Order on the abolition of the Croat *Domobrani,* Navy, and Airforce, undated (probably from late 1944 or early 1945), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 8, Document 13.
[139] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Lieutenant Mato Matičević, 29 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 18, Folder 7, Document 39.
[140] Proclamation by General Dragutin Kuzmić, 25 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 6, p. 32.
[141] "Braćo Domobrani", undated (probably from autumn 1944), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 1, Document 34.
[142] "Izjava Draže Mihajlovića", November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 158, Folder 1, Document 40.
[143] Proclamation by General Dragutin Kuzmić, 25 November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 17, Folder 1, Document 6, p. 32.

that there would be no postwar collective punishment.[144] On Christmas Day, Mihailović sent his greetings to his Croat officers and soldiers.[145]

These efforts culminated in an order proclaimed on Unification Day (1 December) grandly titled the Order of the Creation of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland.[146] The JVO was reorganised in to three armies – a Croat, Serb, and Slovene – and a Muslim Group of Corps, all of which would be under the direct command of Mihailović and the High Command. The national armies would have their traditional national flags with the Yugoslav tricolour in the top right-hand corner, whilst the Group of Muslims Corps' flag would be green with a crescent and star, as well as the Yugoslav tricolour as on the other flags. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Mihailović ordered the immediate disbanding of all Chetnik units and removal of Chetnik insignia.[147] This order was reproduced as a propaganda leaflet.[148] Having thus rearranged his army, it was necessary to fill it with men. Kuzmić had already been named the commander of the Croatian Army, and in late January, Preljubović was named commander of the Group of Muslims Corps,[149] which numbered at least four corps at that time.[150]

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[144] "Domobrani", November 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 3, Document 7; "Poštenim hrvatima", 11 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 158, Folder 1, Document 45; "Braćo hrvati", 31 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 4, Document 2; "Vratite se", December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 3, Document 24.
[145] "Božićna čestitka", 25 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 30.
[146] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 4, Document 4.
[147] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 4, Document 4.
[148] Order Number 100 by Army General Draža Mihailović, 1 December 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 5, Folder 4, Document 5.
[149] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 6, Folder 1, Document 26. For its protection, Preljubović's family was sent to the territory of

Concurrent with the reorganisation of the JVO were continued efforts to improve the discipline of its units, particularly those in northeastern Bosnia, a task made all the more difficult by the weather and the lack of accommodation and food. Nonetheless, Mihailović gave clear orders. On 16 January, he ordered Lieutenant Colonel Dragutin Keserović, the commander of the Rasina-Toplica Group of Corps, to execute looters in Muslim villagers near Modriča.[151] On 11 February, the following order was issued to all commanders:

> (1) Units are forbidden from requisitioning in Muslim, Catholic, and Orthodox villages. This is the responsibility of the quartermaster's organs. In the event that no other manner is available to find food, requisitioning can occur, but only through local authorities, that is, local Ravna Gora Committees. In the event that these do not exist, they are to be formed.
> (2) Whilst bivouacking in Muslim communities be especially mindful of Muslim sensitivities regarding their homes. It is preferable to utilise public buildings such as schools, taverns, etc. Homes are only to be used in agreement with local authorities, and sufficient room must be made available for family members.
> (2) Each and every one of our soldiers and officers is to be a propagator of religious freedom and religious tolerance ...
> (3) Let it be clear to all officers and soldiers that I will never turn from this policy ... and that I will take the sternest measures against all those who sin against this truth.[152]

Mihailović had clearly declared that his tolerant and cooperative policy was not merely a temporary ploy to deceive the Croats and Muslims, but was his

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the First Ravna Corps in central Serbia (Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Aleksandar Aksentijević, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15B, Folder 3, Document 1, p. 42).
[150] Telegram (Number 341) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Stevan Damjanović, 18 January 1945, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 286.
[151] Order by Army General Draža Mihailović for Lieutenant-Colonel Dragutin Keserović, 16 January 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 6, Folder 1, Document 15.
[152] Order Number 244 by Army General Draža Mihailović, 11 February 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 19.

permanent policy, and that he expected his subordinates to sincerely implement this policy as well. A general order by Mihailović from February illustrated his thinking as well as his realisation of the needs of the time. On 11 February 1945, he sent the following telegram to the Central National Committee, Propaganda Section of the High Command, all military units, and delegates:

> The state policy that we are leading is aimed at uniting the masses irrespective of their religion in the struggle against communist tyranny. All our citizens have equal rights and all enjoy the protection of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland ... All must know that the united strength of the people, irrespective of religion, is the surest guarantee of our victory ... I draw your attention to this for the last time.[153]

Mihailović had finally realised the necessity of treating all Yugoslavs equally and uniting them if his struggle against the Partisans was to be victorious.

It was, of course, too late and Mihailović's efforts came to nothing. The Americans did not come to his rescue, and there was no massive influx of Croat and Muslim recruits in to his army. In fact, his army fell apart as he was abandoned by many of his commanders, including a fair number of those he had counted amongst his closest associates and confidantes.[154] In the spring, he led the remnants of his army – by now little more than a ragtag assemblage of typhus-ridden walking skeletons – in a final attempt to return to the heartland of

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[153] Order Number 244 by Army General Draža Mihailović, 11 February 1945, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 15, Folder 2, Document 19.
[154] Milazzo (1975) pp. 179-191; Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 332-338; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 446-447.

Serbia and lead a new uprising against the communists.[155] Instead, he led it to its demise in the rocky crags of Mount Zelen Gora and the cold waters of the Sutjeska River in southeastern Bosnia in May 1945.[156] With a handful of trusted men, he adopted the life of a fugitive, hiding in the mountains of eastern Bosnia where he managed to avoid capture by the Yugoslav army and secret police for almost a year, before being betrayed by one of his most trusted commanders in March 1946.[157] Brought to Belgrade, he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death.[158] The location of his execution and body remain a mystery to this day.

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[155] Tomasevich (1975) pp. 449-450, 453-455.
[156] Milošević (1956) pp. 207-244; Milovanović (1984) Volume II, pp. 357-361; Samardžić (1997) pp. 230-231; Tomasevich (1975) pp. 455-456.
[157] Krstić (1988); Nikolić & Dimitrijević (2009); Popović (1971).
[158] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom; The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović.*

Chapter VII

# Conclusions

The national question was the most important issue faced by the interwar South Slav state, and its significance did not diminish during the Second World War following Yugoslavia's dismemberment. Despite the many pressing military challenges and demands raised by the armed conflict, the national question lurked in the background, creating discord and instability for the wartime actors, all of whom were faced with the challenge of attempting to solve this seemingly unsolvable puzzle. Formulating a policy to address the national question was undoubtedly the most important political task faced by Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement. A national policy would guide behaviour during the war, and serve as the blueprint for the organisation of the postwar state. As such, it was nothing less than what the Chetnik Movement was fighting for.

Yet Mihailović, at least initially, does not seem to have grasped the necessity of producing a national policy. Originally, his aims were primarily of a

military nature: the continuation of armed opposition to the invader, the creation of a nationwide resistance organisation, the liberation of Yugoslavia and the maintenance of order in the period immediately following, the return of the king, and the punishment of those deemed responsible for the April defeat.[1] Even so, within a short space of time Mihailović realised that his fledgling organisation required political goals and this meant formulating a national policy. Mihailović had committed himself from the very beginning to the reestablishment of Yugoslavia, and this inevitably raised the question of its state arrangement and the position of the numerous peoples who lived within its borders.

Nevertheless, it was not until the Saint Sava Congress in January 1944 that the Chetnik Movement produced a definitive national policy. Before this date, even though Mihailović and some of the leading figures in the movement had canvassed the national question in numerous articles in the Chetnik press, letters, programmatic documents, propaganda leaflets, and telegrams, and at conferences and meetings, and even though a number of pronouncements had been made on the issue, no comprehensive political program had been composed and adopted as official policy. The lack of a clear national policy is perhaps best illustrated by questions that Ilija Trifunović Birčanin asked Mihailović in a letter written in October 1942: "(1) Are we fighting for Yugoslavia or Serbia? (2) If we are fighting for Yugoslavia, how will it be organised? Will the Cvetković-Maček *Sporazum* be the starting point for the future state organisation, as most Croats

[1] See Chapter III, "Early Ideas".

declare!?"[2] That a figure of such high standing in the Chetnik Movement asked questions that struck at the very heart of the purpose of the entire struggle is demonstrative of the absence of a definitive and unambiguous national policy.

Given the importance of formulating an official national policy, it is almost incomprehensible why Mihailović did not accomplish this prior to January 1944. One of the main reasons, perhaps even *the* main reason, was his failure to devote an adequate amount of attention to the political aspects of his movement. This was due to a number of factors, including Mihailović's disinterest in politics,[3] his consciousness of his lack of political acumen,[4] a desire to present himself and his organisation as purely military and apolitical,[5] and a failure to grasp the importance of politics in warfare.[6]

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[2] Letter by Ilija Trifunović Birčanin for Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 676.

[3] Mihailović stated at his trial that "[p]olitics never interested me" (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 131).

[4] Captain Zvonimir Vučković wrote that Mihailović "made no pretense of being well versed in politics" (Vuckovich (2004) p. 59), and that he "did not claim to be thoroughly acquainted with the Croatian problem" (Vuckovich (2004) p. 136).

[5] On 30 June 1942, for example, Mihailović sent a telegram to a certain Captain Stevanović in which he wrote: "I forbid all politics" (Telegram (Number 40) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Captain Stevanović, 30 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 493). The following day he sent another telegram in which he declared: "This is not a political party" (Telegram (Number 47) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Captain Stevanović, 1 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 493). Major Žarko Todorović was similarly warned: "I forbid all politics. Work is to be purely military." (Telegram (Number 61) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Žarko Todorović, 2 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 495). See also Milovanović (1984) Volume I, pp. 328-330.

[6] Karchmar (1973) wrote: "In view of the object lesson provided by the Partisan movement, the lack of emphasis on political activity in the Četnik Movement is astonishing. There was a general lack of comprehension of the importance of the political approach in resistance work, even among the intellectuals and the few political figures who had joined Mihailović ... Mihailović and his commanders failed altogether to appreciate the military advantages of strong political work in a resistance movement." (pp. 937, 938).

The second reason was Mihailović's decision to relinquish this task to the Yugoslav government-in-exile of which he was a member for much of the war. As Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce, Mihailović viewed himself as responsible for military affairs, and the government for other matters, including those of a political nature.[7] Such an arrangement undoubtedly suited an officer like Mihailović who had no desire whatsoever to play the politician. Indeed, had he involved himself in such concerns as the postwar arrangement of the state this would have been something of an overstepping of his duties, and might have been regarded as a challenge to the authority of the government. One of the latter's responsibilities, not only in Mihailović's eyes but also in the eyes of the British, was to produce a program of wartime aims and a plan for the political organisation of postwar Yugoslavia. As a minister, Mihailović was obliged to champion and implement his government's orders and policies in the homeland.

The government-in-exile, however, was wracked by infighting for most of its existence. When it finally composed a statement of wartime and postwar aims in June 1943, it was nothing more than a commitment to "the liberation of Yugoslavia and the reestablishment of its unity as a State",[8] and a recognition of the need for a "federal solution which would permit the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes to collaborate with each other in the realization of their common

[7] An example of this thinking is the diary entry from the spring of 1942 regarding the fate of the Muslims, in which Mihailović wrote that the "question of the Muslim population must be resolved by the government" (Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 34).
[8] Foreign Relations of the United States – Diplomatic Papers, 1943, Volume II, p. 1,012.

political aims without renouncing … their ethnic individuality".[9] Such a feeble and vague declaration could not hope to adequately address the national question or provide Mihailović with a meaningful national policy to implement in Yugoslavia. When Mihailović realised in late 1943 that he could not rely on the government-in-exile to formulate a constructive national policy, and that he would have to do it, the fortunes of the Chetnik Movement were already in decline and it is questionable whether having a comprehensive and well-defined national policy would have bestowed any significant benefits upon it, coming so late in the war, or altered its fate.

Although the Chetnik Movement did not produce an official and comprehensive national policy until January 1944, it did nonetheless have what might be called an unofficial national policy. Whilst this unofficial national policy was not clearly articulated, comprehensive, encapsulated in a single programmatic document, or even known to all of the leading figures in the movement, it did exist, as demonstrated by the common themes that ran through the numerous letters, articles, programs, telegrams, propaganda material, and the like presented in the preceding pages. In them can be discerned a set of ideas about the national question that played a crucial role in shaping the Chetnik Movement's wartime behaviour and its views on how the postwar state should be organised to fulfill its national policy goals.

[9] Foreign Relations of the United States – Diplomatic Papers, 1943, Volume II, p. 1,013.

## Characteristics of the National Policy

Mihailović and the other leading figures in the Chetnik Movement were guided, first and foremost, by what they deemed to be in the interests of the Serbian nation, and the movement's national policy reflected this. In their self-appointed role as the defenders of the national interests of the Serbian people they sought what was best for the Serbs both during the war and afterwards. The aspirations and fate of the other peoples who inhabited Yugoslavia, insofar as they were considered, were relegated to a distant second position.[10] As such, Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement are best described as nationalistic.[11] Nationalism, according to Ernest Gellner, one of the foremost experts on the subject, "is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent."[12] This political entity, the *nation-state*, encompasses all, or at least most, members of a single nation and is based, according to John Breuilley, another nationalism scholar, on three assertions:

> (a) There exists a nation with an explicit and peculiar character.
> (b) The interests and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values.
> (c) The nation must be as independent as possible. This usually requires at least the attainment of political sovereignty.[13]

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[10] One of the best examples of this thinking can be found in a letter by Mihailović for Colonel Bajo Stanišić from March 1943: "We are guided by the following principles: We work solely for ourselves and nobody else; our only concern is the interests of the Serbs in Yugoslavia." (Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Colonel Bajo Stanišić, 9 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 399).
[11] On the differences between nationalism and patriotism, see Poole (2007) pp. 129-145.
[12] Gellner (1983) p. 1.
[13] Breuilly (1985) p. 3.

In the national policy of the Chetnik Movement, the ideology of nationalism and its overriding goal of creating a nation-state are most distinguishable.

To construct a nation-state for the Serbs, the Chetniks sought to amalgamate regions with a sizeable Serbian population, as well as a number with a negligible Serbian populace, in to a single political unit after the war. This goal remained unchanged throughout the conflict, from the summer of 1941 when Mihailović and his associates discussed the ideal postwar arrangement, through to the Resolutions of the Saint Sava Congress in January 1944 which called for "the creation, in a democratic manner, of a Serb unit … which would, on democratic principles, unite the entire Serbian people upon its territory."[14] Many of the most important military and political figures also saw this as the prime objective. Although the regions that would comprise the imagined postwar Serbia were not specifically named at the Ba Congress or by Mihailović, given the distribution of Serbs throughout Yugoslavia[15] it would have included, roughly speaking, Bačka, Banat, Banija, Baranja, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, Kordun, Kosovo, eastern Lika, Macedonia, Metohija, Montenegro, the Sandžak, Serbia, parts of Slavonia, and Srem. The aim of creating a Serb nation-state composed of all lands inhabited by Serbs was the main goal of Mihailović and his movement.

Despite this desire to establish a Serbian national homeland, Mihailović and the Chetniks believed that it should be part of a wider South Slav union. The

[14] The Decisions of the People's Congress, 28 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 13.
[15] See Maps 1, 2 & 4.

call for an independent Serbia was rare indeed, and Mihailović was not one of its proponents.[16] The new Yugoslavia was to be a federation of three national units – a Croat, Serb, and Slovene – and would be increased by the inclusion of territory annexed from adjoining states.[17] Mihailović hoped for the inclusion of Bulgaria in to the postwar South Slav union as a fourth federal unit in 1941, and the idea resurfaced throughout the war.[18] The Slovene unit was to comprise the Drava *Banovina* as well as lands annexed from Austria (southern Carinthia and southern Styria) and Italy (part of Istria and the Julian March).[19] The Croat unit would have been limited to Croatia, most of Istria, western Lika, and most of Slavonia. It seems that central Dalmatia (from Šibenik to the Neretva River) and western Hercegovina, because of their overwhelmingly Croatian population, would have been constituted as an autonomous province within the Serb unit,[20]

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[16] At his trial, Mihailović described the formation of a Great Serbia as a "fall from a horse on to a donkey" compared with Yugoslavia (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 219).
[17] In 1941, Mihailović annunciated a number of territorial claims against Yugoslavia's neighbours which included northern Albania, western Banat, Hungarian Baranja, Austrian Carinthia, Istria, the Julian March, and southern Styria (See Chapter III, "Mihailović's Early Vision of Postwar Yugoslavia" and Map 6). Moljević sought the inclusion of parts of Albania (northern Albania), Bulgaria (the cities of Kyustendil and Vidin), Hungary (the city of Pécs), and Romania (eastern Banat) in to postwar Serbia (Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 7). See Map 8. Later in the war, regions from Austria (Carinthia and southern Styria), Hungary (a strip of territory along the Yugoslav border), and Italy (Istria and the Julian March) were added to the territorial demands of the Chetniks (*Ravna Gora*, Issue 1, 1 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 12). See Map 10.
[18] An article in the official Chetnik newspaper *Vidovdan* dated 19 September 1942 called for the creation of a "great and mighty Yugoslavia from [Mount] Triglav to the Black Sea" (*Vidovdan,* Issue 5/139, 19 September 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 16). At the end of 1942, Mihailović reiterated that his goal was the creation of a "Great Yugoslavia from Mount Triglav to the Black Sea" (Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Major Radoslav Đurić, 23 November 1942, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 59).
[19] As early as January 1942, Mihailović declared that the Slovenes "expect the return of Istria, Gorizia, Styria, and Carinthia" (Telegram (Number 71) from Division General Draža Mihailović to the President of the Yugoslav Government, 25 January 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 348). See also "Slovenska etnička jedinica u budućoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 7, 15 June 1944, in Matić (1995) pp. 195-198.
[20] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 4.

or included in the Croat unit.[21] The establishment of Bosnia and Hercegovina as a federal division was mooted by Mihailović in 1941[22] and by the representatives of the political parties in 1943,[23] but the idea was never accepted as policy, nor does it appear to have enjoyed much support. There is evidence that serious consideration was given to dividing the postwar Serb federal unit in to smaller administrative provinces.[24] The need to form a wider coalition of Balkan states was also discussed.[25] A final characteristic of the Chetnik Movement's national policy was wholehearted support for the Karađorđević dynasty.

Concurrent with the creation of three federal units, was the recognition of only three constituent Yugoslav nations: Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes. Although Chetnik propaganda and internal documents occasionally referred to the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes as three tribes of a single nation, far more often they were referred to as three separate, albeit closely related, nations. Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims were declared to be members of the Serbian

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[21] "Hrvatska etnička jedinica u sutrašnjoj federativnoj kraljevini Jugoslaviji", *Pomoravlje,* Issue 6, 1 June 1944, in Matić (1995) pp. 192-195.
[22] Pantić (1960b) p. 1.
[23] Topalović (1967) p. 45.
[24] This was Mihailović's aim in 1941 (See Chapter III, "Mihailović's Early Vision of Postwar Yugoslavia"). Moljević referred to four "Serb Provinces" (*Srpske Oblasti*) in *Homogenous Serbia:* the Central, Northern, Southwestern, and Western. They were based on four *Banovine,* the Drina, Danube, Zeta, and Vrbas, respectively, to which were added territories from other *Banovine* and neighbouring states (Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 2-4). It seems that another two Serb Provinces were to be formed centred on the Morava and Vardar *Banovine*. In another program, Moljević proposed five provinces: Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia, South Serbia, and Vojvodina (Stevan Moljević, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1).
[25] Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 4-5; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 421, 497.

nation.[26] Chetnik views on this aspect of the national question were influenced by three factors. Firstly, they reinforced Chetnik claims to the lands inhabited by these people, all of which were designated for inclusion in to the postwar Serb unit. Secondly, recognising these groups as nations implicitly meant recognising their right to their own national unit, which in turn meant forfeiting the lands they inhabited. Finally, the conceptions reflected the ideas of various Serb and foreign ethnographers and historians who argued that the only South Slav nations were the Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes,[27] and that the Macedonians,[28] Montenegrins,[29] and Muslims[30] were part of the Serbian nation. The Montenegrins were, and indeed remain, divided between those who see themselves as Serbs and those who see themselves as a separate nation.[31] The Muslims were divided even more so.[32] Unlike the Macedonians and Montenegrins who are Orthodox Christians, the Muslims do not share a common religion with the Serbs, although they do share a common language, and a number of prominent Serb intellectuals claimed that the Muslims' forebears were

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[26] Mihailović referred to Macedonians as "South Serbs" (*Južni Srbi*) (Telegram (Number 235) from Division General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 11 June 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 360). Chetnik views on the Montenegrins can be found in a leaflet from July 1943 titled "Srbima u Crnoj Gori" ("Srbima u Crnoj Gori", 12 July 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 38).
[27] Cvijić (1922) Volume I, Chapter 13; Hinković (undated) pp. 3-4; Marjanović (1916) pp. 5-7. The Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes were occasionally described as constituting the Yugoslav nation (Cvijić (1922); Hinković (undated) pp. 3-4; Marjanović (1916) pp. 5-7; Miholjević (1919) p. 10).
[28] Belić (1912) pp. 665-673; Cvijić (1906); Dedijer (1912) pp. 674-699; Georgevitch (1918); Ivanić (1906); Popović (1916); Protić (1928).
[29] Stanojević (1902) pp. 44-45.
[30] Cvijić (1908) p. 19; Cvijić (1922) Volume II, Chapter 7; Ćorović (1925); Gravier (1912) pp. 924-931; Radovanović (1940) pp. 31-37; Ranke (1847) p. 76; Stanojević (1909).
[31] According to the 2003 census, Montenegro had 267,669 Montenegrins and 198,414 Serbs (Zavod za Statistiku Crne Gore (2004) p. 12).
[32] See Chapter I, "The New Order".

Orthodox Serbs prior to their conversion to Islam.[33] Indeed, a number of Muslims considered themselves Serbs, the most famous being the writer Mehmed "Meša" Selimović.[34]

The lands earmarked for postwar Serbia were home not only to Serbs and those who the Chetniks deemed to be Serbs, but to a number of other peoples. The Chetniks planned to alter the national character of their state through the expulsion of numerous undesirable nations. As early as the summer of 1941, Mihailović decided that the Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians should be expelled after the war.[35] Although initially it was conceived that the Albanians would remain,[36] they too were added to the list of undesirable minorities since the Chetniks planned to colonise Kosovo and Metohija, as well as the lands depopulated by the expulsion of the aforementioned nations, with impoverished Serbs from poor regions.[37] The numerous other minorities were to remain as it was believed that they were too small to pose a threat, and could be assimilated in

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[33] Cvijić (1922) Volume II, Chapter 7; Ćorović (1925); Stanojević (1909). Cvijić (1922) wrote that "[i]t is known that there are Muslim Serbs of the Dinaric character from the Sava River through Bosnia, Hercegovina, and the former Sandžak of Novi Pazar to Mitrovica in Kosovo ... There are about 750,000 of them." (Volume II, Chapter 7).

[34] "I come from a Muslim family in Bosnia, and I am a Serb by nationality," Selimović wrote in a letter to the Serbian Academy of Science and Art in 1976. "I equally respect my origin and my choice, because I am attached to everything that determined my personality and my work." (Quoted in Ljiljana Smiljanić, "Honoring Meša Selimović", *Southeastern European Times,* 13 May 2010).

[35] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 378.

[36] See Chapter III, "Mihailović's Early Vision of Postwar Yugoslavia".

[37] *Socialno Politički Program Ravnogorskog Četničkog i Narodnog Pokreta,* 12 April 1943, in Martinović-Bajica (1956) pp. 220-223; "Seljak domaćin ima da bude čuvar slobode i demokratije u Jugoslaviji i na svemu Balkanu", *Sve za Srpstvo,* Special Issue, December 1943, in Vesović & Nikolić (1996) pp. 291-296; Milenko Filipović, *Misli o Manjinskim Problemima Uopšte,* 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 41.

to the Serbian nation.[38] The Resolutions of the Saint Sava Congress did not mention minorities, leaving their ultimate fate in question. Most of those Croats inside of the Serb federal unit but outside of central Dalmatia and western Hercegovina would have been ejected as well. The fate of the Muslims remains unclear; although Mihailović expressed his belief in the spring of 1942 that they should be expelled from Serb inhabited lands after the war,[39] it seems that he moderated his stance as the war progressed, as will be discussed in greater detail shortly. Even so, the Chetnik national policy foresaw the forced removal of at least 1,677,000 people from their postwar Serbia, this being the number of Albanians, Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians living in Yugoslavia in 1941.[40]

Population movements, predominantly forced but also voluntary, were the main tool by which the Chetniks hoped to realise their goal of a Serb nation-state free of its undesirable inhabitants. Given that most of the people who were designated for expulsion probably had no desire to leave lands which they had inhabited for centuries, the implementation of the Chetnik national policy would have engendered opposition, quite possibly of an armed nature. It is difficult to imagine that the immediate postwar period would have been characterised by anything other than misery for large numbers of people declared undesirable by the victorious Chetniks. It should be pointed out that the preoccupation of some

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[38] Milenko Filipović, *Misli o Manjinskim Problemima Uopšte,* 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 41; Milenko Filipović, *Savremeni Etno-Politički Problemi kod Srba,* 23 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 14, Folder 1, Document 8.
[39] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 34.
[40] Kočović (1990) calculated that there were 601,000 Albanians, 519,000 Germans, 482,000 Hungarians, and 75,000 Romanians in Yugoslavia in 1941 (p. 151). This figure does not include those Croats and others who were to be expelled.

contemporary writers with viewing the issue of ethnic cleansing in moral terms obscures the prevalence of this practice throughout the modern history of the Balkans[41] and Europe more generally.[42] The emergence and growth of the Balkan states of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was marked by the expulsion and emigration of the indigenous Muslim population.[43] Similarly, the Ottoman Empire engaged in such policies towards its Christian communities,[44] most notably the Armenians.[45] In the early 1920s, Greece and Turkey exchanged some two million people between themselves.[46] One commentator has described these population exchanges in the following words:

> Like so many state actions we now condemn, ethnic cleansing was viewed not so long ago as a legitimate tool of foreign policy. In the early part of the 20th century, forced population shifts were not uncommon, as multicultural empires crumbled and nationalism drove the formation of new, ethnically homogenous countries.[47]

It has been argued that ethnic cleansing is one of the pillars of the state-building project in the modern world; Rogers Brubaker noted that the "unmixing of peoples"[48] was a common concomitant of the collapse of empires, most of which were multinational rather than based on a single nation.[49]

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[41] Allcock (2000) 145-169; Carmichael (2002).
[42] Lieberman (2006); Tooley (2003) pp. 42-62.
[43] Bandžović (1998); Carmichael (2002); McCarthy (1995).
[44] Naimark (2001) pp. 17-56.
[45] Akçam (2004, 2006); Balakian (2003); Dadrian (1995).
[46] Clark (2006).
[47] Belinda Cooper "Trading places", *The New York Times* (New York), 17 September 2006.
[48] Brubaker (1995) p. 189.
[49] Brubaker (1995) pp. 189-218.

The emergence of the nation-state as the prevailing type of political organisation is closely related to inter-nation strains in the modern world,[50] and such states can resolve this problem, according to Klejda Mulaj, in three ways: (1) by balancing the demands of the national groups with the state's interests; (2) by assimilating minority nations in to the dominant nation; or (3) by excluding the minority nations from the state.[51] The Chetniks emphasised the third method, and the second to a lesser extent. Their arch enemies, the Partisans, championed the first. Understanding the Chetnik goal of creating a Serb nation-state through the unification all Serb inhabited lands and the expulsion of undesirable populations can only be understood against the backdrop of ideas pertaining to the modern state that were current at the time.

It seems that demographic and economic factors also played a role in shaping the Chetnik Movement's national policy. The Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians inhabited the fertile farming region of Vojvodina, and their expulsion would have provided sizeable tracts of arable land for impoverished Serbs from the so-called passive regions (*pasivni krajevi*),[52] the number of which had increased greatly in the first decades of the twentieth century resulting in severe rural overpopulation.[53] The Chetniks planned to settle these poor Serbs on to the fertile land expropriated from the expelled minorities and solve the twin

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[50] Francis (1976) p. 44.
[51] Mulaj (2006) p. 22.
[52] The poorest regions inhabited by Serbs included Banija, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, Kordun, Lika, Montenegro, and southern Serbia.
[53] Allcock (2000) pp. 165-168; Dulić (2005) p. 328; Warriner (1964) pp. 59-81. Wilbert Moore (1945) estimated that in the first half of the 1940s, Yugoslavia had a 'surplus' rural population of 61.5 per cent (pp. 63-64).

problems of overpopulation and poverty that bedeviled much of the Serbian peasantry in prewar Yugoslavia.

## Popular Support for the National Policy

The most salient feature of the Chetnik Movement's national policy was its devotion to the interests of the Serbian people as understood and enunciated by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership. Guided by the principles of nationalism, the primary goal of the national policy was to create a Serb national unit after the war. As such, it was not unreasonable for the Chetnik leadership to expect that this policy would be supported by the Serbs. There was much in it for the Slovenes since it promised them territories annexed from Austria and Italy, and protection from the predations of mightier neighbours within a South Slav union. It is difficult to imagine that many Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, or Muslims found much in the Chetnik Movement's national policy attractive to them. Even though the Chetniks considered the Macedonians and Muslims to be Serbs, there is no evidence that anything but a small number of them supported the Chetnik Movement and its aims, although the number of Muslims was decidedly larger than Macedonians.[54] Whilst the number of pro-Chetnik Montenegrins was much larger, there was also a sizeable body of Montenegrins who wanted the recognition of a Montenegrin national identity and of Montenegro as a political unit. Naturally, the Chetniks' national policy could not in any way have enticed the Albanians, Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians.

[54] Most of the Macedonians who joined the Chetnik Movement came from the highly Serbianised communities of Babuna, Kozjak, Poreč, and Skopska Crna Gora (Karchmar (1973) p. 286; Milošević (2005) p. 227).

Even in the absence of any data on popular support for the Chetnik Movement's national policy, it is fair to state that it could only hope to appeal to perhaps half of the population,[55] and Mihailović in this manner forfeited the support of many of the inhabitants of Yugoslavia.

Yet it is highly questionable whether there was widespread support amongst the Serbs for the national policy espoused by Mihailović and the Chetniks. Throughout their history, Serbs have been divided along regional lines which have occasionally been as strong if not stronger than their loyalty to the nation. One need only glance at the suspicion, disagreements, resentment, and even open hostility that characterised relations between the Montenegrins, *prečani*, and *srbijanci* within Mihailović's movement to see the depth and width of this divide.[56] The numerous calls by the Bosnian Chetniks for autonomy in any postwar Serbia were but one manifestation of this,[57] as was the not small body of *srbijanci* who wanted nothing more than a Serbia within its old borders.[58] Finally, it should be remembered that the Serbs had been unified in a single state between 1918 and 1941 and it did not seem to have worked well for them.

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[55] There were approximately 6,458,000 Serbs, 1,237,000 Slovenes, and 395,000 Montenegrins in Yugoslavia in 1941 who together accounted for 51.1 per cent of the population (See Appendix 7).
[56] Karchmar (1973) wrote: "In Mihailović's movement, the *srbijanci* disliked the Montenegrins, and the *prečani* distrusted the *srbijanci*. Particularism was what really mattered to them, as Mihailović found out any time he tried to appoint a *srbijanac* to command a corps in Bosnia or a Montenegrin in Dalmatia." (p. 926). See Kačavenda (1972) on the problems Mihailović experienced with the indigenous Bosnian Chetnik leadership. These divisions were carried in to exile where Chetnik émigrés formed two main veteran organisations: the *Pokret Srpskih Četnika Ravne Gore* (Movement of Serb Chetniks of Ravna Gora), founded by Momčilo Đujić and composed primarily of veterans from the NDH, and the *Udruženje Boraca Kraljevske Jugoslovenske Vojske "Draža Mihailović"* (Association of Fighters of the Royal Yugoslav Army "Draža Mihailović"), founded by General Miodrag Damjanović and composed primarily of those from Serbia.
[57] See Chapter IV, "The Bosnian Chetniks and their Policies".
[58] Karchmar (1973) p. 120.

Similarly, it is highly questionable whether the Karađorđević dynasty enjoyed the allegiance of any great number of Serbs, to say nothing of the non-Serbs. Notwithstanding questions regarding the relevance of the institution of monarchy in the twentieth century, it should be noted that the Karađorđević dynasty had twice lost the throne in its history, and that its reputation had been tarnished by Alexander's flirtation with authoritarianism after 1929, and Peter's immature wartime behaviour, which culminated in his marriage in March 1944.[59] Mihailović and the Chetniks offered the Serbs a political platform that did not necessarily appeal to all or even most of them.

## Mihailović and the National Policy

Why Mihailović adopted and championed such a national policy, despite its obvious and not so obvious weaknesses, can partly be explained by reference to six factors which shaped his views on the national question: (1) his life before the Second World War; (2) the idea of Serb unity; (3) events during the Second World War; (4) beliefs about the desire of the various Yugoslav nations to live together; (5) the idea that the Croats and Muslims needed to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Serbian people; (6) his personality; and (7) the men who formed the leadership of the Chetnik Movement.

Mihailović was born and raised in an environment dominated by nationalism. Orphaned at an early age, he grew up in the Belgrade home of one of his paternal uncles who was an officer in the Serbian Army, as were another two

[59] Tomasevich (1975) p. 308.

paternal uncles.[60] Mihailović enrolled in the Military Academy (*Vojna Akademija*) at the age of seventeen and soon thereafter fought in both Balkan Wars and the First World War. His wartime record was marked by bravery and sacrifice,[61] reflected in the numerous awards bestowed upon him.[62] During the 1920s and 1930s he rose steadily through the ranks of the Yugoslav Army. Mihailović was typical of a generation of Serbs raised on the milk of Serbian nationalism, for whom love of the nation and service to the state were amongst the greatest virtues. Indeed, his patriotism was a defining feature of his character.[63] His experiences with the non-Serbs, on the other hand, were mixed. He witnessed the attacks by Albanians on the retreating Serbian Army during the First World War,[64] and participated in the suppression of Albanian insurrections on Kosovo and Metohija in 1913 and 1920.[65] During the Great War, he fought against Croats, Germans, Hungarians, Muslims, and Slovenes in the Austro-Hungarian Army when it invaded Serbia. On the other hand, he fought alongside

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[60] Marjanović (1979) p. 47; Samardžić (1997) p. 13. The fourth was employed in the Belgrade postal service (Marjanović (1979) p. 47; Samardžić (1997) p. 13).
[61] In September 1918, Mihailović captured a Bulgarian battery in the vicinity of Štip (Karchmar (1973) p. 70). Although he was offered a position in the rear following his recovery from a serious chest wound in September 1916, he refused and returned to his unit (Karchmar (1973) p. 70; Marjanović (1979) p. 47).
[62] Mihailović was awarded the following medals and orders for his participation in the Balkan Wars and First World War: Commemorative Medal for the First Balkan War (1913); Commemorative Medal for the Second Balkan War (1913); Silver Medal for Bravery (1913); Gold Medal for Bravery (1915); British Military Cross (1917); Order of the White Eagle with Swords – Fourth Class (1918); Commemorative Medal for the First World War (1920); Gold Medal for Bravery (1920); Order of the White Eagle with Swords – Fifth Class (1920); Commemorative Medal for the Albanian Retreat (1921) (Ministry of the Army and Navy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Dossier of Personal and Official Data of Officers for Dragoljub Mihailović (K – 1,034/389) (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence)).
[63] Karchmar (1973) wrote that Mihailović "had been raised a Serbian patriot and a royalist, and these traits were to remain with him to the last." (p. 72).
[64] Mitrović (2007) p. 151.
[65] Ministry of the Army and Navy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Dossier of Personal and Official Data of Officers for Dragoljub Mihailović (K – 1,034/389) (Unregistered documents from the trial of Mihailović and others in 1946 given to the author in confidence).

Croats, Muslims, and Slovenes when his unit (the Vardar Division) was amalgamated with South Slav volunteers from Austria-Hungary to create the First Yugoslav Division in early 1918.[66] A Muslim volunteer from Bosnia, Fehim Musakadić,[67] became Mihailović's colleague on the Salonika Front.[68] All of this shaped Mihailović's views on the Serbs and the other nations which inhabited Yugoslavia.

Mihailović was a firm believer in the importance of Serb unity, an idea summed up in the ubiquitous slogan: *Samo Sloga Srbina Spašava* (Only Unity Saves the Serb). He saw himself as the leader of the Serbian people, and his movement as one that encompassed all Serbs irrespective of their region of origin, an idea expressed in a letter from October 1942 in which he declared that "it is well known that all Serbian provinces are equally dear to me".[69] A true Ravnagoraist, Mihailović argued, was above "local and narrow"[70] concerns; it was the interests of the Serbian nation as a whole that were paramount. Yet particularism was what really mattered to the Serbs. Mihailović's devotion to this slogan blinded him to the possibility that the Serbs might not only accept a federal solution, but that it might even be preferable to what the Chetniks were offering.

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[66] Karchmar (1973) p. 70; Mitrović (2007) p. 298; Samardžić (1997) p. 14.
[67] Konjhodžić (1965) p. 59.
[68] Radulović (1975) p. 49.
[69] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 660.
[70] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 660.

Two events during the Second World War reinforced Mihailović's belief in the necessity of forming a Serb nation-state free of undesirable nations. The first was the rapid defeat of the royal Yugoslav army which was interpreted as reflecting the weaknesses of a multinational army and state, for if war is the ultimate test of a state's character, then the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had so obviously failed this test. Compared with the dogged resistance offered by the nationally homogenous Serbian Army in the First World War, the nationally heterogeneous Yugoslav Army was found wanting. According to this view, national minorities were a danger to a state's strength and safety, and the entire national question was really a question about national security. The second was the persecution and mass killing of Serbs by their neighbours which was seen as proof that a common future was neither desirable nor possible, and would be nothing more than a repetition of the mistakes of the past. The expulsion of these hostile nations from lands inhabited by Serbs would prevent them from persecuting Serbs again.

Mihailović's national policy was partly based on what he believed the Yugoslav people desired. A number of events during the war led Mihailović to the conclusion that many, perhaps even most, non-Serbs had no wish to live in a common state with the Serbs. Amongst them were the Bjelovar Mutiny in the early days of the April War;[71] the attacks by armed Croats and Muslims on Mihailović and his men in the immediate aftermath of the war as they retreated

[71] Dizdar (2008) pp. 581-609.

through northeastern Bosnia;[72] the mass killing, ethnic cleansing, and persecution of the Serbs by some of the neighbours, especially the Albanians, Croats, and Muslims; the failure of the established non-Serb leadership to attempt to halt these horrors; the miniscule number of non-Serbs who joined the Chetnik Movement; and reports by his subordinates questioning the sincerity of Croat and Muslim offers of cooperation later in the war.[73] Similarly, Mihailović formed the opinion that the Serbs had no desire to live with certain nations, especially the Muslims, as can be seen in his diary entry from the spring of 1942.[74] Commanders and delegates regularly sent him letters and reports in which they claimed that the mood of the Serbs was against any future existence with the Croats, Muslims, and others.[75] Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić, for example, assessed the temperament of the Serbian peasantry in eastern Bosnia in late 1941 as such: "The people want and ask that all Muslims be annihilated from all regions where Serbs live."[76] Chetnik leaders believed that it would be a formidable task to alter the people's disposition[77] and prevent the indiscriminate killing of Croats, Muslims, and others after the war.[78] Not only was Mihailović assailed by such information from leading men within his organisation, he

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[72] See Chapter III, "The April War and Arrival on Ravna Gora".
[73] See Chapter IV, "Mihailović, the Chetnik Leadership, and the Croats and Muslims".
[74] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 34.
[75] See Chapter IV, "Mihailović, the Chetnik Leadership, and the Croats and Muslims".
[76] Letter by Lieutenant Kamenko Jevtić for Dragiša Vasić, 29 October 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 165, Folder 2, Document 32.
[77] One of Jevđević's collaborators conceded to the Italians that he was "incapable of putting the brakes on his men because they were pervaded by a profound race hatred and dominated by desire for revenge" (Newsletter Number 44 by the Command of the Italian Second Army, 15 November 1942, in Milazzo (1975) p. 108).
[78] Baćović and Jevđević told Mihailović in late 1942 that "[i]t will be difficult to restrain the masses during the final settlement, so that the innocent do not pay along with the guilty" (Report by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of November 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 733).

witnessed it himself. At his trial, he related an event that took place during a visit to a village in western Serbia:

> I am going to cite one case to show how the people looked on the bloody bestialities of the Ustaše and what impression it made on them. At a meeting I introduced [Mustafa] Mulalić to the people as a Muslim. This was in Srednja Dobrinja. He rose to speak and said: "Brothers, I am a Muslim. The Muslims have sinned greatly, and there are three ways to resolve this question with them. The first way is to slaughter them all." All of the people at the meeting, male and female, shouted: "Let us slaughter them!" We were astonished.[79]

It must, however, be remembered that the information Mihailović received was contradictory and he was informed on a number of occasions that there were Croats and Muslims who sincerely desired to cooperate with the Chetnik Movement. As early as the summer of 1942, Major Vojislav Lukačević informed Mihailović that the "attitude of the Muslims is penitent",[80] and that the Muslim intelligentsia felt the urge for "rehabilitation".[81] Dobroslav Jevđević reported that in Mostar and other larger towns throughout Hercegovina there existed "small groups of Muslim intellectuals, pure Serbs, who have adopted a very correct stance and who have helped us greatly in political tacticising, declaring in numerous resolutions that they identify themselves with the Serbs and support their requests."[82] The cumulative effect was, at the least, to make Mihailović have serious reservations about the wisdom of attempting to recreate a multinational

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[79] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 269.
[80] Telegram (Number 114) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.
[81] Telegram (Number 114) from Captain Vojislav Lukačević to Army General Draža Mihailović, 28 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 482.
[82] Letter by Dobroslav Jevđević for Major Petar Baćović, undated (probably from the second half of July 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 469.

Yugoslavia, since this was apparently contrary to the wishes of a fair proportion of the Yugoslav people.

One idea that held sway over Mihailović and influenced his behaviour was that the Croats, Muslims, and other non-Serbs needed to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Serbian people. This notion is illustrated in a letter from October 1942 in which he ordered Jevđević to explain to Muslims that

> only by organising under the command of our officers and fighting against the Ustaše and communists, as well as by maintaining a loyal attitude towards the Serbian populace, can the Muslims repair the shameful role that they have played since the fall of Yugoslavia.[83]

In the same letter he wrote the following about the Croats:

> It is obvious to everyone that Yugoslavia will exist once again and that Croats must live in this Yugoslavia. The borders of the Croat unit and the rights that will be enjoyed by the Croats in this future new state will depend entirely on them, that is, whether Yugoslav orientated Croats join our ranks and participate in the liquidation of Croat traitors, who worked against Yugoslavia for 23 years and massacred 600,000 Serbs from April last year to today. It is my desire, as well as that of our High Commander and government, that Yugoslav Croats finally realise that it is the twelfth hour for them to rise to arms and to demonstrate in this way that they desire to invest in the creation of a new Yugoslavia.[84]

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[83] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 658.
[84] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.

Mihailović believed that "if the Croats remain inactive, no power will be able to rescue them from the vengeance of the Serbian people".[85] Although Mihailović knew that the massacres were the work of "Croat traitors"[86] and not the Croatian nation as a whole,[87] he was convinced that the Serbian people did not see things so rationally and that they blamed the Croats and Muslims collectively, thus his insistence that the Croats and Muslims needed to alter this collective mood through their participation in the Chetnik Movement. This thinking seems to have permeated the Chetnik leadership as well.[88] It should be noted that Tito's view on this matter was not entirely dissimilar; on 16 November 1941 he warned that

> [i]t is necessary to explain to the Croatian masses that the final hour has arrived for them to rise up in revolt against the tyranny of Pavelić and the occupier if they desire to remove from themselves the guilt before the people for the frightful atrocities which the evildoer Pavelić committed against the Serbs and other peoples.[89]

Mihailović's views on the disposition of the Serbian people, accurate or otherwise, clouded his comprehension of the wartime relations between the Yugoslav

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[85] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[86] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 659.
[87] In December 1942, Mihailović asked his prime minister to convince the Croat members of the exiled government to openly condemn the Ustaše and make a distinction between them and innocent Croats (Telegram from Army General Draža Mihailović to Slobodan Jovanović, 19 December 1942, in Williams (2003) p. 111).
[88] Ostojić, for example, wrote at the end of 1942 that Croats who wished to join the JVO would be provided "with the opportunity to prove themselves" (Report by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 29 December 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 800). During the Battle of the Neretva he informed Jevđević that the "Muslims are also undertaking their exam though battle for their homes, King, and Fatherland" (Telegram (Number 215) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Dobroslav Jevđević, 20 February 1943, in *Dokumenti o Izdajstvu Draže Mihailovića,* p. 433 (#313)).
[89] Letter by the High Command of the National Liberation Army, 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume V, Book 2, p. 22.

peoples, and hampered his ability to understand the national question, let alone come up with a solution that was satisfactory to most Yugoslavs.

Certain aspects of Mihailović's character explain why he adopted the national policy that he did. His patriotism[90] and concern for the Serbian people[91] clouded his view of the world, and his decisions were based on what he believed was best for the Serbs rather than for all of the inhabitants of Yugoslavia. Although educated and intelligent, he was rather inflexible in his thinking, having become accustomed to the ordered nature of military life; he was used to giving and receiving orders, not questioning, debating, and tacticising. It is not surprising that such a man preferred simple solutions to the complex Yugoslav national question. Whilst he was a figure who elicited affection with his good nature,[92] the softness with which he spoke,[93] and his simple manner and dress,[94] he did not have the strength of personality to impose his will on others, and was consequently easily influenced by the numerous strong personalities who surrounded him during the war. It was not particularly difficult for strong-willed individuals like Pavle Đurišić and Stevan Moljević to influence Mihailović, and

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[90] Karchmar (1973) p. 72.
[91] Mihailović was very much concerned with protecting Serb lives (Karchmar (1973) pp. 935; Tomasevich (1975) p. 466). At the Avtovac Conference (22-23 July 1942) he "wanted to discuss the measures which should be taken in order to prevent a repetition of the persecution of the Orthodox population by the "Wild Ustaše" (the resettlement of part of the Serbian population to Montenegro and the assignment of Montenegrin detachments to combat stations for the purpose of protecting them)." (Report by Vittorio Castellani (Consul of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attached to the Staff of the Second Army) for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-821,* Roll 252, Frame 298).
[92] Vučković (1980) p. 73.
[93] Inks (1955) pp. 149, 154; Kordić (1998) p. 16; Lawrence (1947) pp. 230-231.
[94] Lawrence (1947) p. 233; Seitz (1953) p. 10; Tomasevich (1975) p. 468; Vučković (1980) p. 73.

steer him and his movement in a direction that he may not have initially intended to go.[95]

The men who formed the military and political leadership of the Chetnik Movement played an important role in shaping Mihailović's understanding of the national question, and therefore the national policy of his movement. The overwhelming majority of them were Serbs, which meant that the other Yugoslav nations were either unrepresented in the High Command, or if they were represented, their voice was drowned out by the calls for Serb national interests to take precedence. Most of the commanders were either civilian notables such as gendarmes, government officials, priests, and wealthy landowners (especially in the NDH), or officers (especially in Montenegro and Serbia), two groups which had enjoyed a privileged position in Yugoslavia and who, generally speaking, leaned towards Serbian nationalism. Furthermore, quite a number of the civilian leaders belonged to the numerous prewar Chetnik associations and *Narodna Odbrana*. Given that the leadership of the Chetnik Movement was primarily composed of men from these two groups, it is not particularly difficult to understand why it became a Serb nationalistic, not to say chauvinistic, organisation. Mihailović surrounded himself mostly with Serb officers, men who were brought up like him within the framework of Serbian nationalism and could

[95] Karchmar's assessment of this aspect of Mihailović's character seems correct: "His was not a strong personality, nor did he have the toughness necessary in a resistance leader or in any major military commander. He was easily influenced, and, as there were always stronger personalities than his own around him – Moljević, Djurišić, and others – his intended courses of action were distorted and diverted far more often than they should have been." (Karchmar (1973) p. 942). See Karchmar ((1973) pp. 941-942) and Tomasevich ((1975) pp. 465-471) for succinct analyses of Mihailović's character.

not comprehend, let alone adequately address, the national question from a Yugoslav perspective. Furthermore, because the Chetnik leadership was composed of such people, it repelled intellectuals and political figures generally, and those with leftist and progressive leanings specifically.[96] Instead, it attracted conservative and nationalistic ones such as Moljević, Vasić, and their colleagues from the Serb Cultural Club, who brought some of the ideas of their society – the predominance of Serb national interests, the recognition of only three South Slav nations, the creation of political units along national lines, forced expulsion as a tool for solving the national question[97] – to Mihailović and the High Command, that is, to the very heart of the Chetnik Movement.

## Wartime National Policy

Although Mihailović's wartime national policy was guided by the ultimate goal of creating a Serb nation-state free of undesirable peoples after the Second World War, the vagaries and needs of the conflict demanded a flexible approach to the national question and the non-Serbian population of Yugoslavia, or at least until the anticipated Chetnik victory.

Initially, Mihailović planned to work primarily, and quite possibly exclusively, amongst the Serbs. This is observable at the Struganik Conference in May 1941 where he spoke of his faith in the "strength and fighting spirit of the

[96] Tomasevich (1975) p. 468; Vučković (1980) p. 93.
[97] See Chapter II, "The Serb Cultural Club".

Serbian people",[98] as well as in the territories – Bosnia, Hercegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, South Serbia (Macedonia), and Vojvodina – from which the Central National Committee originally planned to draw its members.[99] In Mihailović's eyes, the Serbian nation had the ability and desire to liberate Yugoslavia, whereas many of the other Yugoslav nations did not appear to share this aim; examples of this could be observed as early as the April War, and included the Bjelovar Mutiny, the numerous cases of non-Serb reservists failing to report for duty, and non-Serb troops surrendering without fighting, or simply deserting and going home,[100] and the manner in which German troops were greeted upon their entry in to some Yugoslav cities and towns, most notably Zagreb, by their inhabitants. Given that the vast majority of officers who came to Ravna Gora to join the resistance movement in the first few months were Serbs, and that it was the Montenegrins and Serbs who were in rebellion, whereas the other Yugoslavs remained quiescent or even welcomed the New Order, this could only have confirmed Mihailović's decision to focus on the Serbian nation in his plans. By the autumn of 1941, his organisation was restricted to Serbia, its leadership was composed overwhelmingly of Serb officers, and its rank and file was exclusively Serb. No evidence exists that he made any effort in the first six months of the war to mobilise amongst the non-Serbian nations or to make contact with the prewar established non-Serb leadership. The failure to go out and organise amongst the non-Serbs was undoubtedly influenced by Mihailović's ambiguous views of their willingness to fight for the liberation of Yugoslavia, but

[98] Živanović (1962a) p. 71.
[99] Živanović (1962a) p. 126.
[100] Đelević (2004) pp. 19-20; Karchmar (1973) p. 4.

it was also a result of more tangible limitations; his movement suffered from a chronic lack of officers, Serb or otherwise, for its entire existence.[101] It is debatable, however, how fruitful it would have been to send out organisers amongst the non-Serbs in 1941 especially when one considers the failure of the Partisans to make any significant inroads in to these communities until much later in the war.[102] Nor does it seem that Mihailović made any efforts to contact the traditional non-Serb leadership, which, once again, would probably have produced few results given the circumstances.[103] Thus, from the very beginning of its existence, the Chetnik Movement, partly through circumstance and partly through Mihailović's decisions, developed a Serb character.

Mihailović's plans, such as they were, were altered by the decision of the Yugoslav government-in-exile in November 1941 to name him "commander of all Yugoslav armed forces that are fighting in the country",[104] and to urge all Yugoslav patriots to join his organisation. The blessing of the government-in-exile provided an opening to approach the other Yugoslavs, since the government claimed, with some justification, to embody legitimate state authority and to

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[101] Karchmar (1973) pp. 546-547.
[102] Karchmar (1973) wrote that in "1941, and, for practical purposes, throughout 1942, resistance in Jugoslavia was a Serbian affair" (p. 928). Similarly, Milazzo (1975) wrote that "well into 1943, the entire Yugoslav resistance, both Chetnik and Partisan, was overwhelmingly Serb" (p. 111). Reflective of the general disinterest of the non-Serbs in joining the resistance movements is the fact that the Partisans managed to form only a single Muslim unit in eastern Bosnia in 1941 (Karchmar (1973) pp. 460-461). See also Deakin ((1971) p. 106).
[103] See Chapter II, "The New Order". Redžić (2005) stated that a "considerable part of the JMO leadership adapted to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina [by the NDH] and joined the state structure of the NDH." (p. 165).
[104] Broadcast by Prime Minister General Dušan Simović, 15 November 1941, in Tomasevich (1975) p. 152.

represent the Yugoslav peoples since it contained Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes,[105] as well as members of most of the largest political parties.[106] Indeed, the recognition and presumably support of the government-in-exile implicitly meant that it was Mihailović's responsibly to adopt a broad Yugoslav rather than narrow Serb approach to resistance and the national question more generally. If he wanted to be the leader of the Yugoslavs, he would need to engage the non-Serbs and draw them in to his movement.

Unlike Mihailović's efforts in Serbia to create an officer-led movement, and his endeavours to secure the loyalty of the numerous Orthodox armed units in Montenegro and the NDH that had sprung up during the summer of 1941, he made no concomitant effort to organise the non-Serbs. Although it would be erroneous to state that no attempt was made, one simply does not observe the same investment of time and energy in to spreading the Chetnik Movement amongst the non-Serbs as one does with the Serbs. Throughout the war, the focus was on the Serbian nation and thus on regions with a sizeable Serbian

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[105] Interestingly, the government-in-exile does not seem to have had any Macedonian, Montenegrin, or Muslim members, or representatives of the largest non-South Slav nations (Albanians, Germans, and Hungarians).

[106] The composition of the government-in-exile at the end of 1941 was: General Dušan Simović (Prime Minister, officer, Serb), Slobodan Jovanović (Deputy Prime Minister, academic, Serb), Juraj Krnjević (Deputy Prime Minister, Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Miha Krek (Deputy Prime Minister, Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Jovan Banjanin (Yugoslav National Party, Serb), Rudolf Bićanić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Srđan Budisavljević (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Branko Čubrilović (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Milan Gavrilović (Agrarian Union, Serb), Franc Grabovšek (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Milan Grol (Democratic Party, Serb), General Bogoljub Ilić (officer, Serb), Bogoljub Jevtić (Yugoslav National Party, Serb), Ilija Jukić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Sava Kosanović (Independent Democratic Party, Serb), Lojze Kuhar (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Božidar Marković (Democratic Party, Serb), Milan Martinović (Serb), Vladimir Milanović (Serb), Momčilo Ninčić (Radical Party, Serb), Franc Snoj (Slovene People's Party, Slovene), Ivan Šubašić (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), Juraj Šutej (Croat Peasant Party, Croat), and Miloš Trifunović (Radical Party, Serb) (Đuretić (1982) p. 14 (Footnote 1); Tomasevich (1975) p. 49).

population, all of which were designated for the postwar Serbia. The activities of the Chetnik Movement amongst the non-South Slavs (the Albanians, Germans, and Hungarians) were virtually non-existent,[107] and only a few of them joined it.[108] This failure can not be entirely explained by the publicly stated aim of the Chetnik Movement to expel them after the war, or the failure to make any serious efforts to go out amongst these communities; the national aspirations of the Albanians, Germans, and Hungarians were fulfilled by the New Order and they must have seen the recreation of any Yugoslavia, even one based on Brotherhood and Unity, as merely a return to South Slav domination. The South Slavs, on the other hand, were a different matter altogether, and Mihailović encountered a mixture of failures and successes in his wartime national policy towards them. Although the Chetnik leadership looked upon the Macedonians as Serbs, the JVO in Macedonia was limited to Serb settlers and Macedonians from the highly Serbianised communities of Babuna, Kozjak, Poreč, and Skopska Crna Gora;[109] the vast majority of Macedonians were decidedly disinterested in the Chetnik Movement, and only a miniscule number joined.[110] Much was expected from the Slovenes because of the obliteration of Slovenia as a political unit, the repressive policies of the Germans and Italians,[111] calls by the leader of the Slovenes in the government–in-exile, Miha Krek, for his people to join Mihailović's army and

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[107] Although Mihailović established contact with Muharem Bajraktari, an anti-communist Albanian warlord based in northeastern Albania and western Macedonia, nothing came of this (Karchmar (1973) p. 842). See also Karchmar ((1973) pp. 841-843).
[108] Major Radoslav Đurić managed to form a brigade composed of Albanians on the territory of the Command of South Serbia (Karchmar (1973) p. 597). See also Karchmar ((1973) pp. 841-843).
[109] Karchmar (1973) p. 286; Milošević (2005) p. 227. See Milošević (2005) for information on the JVO in Macedonia (pp. 227-235).
[110] Karchmar (1973) p. 286; Milošević (2005) p. 227.
[111] See Chapter II, "The New Order".

obey any commands issued by the general,[112] promises of territorial gains in the event of a Chetnik victory, and protection in a South Slav union from the predations of irredentist neighbours such as Austria and Italy, but the Chetnik Movement in Slovenia never amounted to much.[113] In line with the Chetnik leadership's view that the Montenegrins were an integral part of the Serbian nation, great efforts were made to bring them in to the movement, and Mihailović was quite successful in accomplishing this except in western Montenegro where support for the federalists was strongest. The problem, however, was that the Montenegrins were the least numerous of the South Slav nations, amounting to some 395,000 people in 1941, a mere 2.50% of the entire population of Yugoslavia.[114]

It was the Croats and Muslims who provided Mihailović with perhaps the greatest opportunities regarding his wartime national policy, and from the autumn of 1941 he made numerous efforts to attract them to his movement through propaganda, and approaches to the established political and religious leadership with offers of cooperation so as to utilise the authority and influence that it possessed with the Croatian and Muslim masses for the benefit of the Chetnik Movement. Attracting the Croats and Muslims was crucial because of their numbers (there were approximately 3,572,000 Croats (22.56 per cent) and 1,089,000 Muslims (6.88 per cent) in 1941),[115] their location in many of the

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[112] Tomasevich (1975) pp. 222-223.
[113] Karchmar (1973) p. 529. See Novak ((1956) pp. 317-332) and Tomasevich ((1975) pp. 220-226) for the story of the Chetnik Movement in Slovenia.
[114] See Appendix 7.
[115] See Appendix 7.

regions in which the Chetnik Movement operated,[116] and, from the middle of 1943, to prevent them from joining the Partisan Movement.[117]

Propaganda directed at the Croats and Muslims was the main tool employed by the Chetniks to gain their support, and although Mihailović recognised the importance of propaganda from the very beginning of the war,[118] it can not be said that any great deal of it was produced in the first two years of the conflict, particularly by the High Command.[119] During the uprising of 1941, even though a journal (*Sloboda ili Smrt*) was published, Chetnik propaganda was directed at the population of Serbia and does not appear to have been on any large scale.[120] Mihailović's first appeal as leader of Yugoslav resistance on 16 November 1941 spoke of a "Great Yugoslavia, arranged on the basis of a brotherly

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[116] See Maps 1, 2 & 4.
[117] Karchmar (1973) argued that "from 1943 onward, the weight of Croat support was thrown in on the Partisan side and became one of the factors which decisively turned the scales against Mihailović" (p. 130).
[118] Prior to their departure for their assigned territories throughout the spring and summer of 1941, officers were ordered to conduct propaganda (Pantić (1948b) p. 3; Živanović (1962a) p. 71). Mihailović's Order Number 3 to all commanders from 7 November 1941, was devoted to propaganda: "It is necessary to immediately establish information propaganda sections for all *odredi*." (Order Number 3 by Colonel Draža Mihailović for all *odred* commanders, 7 November 1941, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 105). See also Matić ((1995) pp. 33-48).
[119] This is in stark contrast to the Partisan High Command which published a central bulletin throughout the entire war. Issue 1 (10 August 1941), Issue 2 (19 August 1941), Issue 3 (26 August 1941), Issue 4 (3 September 1941), Issue 5 (8 September 1941), Issue 6 (18 September 1941), Issues 7 & 8 (1 October 1941), Issue 9 (10 October 1941), Issues 10 & 11 (20 October 1941), Issues 12 & 13 (for December 1941 and January 1942), Issues 14 & 15 (for February 1942 and March 1942), Issue 16 (for April 1942), Issues 17, 18 & 19 (for June 1942, July 1942, and August 1942), Issues 20, 21 & 22 (for September 1942, October 1942, and November 1942), Issues 23, 24, 25, 26 & 27 (for December 1942, January 1943, February 1943, March 1943, and April 1943), Issue 28 (for May 1943), Issues 29, 30 & 31 (for June 1943, July 1943, and August 1943), Issue 32 (for September 1943), Issue 33 (for October 1943), Issues 34, 25 & 36 (for November 1943, December 1943, and January 1944), Issues 37, 38 & 39 (for February 1944, March 1944, and April 1944), Issues 40, 41, 42 & 43 (for May 1944, June 1944, July 1944, and August 1944), Issues 44 & 45 (for September 1944 and October 1944), and Issues 46 & 47 (for November 1944 and December 1944).
[120] Only a handful of Chetnik propaganda material from the uprising of 1941 in Serbia survived the war, and even though this is partly a result of the destruction of wartime documents, it is also reflective of the small amount produced.

agreement between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, based on the respect of national rights";[121] a rather feeble and anaemic call compared to that of the Partisans.[122] During the first half of 1942 the BBC became the main vehicle for Chetnik propaganda because of the constant movement of Mihailović and his staff, and radio broadcasts in March and April called upon "[y]oung Croat officers of the Yugoslav Army"[123] in the NDH armed forces to "[e]stablish contact with General Mihailović for a common struggle for freedom and the resurrection of our beautiful Fatherland, Yugoslavia."[124] On 17 May, Juraj Krnjević appealed to his people to join Mihailović's movement.[125] In April, Mihailović asked his government to "conduct propaganda amongst our Muslims to win them over and prepare them for the struggle against the occupying powers and Ustaše."[126] Following the establishment of the High Command in Gornje Lipovo, he summoned the Executive Committee of the Central National Committee (Moljević, Vasić, and Žujović) to the High Command in autumn and ordered them to produce propaganda.[127] A printing press was established,[128] and the Chetnik Movement, after a break of more than a year, launched its new central

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[121] "Srbi, Hrvati i Slovenci", 16 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 77.
[122] Proclamation by the Central Committee of the KPJ, "Radnici, seljaci i građani Jugoslavije!", undated (late June 1941), *Zbornik* Volume I, Book 1, pp. 11-17; Proclamation by the Central Committee of the KPJ to the Peoples of Yugoslavia, "Narodi Jugoslavije: Srbi, Hrvati, Slovenci, Crnogorci, Makedonci i drugi!", 12 July 1941, *Zbornik* Volume I, Book 1, pp. 18-21; Proclamation by the Central Committee of the KPJ to the Peoples of Yugoslavia, "Narodi Jugoslavije!", 25 July 1941, *Zbornik* Volume I, Book 1, pp. 22-26.
[123] Military Broadcast, 19 March 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5.
[124] Military Broadcast, 19 March 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 5. See Chapter IV, "National Policy in the Spring".
[125] Đuretić (1983) pp. 210-211.
[126] Telegram (Number 145) from Division General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 22 April 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 353.
[127] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500.
[128] Karchmar (1973) p. 587.

journal, *Ravna Gora*, in February 1943.[129] The propaganda that was composed, however, could only serve to frighten the non-Serbs; the first issue of *Ravna Gora* contained a map of postwar Yugoslavia as outlined in Moljević's *Homogenous Serbia*. During the Battle of the Neretva, however, chauvinistic slogans and themes almost entirely disappeared from Chetnik propaganda.[130] In line with the general reappraisal that took place in Mihailović's mind in the summer of 1943 following the disasters of the spring, propaganda, both towards the Serbs and non-Serbs, finally received the attention that it deserved. From this point onwards, propaganda was produced in ever-increasing quantities in the form of journals, leaflets, newsletters, pamphlets, and radio broadcasts, with much of it carrying Mihailović's signature.[131]

Chetnik propaganda was full of appeals for those in the NDH armed forces, as well as Croats and Muslims more generally, to join the JVO, or at least to support it clandestinely and then openly at the time of the great uprising. Such calls were based on Mihailović's authority as minister and chief of the JVO, the inevitability of an Allied victory, and promises of a better life in a future Yugoslavia. The threat of harsh punishment for those who found themselves in Axis formations after the war was also employed. A common theme was that the Croats and Muslims had to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Serbian people, and that this could be accomplished by joining the JVO.

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[129] The Interrogation of Draža Mihailović, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 500; Matić (1995) p. 69; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 318. The first issue of *Ravna Gora* came out on 1 February 1943 (Matić (1995) p. 69).
[130] See Chapter V, "The Battle of the Neretva".
[131] See Chapter V, "The Return to Serbia"; Chapter V, "Mihailović Takes the Lead"; Chapter V, "The Road to Ba"; and Chapter VI.

The ability of Chetnik propaganda to achieve its aims was seriously hindered by a number of problems. As discussed previously, very little of it was composed in the first half of the war, especially by the High Command and the Central National Committee, the two highest military and political bodies within the Chetnik Movement. The propaganda that was produced in this period differed, sometimes greatly, from region to region, reflecting the enormous independence enjoyed by local commanders and propaganda chiefs who were responsible for propaganda, their need to second-guess policy in the absence of both a central journal (until February 1943) and a publicly annunciated official policy (until January 1944), and local conditions. Propaganda, like so much else in the Chetnik Movement, was decentralised, which gave it a heterogeneous, parochial, inconsistent, and sometimes even contradictory character. Much of this was due to Mihailović's decision early in the war to shoulder local commanders with responsibility for propaganda,[132] and the failure of the High Command and Central National Committee to play a leading role till the summer of 1943. Far more damaging, however, were the veiled, and sometimes quite open, threats of collective punishment against the Croats and Muslims following the conclusion of the war, and the lateness with which Mihailović made clear and unambiguous statements that this would not be the case. Finally, the massacres of Croat and Muslim civilians caused irreparable damage to the image of Mihailović and his movement which no amount of propaganda could repair.

[132] Order Number 3 by Colonel Draža Mihailović for all *odred* commanders, 7 November 1941, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume I, p. 105).

The second tactic employed by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership was to approach the established prewar leadership of the Croats and Muslims with offers of cooperation to gain its support in the struggle against the Chetniks' enemies, and to assist in the recruitment of Croats and Muslims. Essentially, this meant dealing with the political parties that had represented the Croats and Muslims before the war, and with the Catholic Church and Islamic religious hierarchy. During the interwar years, the Croat and Muslim masses gave most of their votes to two political parties, the Croat Peasant Party and the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation respectively.[133] Initially, Mihailović did not attempt to contact the established leadership, probably mostly due to his decision to operate primarily amongst the Serbs, but as the war progressed this changed, partly as a result of his new position as head of Yugoslav resistance, partly in the hope of strengthening his movement, and partly to prevent them from joining the Partisans. The Chetnik Movement maintained regular contact with leading figures in the Croat Peasant Party throughout much of the war, and quite a number of meetings were held between the two organisations. The Chetniks were convinced that if they could get the support of the party, they would have the support of the Croatian nation, an idea that, at face value, appeared sound; the Croat Peasant Party had, after all, garnered the electoral support of the overwhelming majority of Croats in the prewar period and its head was in many ways the *de facto* leader of the Croatian people.[134] It does not appear that the

[133] This was in stark contrast to the Serbs, whose political loyalties were divided between a number of parties.
[134] Karchmar (1973) wrote that "[d]uring the inter-war period, the Croat Peasant Party dominated the political life of Croatia to the point of making it practically a one-party nation" (p. 125) which seems an accurate description of its political role.

leadership of the Catholic Church was ever approached,[135] probably because of the close relationship between it and the Ustaša regime, and the prominent role played by some of its members in the persecution of Serbs.[136] The opposite situation was true regarding the established Muslim leadership; the Chetniks concentrated their efforts on the Islamic religious hierarchy and almost entirely ignored the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation.

The strategy of seeking cooperation with the prewar Croat and Muslim leadership was deeply flawed. Like all political parties in the NDH, the Croat Peasant Party and Yugoslav Muslim Organisation were banned, and they subsequently fragmented in to numerous splinter groups.[137] Party members, high ranking and otherwise, reacted to the situation differently: a sizable number greeted the establishment of the NDH and cooperated with the Ustaše wholeheartedly, some out of principle and others out of opportunism; many withdrew from politics in the chaotic, uncertain, and dangerous times and adopted a wait-and-see approach. Of the small number who were prepared to have dealings with the Allied resistance, most were terrified of being discovered by the Axis and refused to commit anything to paper or take any concrete steps towards collaboration; only a handful actually joined the resistance, mostly in the latter half of the war, and mostly under the Partisan banner. Vladko Maček

[135] A letter purportedly written by Mihailović for Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac was presented at Mihailović's trial (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 99, 293, 294-296, 455-456), but Mihailović emphatically rejected penning it (*The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 293, 296).
[136] Steinberg (1994). Viktor Novak's (1948) enormous work contains the names of many Catholic clergymen who participated in the Ustaša Movement (pp. 527-1,100).
[137] One reason for this fragmentation was their heterogeneous nature, a characteristic common to such 'catch-all' parties (Karchmar (1973) p. 126). See Redžić (2005) for the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation during the war (pp. 166-173).

especially proved himself not up to the needs of the times; his passive stance ensured that events overtook him. Chetnik approaches to Maček and leading figures in the Croat Peasant Party especially, and the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation to a much lesser extent, were based on the assumption that they still commanded the respect of, and had influence over, the majority of Croats and Muslims as they had before the war, an assumption that was questionable given the great changes wrought by the war. Josip Cvijetić, a Croat member of the Central National Committee, warned at its second plenary session in June 1944 when the subject of cooperation with the Croat Peasant Party was discussed that both Maček and his party no longer possessed the political clout they had before the war,[138] but it seems that nobody in the Chetnik leadership grasped the accuracy and significance of this statement. The leadership of the Croat Peasant Party and Yugoslav Muslim Organisation failed to adjust to the conditions produced by the war, and their power was essentially destroyed. Finally, the fear that gripped many Croats and Muslims of an indiscriminate postwar Chetnik vengeance worked against any agreement. When the choice came down to the Chetniks and Partisans, that many who despised and dreaded communism were nonetheless prepared to cooperate with Tito rather than Mihailović attests to the strength of this fear.[139]

Mihailović's attempts to mobilise the *Domobrani* and other Croats and Muslims were hampered by his failure to create the necessary organisational

[138] Excerpts from the Second Plenary Session of the Central National Committee, 28-30 June 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 13.
[139] Tomasevich (1975) noted that this fear was "so great that even so strong an anti-communist as Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac preferred a Partisan victory as the lesser of two evils" (pp. 467-468).

framework in some regions, especially in Croatia and Slavonia, to accept officers and soldiers, and the behaviour of commanders in regions where the JVO did exist. Although Mihailović appealed to the Croats to join the JVO, he did not really provide the structure for their acceptance and integration; the JVO was virtually non-existent in the Croatian heartland of Croatia and Slavonia.[140] Responsibility for organising these two territories was initially given to the Command of Belgrade,[141] but it was busy enough managing the affairs of the capital city to devote the necessary time and energy to the vast stretch of northern Yugoslavia under its jurisdiction (Croatia, Slavonia, and Vojvodina). Although a Command of Croatia existed since at least the end of 1942,[142] it does not appear to have done very much. It was only in the second half of 1943 that a separate Command of Slavonia was established, but its work was hindered by its commander, Colonel Aleksandar Nikolić, who preferred the comfort and safety of Serbia;[143] he did not step foot on to his assigned territory until October 1944.[144] In this manner, the Croatian heartland was surrendered to the Partisans and

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[140] Although Captain Žarko Milurović intended to organise Chetnik units in Croatia and Slavonia composed of local Croats and Serbs, and Slavonian Serb refugees from Serbia in the spring of 1942 (Letter by Captain Žarko Milurović for Major Boško Todorović, 13 February 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 156-159), it does not appear that this was accomplished (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)). A JVO unit was eventually established in the vicinity of Novska in the summer of 1943, but it was destroyed by the Partisans soon thereafter (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)). As late as May 1944, the entire composition of the armed forces of the Command of Slavonia was a mere thirteen officers, eleven non-commissioned officers, and 90 soldiers (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)).

[141] At the beginning of November 1942, Mihailović gave Major Žarko Todorović an authorisation to "work on the organisation of units of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland in the [following] zones: Srem, Banat, Bačka, Slavonia and Croatia, as a delegate of the High Command" (Authorisation by Army General Draža Mihailović for Major Žarko Todorović, early November 1942, in Jelić-Butić (1986) p. 170).

[142] Letter by the Zagreb JRP leadership for the Command of Croatia, 27 December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 1, Document 43.

[143] In the middle of May 1944, the entire composition of the armed forces of the Command of Slavonia was a mere thirteen officers, eleven non-commissioned officers, and 90 soldiers (*Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3)).

[144] *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 157 (Footnote 3).

Ustaše, and a great section of the Croatian people remained beyond Mihailović's reach. Even in those regions with a large Croatian population where the JVO existed, such as Dalmatia, Hercegovina, and Lika, Mihailović's efforts were frustrated by the character and behaviour of local commanders. Trifunović Birčanin, although he seems to have sincerely desired cooperation with the Croats, was burdened by his stubbornness, incompetence, chauvinistic opinions, and a failure to grasp Croat fears and aspirations. The massacres in southern Dalmatia and western Hercegovina in the autumn of 1942 by Major Petar Baćović's Chetniks,[145] as well as those of the independent nationalist commander Mane Roković,[146] seriously damaged the chances of recruiting the Dalmatian and Hercegovinian Croats to the Chetnik cause. The situation in Dalmatia and Lika improved with the arrival of Mladen Žujović in the spring of 1943, but it seems that he arrived too late; either way, he was hampered, like most regional commanders, by his inability to impose his will upon the corps commanders.[147] On the whole, Mihailović's efforts to mobilise Croats in to the JVO failed to produce the desired results.

The wartime relationship between the Chetniks and Muslims was somewhat paradoxical; although the Muslims suffered far more than the Croats and any other nation at the hands of the Chetniks, they also provided the JVO

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[145] See Chapter IV, "Chetnik Massacres".
[146] Gizdić (1959b) pp. 573-575, 586; Jelić-Butić (1986) pp. 162-163.
[147] Major Zaharije Ostojić bemoaned the lot of a delegate of the High Command – a position not entirely dissimilar to that of a regional commander – in a letter to Mihailović from June 1943: "Of all of my difficult experiences until now, the role of a delegate in these circumstances is the most thankless job imaginable. In practice, this means that all duties and responsibilities are borne by the delegate, who simultaneously has no rights or sanctions." (Letter by Major Zaharije Ostojić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 12 June 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 756).

with the overwhelming majority of its non-Serb soldiers. The Muslims were the focus of a great deal of attention by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership, especially from late 1942 onwards,[148] partly because the Chetnik Movement operated in all of the lands inhabited by the Muslim nation (Bosnia, Hercegovina, and the Sandžak), all of which were earmarked for the postwar Serb federal unit, and partly because of Chetnik concerns that they would be mobilised by the Partisans.[149] The most important figures in the relationship between the Chetnik Movement and the Muslims were Major Fehim Musakadić, Mustafa Pašić, and Ismet Popovac, the prime movers of the entire effort to recruit the Muslim masses in to the JVO which began in the summer of 1942 and culminated in the creation of the MNVO at the end of that year. Especially in Hercegovina, the MNVO succeeded in mobilising a fair number of Muslims and securing the peaceful surrender of a number of Muslim communities. The successes with the Hercegovinian Muslims were crucially due to the presence of an organisational framework – the Muslim National Military Organisation – which could actually recruit Muslims, organise them in to units, and integrate them in to the JVO, where they saw action, most notably during the Battle of the Neretva. Although efforts to mobilise the Muslims continued until the end of the war, they lost most of their impetus after the middle of 1943 with the collapse of the Chetnik

[148] On 9 January 1943, Mihailović told Ostojić that the "work to gain the Muslims is very important." (Telegram (Number 93) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 8 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 45).
[149] One of the first occasions on which Mihailović expressed this concern was in May 1942 (Telegram from Division General Draža Mihailović to the Government-in-Exile, 6 May 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 248).

Movement outside of Serbia, and the deaths of Musakadić,[150] Pašić,[151] and Popovac.[152] Even though Mustafa Mulalić came to the High Command and became the *de facto* representative and spokesman of the Muslim nation, the Chetnik Movement never repeated its successes of late 1942 and early 1943. Whilst Musakadić, Pašić, and Popovac must receive most of the credit for the accomplishments of the wartime national policy towards the Muslims, Mihailović's support was crucial.

Although by the spring of 1942 Mihailović believed it necessary to expel the Muslims from Serb inhabited lands after the war,[153] it seems that his attitude towards them mollified as the war progressed. In October of that year, for example, he was open to the possibility that they could redeem themselves, as he explained to Jevđević:

> only by organising under the command of our officers and fighting against the Ustaše and communists, as well as by maintaining a loyal attitude towards the Serbian populace, can the Muslims repair the shameful role that they have played since the fall of Yugoslavia.[154]

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[150] Musakadić was captured and shot by the Partisans on 19 June 1943 near Kalinovik (Seferović (1999) p. 137; Šegrt (1964) pp. 331-333).
[151] Pašić was apparently arrested by the Germans when they captured Mostar in May 1943, and handed over to the Ustaše who killed him (Seferović (1999) p. 135).
[152] Popovac was murdered on 21 August 1943 by unknown individuals near Kruščica (Trebinje District) (Daily Report by the Commander of the NDH Dubrovnik Gendarmerie Command, in Seferović (1999) p. 138).
[153] Draža Mihailović's diary, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 1, Folder 3, Document 17, p. 34.
[154] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Dobroslav Jevđević, 8 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 658.

In his instructions to Đura Đurović in May 1943, he wrote that it was necessary for the "Muslims and minorities ... [to] ... work together, within the scope of our organisation, to punish their own offenders, and thus cleansed, within our ranks, to demonstrate their loyalty towards H. R. M. King Peter II and Yugoslavia."[155] By January 1944, Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership were of the opinion that the Muslims were Serbs of the Islamic faith, as can be seen from a leaflet which spoke of the "warm brotherly ties and cooperation between Muslim and Orthodox Serbs".[156] The following month Mihailović, Moljević, and Vasić expressed their belief that the Muslims were Serbs, and that all of them would reside within the Serb federal unit after the war.[157] Nonetheless, Mihailović promised a number of Muslim leaders from Sarajevo in April 1944 that he would "not seek to force any national characteristics upon the Muslims as long as they indentify themselves with a foreign faith".[158] By the summer of 1944, even Moljević had, at least publicly, abandoned his dream of expelling the Muslims after the war.[159]

Whilst it is possible to argue that Mihailović's actions and statements were nothing more than a grand deception to exploit the Muslims, who would have been expelled after the war anyway, it can be argued that his views on the Muslims became less hostile as the war progressed, and that his national policy

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[155] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Đura Đurović, 14 May 1943, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, pp. 12-13.
[156] "Muslimanima Bosne, Hercegovine i Starog Rasa-Sandžaka", 1 January 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 1, Document 1.
[157] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović, Stevan Moljević, and Dragiša Vasić for the Central National Committee, 12 February 1944, in Milovanović (1984) Volume II, p. 49.
[158] Letter by Army General Draža Mihailović for Hamdija Karamehmedović, 24 April 1944, *Rat i Mir Đenerala,* Volume II, p. 22.
[159] Stevan Moljević, "Muslimani i balkanska unija", *Istok,* Issue 10, 5 July 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 13, Folder 3, Document 16. This was actually the fourth issue (Matić (1995) p. 80).

reflected this. This latter contention might be plausible for the following reasons. A number of Muslims, headed by Mulalić, Musakadić, Pašić, and Popovac, declared themselves to be Serbs, and expressed loyalty to King Peter and Mihailović; they also condemned the Partisans and Ustaše, as well as the persecution and mass killing of Serbs.[160] Mihailović was rather fond of Musakadić and convinced of his sincerity, describing him as a "Yugoslav and Serb from head to toe".[161] These men pleaded with Mihailović to adopt a more benevolent stance towards the Muslim population. The argument that the Muslims were Serbs of the Islamic faith, an idea popular in Serb intellectual circles at the time,[162] provided the ideological justification for allowing the Muslims to remain in the Serb nation-state after the war, and by the autumn of 1943, according to Mulalić, the Chetnik leadership had decided that the Muslims would remain in the postwar Serb federal unit.[163] The participation of Muslims in the Chetnik Movement through the MNVO demonstrated that there were Muslims willing to fight for King and Fatherland, thus countering one of the main arguments for their expulsion after the war. How much Mihailović changed his wartime national policy towards the Muslims due to the efforts of the Muslim leaders, and

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[160] In a letter to Mihailović, Popovac wrote: "I and all correct Muslims acknowledge with pain in our souls and nausea that many Muslims have abandoned not only their brotherly, but also their human considerations, and committed crimes which we most resolutely condemn. We unanimously agree that all of these criminals be brought before their deserved punishment when the appropriate moment arrives." (Letter by Ismet Popovac for Army General Draža Mihailović, 21 July 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 458).
[161] Telegram (Number 367) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 28 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 139.
[162] Cvijić (1908) p. 19; Cvijić (1922) Volume II, Chapter 7; Ćorović (1925); Gravier (1912) pp. 924-931; Radovanović (1940) pp. 31-37; Ranke (1847) p. 76; Stanojević (1909). Cvijić (1922) wrote that "[i]t is known that there are Muslim Serbs of the Dinaric character from the Sava River through Bosnia, Hercegovina, and the former Sandžak of Novi Pazar to Mitrovica in Kosovo ... There are about 750,000 of them." (Volume II, Chapter 7).
[163] Letter by Mustafa Mulalić for Muhamed Preljubović, 3 December 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 4, Document 17.

how much due to the steadily deteriorating position of the Chetnik Movement after the defeats of the spring of 1943, is probably impossible to determine with any certainty. Whether this reflected a change of heart on Mihailović's part is, of course, similarly nigh impossible to ascertain.

Despite the fact that Mihailović and his closest collaborators in the High Command produced a national policy, its implementation on the ground was dependent upon local conditions and, far more importantly, the character of the local commander. Alongside commanders like Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić, who gave clear orders against the harming of Muslim civilians[164] and whose Rogatica Brigade (Romanija Corps) was quite possibly the most disciplined in the entire JVO,[165] were those like Đurišić, who seems almost to have reveled in describing the atrocities committed by the men of his Lim-Sandžak *Odred*, which was little more than an armed mob bent on loot and slaughter. Given the independence enjoyed by commanders, the national policies that they formulated were perhaps just as important as the central national policy composed in the High Command. Consequently, it is incorrect and misleading to describe the Chetnik Movement as an organisation that implemented a single, centrally formulated national policy according to a clearly articulated plan. Whilst it is possible to speak of a general

[164] Order Number 5 by Lieutenant Dobrica Đukić (commander of the Rogatica Brigade, Romanija Corps) for battalion commanders, 19 October 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 175, Folder 5, Document 15.
[165] In a report on the fighting between the Chetniks and Partisans in the Dinara region in early 1943, the Rogatica Brigade was described as the "best unit in all battles" (Report Number 273 by Momčilo Đujić for the Staff of the Command of Bosnian, Lika-Dalmatian, and Hercegovinian Military-Chetnik *Odredi,* 28 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 297).

national policy formulated by Mihailović and the High Command, it had to contend with local national policies.

Mihailović's wartime national policy efforts, on the whole, were a dismal failure, perhaps best illustrated by the decision of most non-Serbs to join the Partisans rather than the Chetniks as the war progressed. Whilst this was due to a number of factors, one of the most important was the negative image of Mihailović and his movement in the eyes of many non-Serbs which was primarily a result of the massacres committed against Croat and Muslim civilians and which was actively encouraged by the Partisans and Ustaše through their propaganda.[166] This leads to the issue of Mihailović's role in these mass killings, their nature, and whether they constitute genocide or some other form of mass killing.

## The Mass Killings

The mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians remains the worst blot on the record of the Chetnik Movement. Mihailović was charged with numerous such massacres and other war crimes at his trial,[167] and in his final speech described them as "the most serious"[168] indictments leveled against him. Before any discussion of these mass killings and Mihailović's role in them, it is necessary to point out that this thesis is not concerned with the killing of members and

[166] See, for example, Kovačić (1942b) Chapter IX and *Rezolucija o Osnivanju Antifašističkog Veća Narodnog Oslobođenja Jugoslavije* (1942) p. 1.
[167] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 37-39; *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 54-59.
[168] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 737.

supporters of the Partisan Movement, since it occurred as part of the civil war between the two organisations and was of a political nature. It seems that most of the Partisans killed by the Chetniks were Serbs,[169] which supports the contention that the casualties of the civil war were targeted because of their political rather than national affiliation. Nor is the discussion concerned with the killing of non-Serbs in armed formations such as the *Domobrani*, Green Cadre, Muslim militia, and Ustaše, since they perished as combatants in military engagements. Finally, it seems that the overwhelming majority of the Chetniks' non-Serb civilian victims were Croats and Muslims, and although this can not be stated with any certainty due to the absence of sufficient research on the subject, it is plausible considering that the Chetnik Movement was strongest in Bosnia, Dalmatia, Hercegovina, Montenegro, the Sandžak, and Serbia; territories inhabited mostly by Croats, Muslims, and Serbs.[170] Conversely, it was weakest in regions populated by Albanians (Kosovo, Macedonia, and Metohija), Germans (Bačka, Banat, Baranja, Slavonia, and Srem), Hungarians (Bačka), and Romanians (Banat);[171] peoples deemed undesirable by the Chetnik leadership[172] who might have been persecuted had the Chetnik Movement been stronger in these parts.

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[169] According to the results of the Census of the Victims of War (*Popis Žrtava Rata*) conducted in 1964, the Chetniks killed 140 Croat Partisans (112 fighters and 28 activists) and 256 Serb Partisans (159 fighters and 97 activists) on the territory of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (Graovac (1998) pp. 217-218). This was despite the fact that Croats made up some 75% of the population, whilst Serbs made up perhaps 15% (Graovac (1998) p. 217). There is no reason to think that this pattern was any different in other nationally mixed parts of Yugoslavia where the Chetnik Movement operated, given that the Partisan Movement was overwhelmingly Serb till well in to 1943. By the summer of 1943, the Chetnik Movement had been decimated outside of Serbia, and it was at about this time that the mass killing of non-Serbs more or less ceased (Dulić (2005) p. 295-295).
[170] See Maps 1 & 2.
[171] See Map 2.
[172] See "Characteristics of the National Policy" in this chapter.

Questions regarding the nature and intentionality of the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians, and Mihailović's role, are intimately connected with the Chetnik Movement's national policy since the mass killings were one of its most salient characteristics. Possibly the most contentious and perplexing question is whether the mass killings constituted genocide. Given that most definitions of genocide place great emphasis on demonstrating genocidal intent,[173] this is perhaps the best place to start. If a hard definition of intent is accepted, then it is difficult to argue that the Chetniks aimed to perpetrate genocide since no evidence exists that the mass killings were part of a coordinated, purposive, and sustained policy of targeting the Croats and Muslims for extermination. On the other hand, if a soft definition is adopted, then one could convincingly argue that given the Chetniks' aim of homogenising the national composition of various regions and the mass killing of Croats and Muslims in these regions, that Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership possessed sufficient intent. Similarly, the question of whether the target group was large enough to constitute genocide depends on the position taken. According to definitions that require the entire victim group to be targeted, it is not possible to argue that the Chetniks committed genocide. Conversely, if it is held that it is sufficient to target a substantial part of a target group, then some mass killings, especially the Pljevlja Massacre in early 1943, are candidates for genocide. This thesis is unable to conclusively answer the question of whether the Chetnik Movement committed genocide.

[173] See Chapter I, "Key Issues".

Given the imprecise nature of most definitions of genocide, Tomislav Dulić's theoretical model for understanding and classifying mass killings seems superior to what most other scholars have offered.[174] Dulić hypothesised four categories of mass killing: massacre, ethnocide (ethnic cleansing), attempted genocide, and genocide.[175] As stated earlier, no evidence exists that Mihailović or anyone in the Chetnik leadership planned the physical destruction of an entire nation. In fact, numerous efforts were made to prevent the death and suffering of non-Serb civilians during military operations.[176] There were, however, a number of programmatic documents and statements in which the forced expulsion of whole nations after the war was advocated and this was indeed adopted as policy, at least unofficially; but the ultimate aim was always to remove people, not kill them. This demonstrates the intent to commit ethnic cleansing, but not necessarily genocide. Although the Chetniks planned to implement their policy of forced resettlement in the postwar period, on at least two occasions important figures in the movement advocated that this be undertaken during the war: in January 1942, Major Boško Todorović argued for the "evacuation, extermination, and forcible expulsion of a significant number of Catholics and Muslims"[177] from eastern Bosnia, and in February 1942, Moljević composed a tract[178] in which he

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[174] See Chapter I, "Literature" and "Key Issues". See also Dulić (2005) pp. 21-24.
[175] See Chapter I, "Literature" and "Key Issues". See also Dulić (2005) pp. 21-24.
[176] See below.
[177] Report by Major Boško Todorović for Division General Draža Mihailović, 26 January 1942, in Hoare (2006) p. 152.
[178] Stevan Moljevic, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1.

recommended the "cleansing"[179] of the non-Serbian population during the war. According to Dulić's theoretical model, the national policy of the Chetniks is best described as ethnocidal, whilst the mass killings fall in to two distinct, yet closely related, categories: ethnocidal killings and massacres. This thesis is hesitant to apply the label of genocide to the national policy of the Chetnik Movement because of the absence of an unambiguous genocidal intent.

Notwithstanding questions regarding the most appropriate term for the mass killing of non-Serb civilians by the Chetniks, the question of the number of victims and of Mihailović's responsibility for these crimes remains to be addressed. Since the Second World War, numerous figures for the number of Croat and Muslim civilians killed by the Chetniks have been proposed, some of which place the number of victims in the hundreds of thousands;[180] in April 1944, a Bosnian Muslim emissary presented a brief to the British ambassador in Ankara in which it was claimed that the Chetniks had killed "more than 200,000 women, children, and old people",[181] while in 1972 the Croat émigré historian Ivo Omrčanin declared that the Chetniks had killed 500,000 Croats during the war.[182] Such figures, however, are impossible given the findings of research in to the number of Yugoslavs who died during the war conducted by Bogoljub Kočović, a Serb statistician, and Vladimir Žerjavić, a Croat demographer, who,

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[179] Stevan Moljević, *Današnji Položaj i Uloga Pojedinih Srpskih Oblasti u Stvaranju Homogene Srpske Države,* 26 February 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 2, Document 1.
[180] See Dizdar (2002) for an overview of these figures (pp. 329-333).
[181] Brief by Besim-beg Teskeredžić for the British ambassador in Ankara, 24 April 1944, in Dizdar (2002) p. 332.
[182] Omrčanin (1972) p. 181.

working independently and employing statistical data from the censuses of 1921, 1931, and 1948, arrived at figures that were very similar; Kočović calculated that 207,000 Croats and 86,000 Muslims perished during the war,[183] whilst Žerjavić calculated 192,000 Croats and 103,000 Muslims.[184] It should be noted that these are figures for the total number of war dead and do not provide any information about the manner in which people died or whether they were combatants or non-combatants. In early 1994, Žerjavić estimated that the Chetniks had killed 20,000 Muslim and 18,000 Croat civilians in Bosnia and Hercegovina and Croatia,[185] but these figures were criticised[186] for their failure to be grounded in any data and their highly politicised nature, given that they were compiled for primarily political purposes at the height of the War in Croatia (1991-1995).[187] For these reasons, they should be rejected. The most detailed research on the number of victims of the Chetnik terror was conducted by Igor Graovac, a Croat historian, who identified 2,905 people of all nations killed by the Chetniks on the territory of the Socialist Republic of Croatia, of whom 1,643 were Croat civilians.[188] It is necessary to point out that these figures represent the minimum number of victims; nonetheless, they are significantly lower than those suggested by Žerjavić and others.

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[183] Kočović (1990) p. 172.
[184] Žerjavić (1992) p. 168.
[185] I am indebted to Doctor Zdravko Dizdar of the Croatian Institute for History (*Hrvatski Institut za Povijest*) who kindly provided me with a copy of Žerjavić's table of figures. See Appendix 8.
[186] Graovac (2000a) pp. 535-537; Graovac (2000b) pp. 556-557.
[187] Graovac (1998) pp. 216-217; Graovac (2000b) p. 557.
[188] Graovac (1998) pp. 216-222. A total of 1,888 Croats were killed by the Chetniks in Croatia.

Most of the Chetniks' non-Serb civilian victims, however, were from Bosnia and Hercegovina. Although it does not appear that any research similar to Graovac's has been conducted for these two provinces, a number of figures do exist, although they vary greatly in size and are far from reliable. A prime example of this variation and unreliability is the number of Muslim civilians massacred by the Chetniks in the Čajniče and Foča districts in December 1941 and January 1942. Captain Sergije Mihajlović, one of the Chetnik commanders, apparently boasted that 5,000 Muslims had been killed,[189] whilst a NDH document from May 1942 claimed that "[o]n the three bridges in Goražde, about 7,000 people were slaughtered, and between Foča and Ustiprača the Drina River swallowed approximately 20,000 people."[190] On the other hand, another NDH document from the end of January 1942, that is, following the expulsion of the Chetniks, stated that "[r]umours of tens of thousands of Muslims killed is a pure fabrication. The truth is that their number in eastern Bosnia, including those killed in fighting, is not even over a thousand."[191] According to the Census of the Victims of War (*Popis Žrtava Rata*) from 1964,[192] the Chetniks killed 5,470 Muslims, 466 Serbs, and 365 Croats throughout the whole of Bosnia and Hercegovina during the Second World War,[193] but these figures appear to be under representative of the true number killed. On the basis of lists compiled by the State Commission for the Determination of the Crimes of the Occupier and its

[189] The interrogation of the *Domobran* Dragutin Očko, 29 January 1942, in Dizdar (2002) p. 103.
[190] Report by the Manager of the Čajniče District Administration, 18 May 1942, in Dizdar (2002) p. 183.
[191] Report by the Sarajevo Branch of the NDH State Reporting and Publicity Office for the Office of the Marshal, 31 January 1942, in Redžić (2005) p. 114 (Endnote 102).
[192] The results of the census – some 313 metres of documentary material – are held in the Archive of Yugoslavia (*Arhiv Jugoslavije*) in Belgrade in Record Group Number 179: Federal Commission for the Census of the Victims of War (*Savezna Komisija za Popis Žrtava Rata*).
[193] Dizdar (2002) p. 336.

Helpers (*Zemaljska Komisija za Utvrđivanje Zločina Okupatora i Njihovih Pomagača*), it is possible to state that the number of Muslims killed by the Chetniks throughout Yugoslavia was at least 15,000,[194] although it should be noted that this includes both combatants and non-combatants, and that most of these deaths occurred in 1941 and early 1942, that is, before Mihailović had formally integrated the Serb nationalist units outside of Serbia in to his organisation. The number of victims after the middle of 1942, at which point it is possible to talk about Mihailović having at least nominal control over the JVO throughout Yugoslavia and thus responsibility for these crimes, is perhaps some 6,000 Croat and Muslim combatants and non-combatants.[195] There is no evidence to support the claims that the Chetnik units – however loosely defined – killed many tens of thousands, let alone hundreds of thousands, of non-Serb civilians.

Alongside questions regarding the nature of the mass killings and the number of civilian victims, is the issue of Mihailović's role in, and responsibility for, the mass killings. After the war, a military court charged him with having "issued orders to his commanders to annihilate the Muslims (who he called Turks) and the Croats (who he equated with the Ustaše)",[196] as well as a number of individual massacres.[197] Mihailović defended himself against the accusations

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[194] See Appendix 9.
[195] See Appendix 10.
[196] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 37.
[197] Eight massacres against the non-Serbian population were specified: (1) in the Čajniče and Foča districts in December 1941 and January 1942; (2) in Foča in August 1942; (3) on Mount Jahorina and in Ustikolina in August 1942; (4) in Makarska in September 1942; (5) in the Prozor District in October 1942; (6) in Drežnica (Mostar District) in the autumn of 1942; (7) in the Bijelo Polje

on the basis of five arguments. First, he contended that he had not exercised control over the Chetnik Movement: "It was like that. Everybody did what he liked."[198] He lamented that he "couldn't check"[199] the commanders because he "did not have any sanctions. I could not replace commanders. Insofar as I was successful, it was only in a few cases."[200] Instead, he argued that blame for the war crimes lay with individual commanders since "[a]ll of them, without exception, worked on their own initiative."[201] Second, Mihailović asserted that he had not been properly informed about the mass killings and other war crimes, declaring that he "knew the least"[202] and that commanders "hid events from me."[203] Although he admitted having received reports about the massacres, he "did not believe many reports from my commanders."[204] Referring to the Pljevlja Massacre in February 1943, he stated that he thought "those numbers, which they cited, were exaggerated",[205] and that with regards to the number of victims of the massacre in Foča in August 1942 he did "not believe that they are accurate, since often in reports it is written that 1,000 to 2,000 were destroyed, which is a large difference."[206] Third, he defended himself by pointing out that he had not ordered the killing of civilians: "It can be seen from the telegrams and from what was said, that I did not say: kill prisoners, burn down villages, kill women and

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District in January 1943; and (8) in the Čajniče and Foča districts in February 1943 (*Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 37-38).
[198] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 334.
[199] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 336.
[200] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 729.
[201] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 729.
[202] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 368.
[203] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 737.
[204] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 351.
[205] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 658.
[206] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 731-732.

children. I never said such things."[207] Fourth, the mass killings were explained as the unanticipated outcome of necessary military operations. Mihailović stated that he "could not believe that they burnt villages and killed the peaceful population, nor could I imagine that such crimes against the populace were possible."[208] The capture of Foča in August 1942 was described as vital to "clean up the Italian militia which was creating difficulties for us, and we could not pass through villages",[209] while Đurišić's campaign in the Lim River valley in January 1943 was deemed essential to "master the Lim and to cleanse this part of the Sandžak of the militia armed by the Italians".[210] Finally, the mass killings were described as retribution for the terror of the Ustaše and Muslim militia against Serb civilians:

> entire regions were devastated by the Muslims, and the subsequent revenge was committed in every possible manner. The men avenged themselves in battle. The Drina carried away many corpses from all three sides. The Drina was a river of blood. The people avenged themselves for the crimes that the Ustaše had committed.[211]

Referring to the capture of Foča in August 1942, he stated that the "massacre was committed as retaliation. I can not name the perpetrators. They were combatants who exacted vengeance."[212] According to this argument, the massacres were a form of vengeance for those previously committed by the Ustaše. Consequently, blame for them lay with the commanders and rank and file, not Mihailović. None

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[207] *The Trail of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 377.
[208] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 732.
[209] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 658.
[210] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 738.
[211] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 269.
[212] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* pp. 731-732.

of these arguments, however, swayed the court, and it found Mihailović guilty of having "fuelled national and religious hatred and strife amongst the peoples of Yugoslavia, because of which his Chetnik bands perpetrated mass slaughters against the Croatian, Muslim, and Serbian population",[213] and sentenced him to death.

Mihailović's defence was, of course, that of a man facing his demise so it should be taken with a fair amount of scepticism. Even so, his arguments appear to have had some veracity. It is true, for example, that he did not exercise effective control over the Chetnik Movement and that commanders largely did as they pleased, a problem that was evident from the earliest days of the movement's existence and does not appear to have been adequately solved. As early as the autumn of 1941, a group of officers organised a plot against Mihailović, and although it was uncovered, he could "not do anything because I did not have other officers."[214] During a Partisan offensive in the middle of November 1941 which threatened to overrun Ravna Gora, he ordered Major Jezdimir Dangić to cross the Drina River with his Bosnian Chetniks,[215] but this command was simply ignored.[216] Đurišić seems to have had nothing but contempt for his superior; in late 1942, he hinted quite openly to the British liaison mission that he was available if they ever wanted Mihailović replaced as

[213] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 745.
[214] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 729.
[215] Order by Colonel Draža Mihailović for Major Jezdimir Dangić, 9 November 1941, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, pp. 72-75.
[216] Karchmar (1973) pp. 254-256, 477-478.

the head of the Chetnik Movement,[217] and in May 1943, during a meeting with a German officer, he repudiated Mihailović, calling him "an unsteady visionary wandering through the land"[218] who was "overrated".[219] Baćović described threats of military courts and the death penalty as "the subject of laughter".[220] Even though Mihailović made numerous attempts to establish control over the commanders and their armed units – primarily through the appointment of regional commanders, and delegates and inspectors of the High Command – these efforts were a failure. Commanders, civilian and officer alike, resisted any encroachment on their independence; Colonel Jevrem Simić, the Inspector of the High Command (*Inspektor Vrhovne Komande*) for Serbia,[221] was murdered by a corps commander,[222] and a number of officers perished under mysterious circumstances in the Dinara region, leading to accusations that they had been murdered by Momčilo Đujić,[223] who seems to have disliked officers generally.[224] The endemic lack of discipline led to the twin evils that bedevilled the Chetnik Movement: its crippling effect on military prowess which made its destruction at the hands of the Partisans largely inevitable, and the war crimes committed not

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[217] Deakin (1971) pp. 151-152.
[218] Report by Lieutenant Colonel F. W. Heinz (Commander of the Fourth Regiment of the Brandenburg Division), 11 May 1943, in Tomasevich (1975) p. 252.
[219] Report by Lieutenant Colonel F. W. Heinz (Commander of the Fourth Regiment of the Brandenburg Division), 11 May 1943, in Tomasevich (1975) p. 252.
[220] Telegram (Number 120) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 9 March 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 446.
[221] Order by Colonel Jevrem Simić for Captain Dragiša Ninković, 23 May 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 721-722.
[222] *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* pp. 297, 377.
[223] Letter by Lieutenant Đorđe Nikolić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 18 April 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 154, Folder 3, Document 34; Letter by Mane Roković for Momčilo Đujić, 15 May 1944, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 153, Folder 6, Document 15.
[224] Report by Vasilije Marović for Major Slavoljub Vranješević, 17 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, pp. 380-385; Report by Captain Ilija Jevtić for Major Slavoljub Vranješević, 20 February 1944, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 3, pp. 385-396.

only against Croats and Muslims, but also against Serbs,[225] the very people the movement was created to protect.

Although Mihailović was aware from at least the summer of 1942 that massacres of the Croat and Muslim civilian population were being committed by JVO units,[226] he had reason to question the accuracy of the information he received. One reason was that commanders sent him conflicting reports about the numbers killed; figures for the massacre in Foča (August 1942) ranged from 300[227] to 2,000[228] Muslim civilian victims. Some commanders reported numbers that were unbelievably high; Đurišić's claim to have slaughtered 9,200 Muslims in eight days[229] warranted scepticism. Given that almost all commanders sent self-serving and inaccurate reports about conditions on their territories, the strength of units, and their military prowess,[230] it is not particularly surprising that Mihailović placed little faith in what his commanders said about the number of Croats and Muslims killed.

Mihailović's claim that he "did not say: kill prisoners, burn down villages, kill women and children",[231] also appears to be largely accurate, perhaps best evinced by the failure of the prosecution to produce any document ordering such

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[225] The Chetnik terror against the Serbs of Serbia is comprehensively dealt with in Nikolić (1999).
[226] See Chapter IV, "Chetnik Massacres".
[227] Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 592.
[228] Telegram (Number 466) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 23 August 1942, in *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 91.
[229] Report by Major Pavle Đurišic for Army General Draža Mihailović, 13 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 182.
[230] Tomasevich (1975) p. 183.
[231] *The Trail of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 377.

things. In fact, Mihailović issued instructions against the killing and mistreatment of Muslim civilians. On 23 January 1943, he told Ostojić that "Musakadić is to continue working, and you are to help him so as to prevent the killing of Muslims ... Court-martials and propaganda important."[232] In early February, he ordered the Montenegrins not to attack Muslims who were well-disposed towards the Chetniks on their march to the Neretva River.[233] On 15 February, he reported that Đurišić was endeavouring to get his men to behave better towards the Muslims, and that Ostojić should make similar efforts with his own soldiers.[234] When pressed to approve an attack on the Ustaša stronghold of Fazlagića Kula in Hercegovina,[235] Mihailović agreed, but made it clear that indiscriminate killing was forbidden: "When your countrymen arrive, most severely forbid the killing of Turks and tell them that there are differences between them".[236] Baćović, Đurišić, and Ostojić, despite the fact that troops under their command were responsible for numerous massacres of the Croat and Muslim civilian populace, issued orders against such things. Prior to the attack on Foča in August 1942, Ostojić gave orders forbidding the killing of women and children,[237] and in early 1943 when he formulated a plan for the destruction of

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[232] Telegram (Number 740) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 23 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 338.
[233] Telegram (Number 536) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 9 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 209.
[234] Telegram (Number 617) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 15 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 213.
[235] Telegram (Number 1,331) from Major Zaharije Ostojić to Army General Draža Mihailović, 20 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 245.
[236] Telegram (Number 682) from Army General Draža Mihailović to Major Zaharije Ostojić, 21 February 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 335.
[237] Letter by Major Petar Baćović and Dobroslav Jevđević for Army General Draža Mihailović, undated (probably from the end of August 1942), *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 592;

the Muslim militia in the Čajniče District, he was careful to include orders against the harming of civilians:

> (11) During the action, commanders will take the sternest measures to forbid all pillage, to prevent the killing of innocent men, women, and children, and to ensure the greatest order and discipline within their units so as to maintain the reputation of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland. Similarly, the burning of homes must be prevented.[238]

In late 1942, prior to the departure of his Hercegovinians for the Dinara region, Baćović gave explicit orders against war crimes: "NOBODY IS PERMITTED TO MISTREAT women, children, and unprotected inhabitants."[239] In preparation for the attack on the Muslim militia in southeastern Bosnia in February 1943, Đurišić gave his subordinates the following orders:

> (12) *Behaviour*. Do not attack the Italians. All Muslim combatants, Ustaše, and communists are to be killed. Women and children are not to be killed ... Burn Bukovica. The remaining villages are not to be burnt insofar as this is not tactically necessary.[240]

Numerous such orders were given during the Battle of the Neretva.[241] Despite these and other such commands, the Chetniks simply disobeyed them and continued to slaughter Croats and Muslims, often in the most bestial manner. The commanders, for their part, do not seem to have punished anyone for these

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[238] Order Number 1 by Major Zaharije Ostojić for the commanders of the Drina Corps, Mileševo Corps, and Durmitor Brigade, 3 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 26.
[239] Order by Major Petar Baćović for subordinate commanders and soldiers, December 1942, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 171, Folder 5, Document 5 (Capitalisation in original).
[240] Order Number 115 by Major Pavle Đurišic for subordinate commanders, 29 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, pp. 126-127 (Italics in original).
[241] See Chapter V, "The Battle of the Neretva".

atrocities. Given that orders of a military nature were ignored, it is hardly surprising that humanitarian ones were disregarded as well.

The argument that the military operations which accompanied the mass killings were necessary also appears to be valid. Controlling Foča and southeastern Bosnia were crucial to ensure that the connection between the four regions which constituted the heartland of the Chetnik Movement – eastern Bosnia, Hercegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia[242] – remained under the control of the JVO and allowed for the free passage of troops between these areas. The Sandžak was important for the same reason. The participation of Chetniks in operations *Albia* and *Alfa* was part of Mihailović's general plan to destroy the Partisans,[243] who were concentrated in Bosanska Krajina.[244]

Mihailović's contention that the Chetniks considered the mass killing of Croat and Muslim civilians as a form of vengeance for the atrocities committed against the Serbian population by the Ustaše has some merit. Such a notion of revenge can be observed in the songs sung by Chetnik soldiers, one of the few pieces of historical evidence left by the predominantly illiterate peasantry who comprised the Chetnik Movement's rank and file. Following the massacre in the Prozor region, for example, troops returning home sang, "When we were in the

[242] Karchmar (1987) pp. vi-vii.
[243] Leković (1966) pp. 79-100; Milazzo (1975) pp. 96-102.
[244] See Map 9.

Rama valley, we avenged our pits."[245] Another song from the period described the mass killings as retribution for the Ustaša massacres of the previous year:

> Now Ustaša heads are flying,
> Serbs are avenging their dead!
> While a Muslim woman in black weeps,
> Fazlagića Kula shakes.
> From his proud mountain,
> a Chetnik descends to the sea.
> Through the flat field of Imotski
> he slaughters every Ustaša.
> The knife whistles, heads fly,
> Serbs avenge their dead of last year.
> Our sword will not stop
> whilst there is a single living Ustaša![246]

According to John Allcock, the atrocities demonstrated "historical echoes, regularities, rationality and indeed, what might be described ... as a "rhetoric of atrocity"."[247] Historically, the Balkan peoples have engaged in behaviours that outsiders have considered barbaric; the beheading or impaling of people was a common form of punishment in the Ottoman lands,[248] whilst the cutting off of noses belonging to enemies, dead and otherwise, was deemed an act of bravery amongst Montenegrins.[249] Serbian epic poetry lauded Đorđe Petrović, the leader

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[245] *Kad smo bili u dolini Rame, osvetismo naše jame* (Ćemalović (1986) p. 131).
[246] "Četničke pesme", undated (1942), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 116, Folder 2, Document 25.
[247] Allcock (2000) p. 395.
[248] Allcock (2000) pp. 395-396.
[249] Allcock (2000) p. 396. Edith Durham, a British traveler and writer, recorded the opinions of a Montenegrin who she met in 1912: "Kovatchevitch, the lame schoolmaster of Podgoritza, "Professor of Modern Languages", and proud of having been in British employ in Egypt, said to me gleefully: "Now you will see plenty of noses! Even baskets full." I told him sternly that such conduct would disgust all of Europe. He flew into a rage and declared nose-cutting was a national custom and Turks not human beings ... The desire to take a nose is so great that a man whose hands were not free would seize his enemy's nose in his teeth and try to bite if off." (Quoted in Allcock (2000) p. 386).

of the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813), for killing 'Turks' and destroying their communities:

> After Đorđe had stirred the Serbs
> and estranged them from the Turks,
> then Đorđe passed through the counties
> and torched the Turkish watchtowers,
> and toppled the Turkish summer houses,
> and struck at the Turkish towns.
> All of the Turkish towns he torched,
> all females and males were put to the sword ...[250]

The Montenegrin Vespers – a massacre of converts to Islam at the beginning of the eighteenth century which may not have occurred[251] – has been described as "the defining moment"[252] of the Montenegrin nation, immortalised in the famous *Gorski Vijenac* (1847).[253] These historical examples address questions of justice and the manner in which transgressions should be punished; they justify and rationalise such behaviours. It has been argued that traditional forms of justice such as the blood feud "underwent a resurgence in those periods when the state failed to act as the sole source of the effective dispensation of justice or has been regarded as intrinsically illegitimate by virtue of its identification with alien élites."[254] Both of these were true of occupied Yugoslavia, especially the NDH. The Chetnik concept of revenge can only be understood by examining its roots in pre-modern South Slav society.

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[250] Đurić (1987) pp. 664-665.
[251] Roberts (2007) pp. 132-135.
[252] Allcock (2000) p. 399.
[253] Petrović Njegoš (1847).
[254] Allcock (2000) p. 389.

The validity of Mihailović's arguments leads to the question of whether the verdict in his trial was appropriate and just. Mihailović was found guilty of having violated two laws:[255] the *Law on Criminal Offenses against the People and State* (1945),[256] and the *Law on the Prohibition of Inciting National, Racial, and Religious Hatred* (1945).[257] According to these statutes, especially the former, Mihailović was undoubtedly guilty, and his death sentence was in accordance with the legislation. The problem, however, was that the *Law on Criminal Offenses against the People and State* (1945) was written in such a manner so as to ensure that Tito and the Partisans could not be prosecuted, since it declared that

> A crime against the people and state is any act which aims to employ violence to overthrow or threaten the existing system of government of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, or to threaten its external security, or the fundamental democratic, political, national, and economic achievements of the War of Liberation: a federal state arrangement, the equality and brotherhood of the Yugoslav peoples, and a people's government.[258]

Accordingly, the numerous mass killings committed by the Partisans during and after the war such as the Red Terror in Hercegovina and Montenegro in the winter of 1941/1942,[259] the massacre of JVO officers, soldiers, and their families

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[255] *Draža Mihailović Pred Sudom,* p. 743.
[256] "Zakon o krivičnim delima protiv naroda i države", *Službeni List Demokratske Federativne Jugoslavije,* Issue 66/1945, 1 September 1945.
[257] "Zakon o zabrani izazivanja nacionalne, rasne i verske mržnje i razdora", *Službeni List Demokratske Federativne Jugoslavije,* Issue 36/1945, 29 May 1945.
[258] "Zakon o krivičnim delima protiv naroda i države", *Službeni List Demokratske Federativne Jugoslavije,* Issue 66/1945, 1 September 1945.
[259] Djilas (1977) pp. 147-169; Karchmar (1973) pp. 387-388, 389-394; Redžić (1999); Roberts (2007) pp. 360-363. Djilas (1977) described how Communists "confirmed their devotion [to the party] by killing their own fathers, and ... dancing and singing around the bodies" (p. 149).

in Bribir in September 1943,[260] the mass killings in Bleiburg (Austria)[261] and Kočevje (Slovenia)[262] towards the end of the war, the ethnic cleansing of the Yugoslav Germans,[263] and the bloody consolidation of power in Serbia,[264] were not crimes because they were not committed with the aim to overthrow the communist regime or the "achievements of the War of Liberation".[265] This does not mean that the mass killings committed by Mihailović and the Chetniks were more morally reprehensible than those committed by Tito and the Partisans; it only means that the latter possessed the power to dictate who was a war criminal and who was a war hero.

## Concluding Remarks

The national policy of the Chetnik Movement was dominated by Serbian nationalism and the desire by Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership to do what they believed was best for the Serbian nation. The interests of the other peoples who inhabited the Yugoslav lands were ignored, or at best relegated to a distant second place, in all considerations, both wartime and postwar. The Chetniks believed that the interests of the Serbian people would best be served by the creation of a nation-state for them through the amalgamation of all lands inhabited by Serbs, or at least those territories with a sizeable Serbian population. Although this was the common goal of much of the Chetnik

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[260] Report on the activities of the Sušak JVO unit, undated (probably from the end of 1943), Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 157, Folder 3, Document 29; Ivetić (2004) pp. 136-150.
[261] Tolstoy (1986); Tomasevich (2001) pp. 757-768.
[262] Karapandžić (1959).
[263] Geiger (1997); Schindler (2003) pp. 221-228.
[264] Cvetković (2006).
[265] "Zakon o krivičnim delima protiv naroda i države", *Službeni List Demokratske Federativne Jugoslavije,* Issue 66/1945, 1 September 1945.

leadership, there were differences over it and other aspects of the national policy: whether Yugoslavia was preferable to an independent Serbia; whether the state should be centralised or federalised; whether certain non-Serbian nations should remain or be expelled. Some in the leadership disagreed with the aim of uniting all regions populated by Serbs in to a single political unit and instead advocated a federal model akin to the Partisan one,[266] although they were most assuredly a minority. It is perhaps most accurate and revelatory to view the national policy of the Chetnik Movement as encompassing a spectrum of positions, ranging from moderate Yugoslavists, such as Živko Topalović, to extreme Serb chauvinists, such as Moljević. Mihailović was usually closer to the moderate end of the spectrum, although at times he strayed in the other direction. Unlike the Partisan Movement which had a single, clear, and detailed official national policy that its leadership formulated, espoused, implemented, and enforced, the Chetnik Movement's national policy did not emerge or function in the same way. Like almost every other aspect of the movement, the national policy was decentralised and heterogeneous. To describe the national policy of the Chetnik Movement as nationalistic obscures just as much as it reveals, and those who have sought a single grand Chetnik national policy have failed to grasp its essentially multifarious nature.

The ideology of Serbian nationalism, however, was a burden that weighed heavily on Mihailović and the Chetnik Movement, and was both a symptom and cause of the internal weaknesses that eventually led to both of their destructions.

[266] Topalović (1967) p. 45.

Whilst this ideology had served the Serbian people and state well during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, since it was arguably the most potent instrument of political mobilisation and state-building, it had failed during the first Yugoslavia to serve as a rallying point for the Serbs, let alone the non-Serbs, in its poorly disguised Yugoslav variant. It failed, far more spectacularly, during the Second World War. Yet Mihailović and the Chetnik leadership could not break away from this ideology, nor recognise that it could never really address the Yugoslav national question. Characterised by war, foreign occupation, nationally motivated violence, and the radicalisation of the masses, the times demanded a new ideology, and the Partisans with their genuinely egalitarian multinational Yugoslavism stepped in to satisfy this need. When the times changed once again half a century later, the Partisans' national policy failed in its own spectacular manner.

The ideology of Serbian nationalism provided the framework within which Chetnik forces committed a series of mass killings and other war crimes against the non-Serb civilian population. Whilst this thesis has argued that this ideology was not the sole or even principal motivation of the perpetrators of these crimes, it certainly provided a schema within which these acts could be understood and even justified. Although the ordinary Chetnik soldiers who committed these crimes, and those relatively few commanders who condoned or encouraged them, were not necessarily motivated by some plan to ethnically cleanse or kill the non-Serb population from the territories designated to become part of the Serb national unit, they could consider such acts as excusable and

indeed praiseworthy if they were done for the benefit of the Serbian nation. Political ideologies often function as a framework for the justification of otherwise unacceptable acts. The Partisans' systematic killing of class enemies and enemy collaborators was also justified, at times quite explicitly, by their ideology of class conflict and national liberation.

The Chetnik national policy, in particular the goal of creating a Serb national unit, was occasionally cited as the justification for the mass killing of non-Serbs. Probably the best example of this was the statement made by Milan Šantić at a meeting in Trebinje in July 1942,[267] where be called for the "[c]reation of Great Serbia",[268] arguing that "Serbian lands must be cleansed of Catholics and Muslims. Only Serbs will live in them. The cleansing will be accomplished thoroughly. We will squeeze and destroy all of them without exception or pity."[269] It was Šantić's contention that "[w]hat the Catholics and Muslims did to the Serbian people gives us the moral justification for everything we do."[270] Here is a clear example of a link between the stated aims of the national policy and the mass killings, although it should be pointed out that Šantić's statement was hardly official policy. Such examples, however, are exceedingly rare, and it is questionable if any significant number of people in the Chetnik leadership held

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[267] See Chapter IV, "Mihailović's Arrival in Montenegro".
[268] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,027.
[269] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,028.
[270] German Consulate in Sarajevo, Transcript of speech given by Milan Šantić in Trebinje on 23 July 1942, 20 August 1942, United States National Archives, Record Group 242, *T-501,* Roll 265, Frame 1,028.

this view. Furthermore, it is disputable whether the link between the national policy and the mass killing of non-Serb civilians was as simple and unidimensional as some scholars have argued; the motives behind the mass killings were complex and often unrelated to ideological reasons, and included bloodlust, personal enrichment, hatred of the enemy, peer pressure, psychological disturbance, and revenge. The mass killings are best understood as the complicated interplay of numerous factors.

Finally, no evidence was found that Mihailović justified the mass killings and other war crimes by referring to the national policy of the Chetnik Movement or the desire to create a Serb nation-state. His justifications, if they can be described as such, were that the mass killings were a form of vengeance by the Serbian people for real and perceived injustices. His failure to punish wrongdoers and his seeming indifference to these aspects of wartime Chetnik behaviour may well have stemmed from a conviction that the mass killings were justifiable and indeed praiseworthy since their ultimate aim was the creation of a nationally homogenous Serb state, but this is based on the assumption that Mihailović was far more bloodthirsty and callous than the available evidence suggests.

# Appendices

1. Ranks of the Royal Yugoslav Army
2. Lucien Karchmar on Order Number 370
3. The structure of the Chetnik Movement according to Lucien Karchmar
4. The Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (November 1920)
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6. The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation (31 December 1942)
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8. The number of Croats and Muslims killed in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, and Srem according to Vladimir Žerjavić (1 January 1994)
9. The number of Croats and Muslims killed by the Chetniks (Combatants and non-combatants)

10. The number of Croats and Muslims killed by the Chetniks in individual massacres (Combatants and non-combatants)

# Appendix 1: Ranks of the Royal Yugoslav Army

## Commissioned

| | |
|---|---|
| *Armiski Đeneral* | Army General |
| *Diviziski Đeneral* | Division General |
| *Brigadni Đeneral* | Brigade General |
| *Pukovnik* | Colonel |
| *Potpukovnik* | Lieutenant Colonel |
| *Major* | Major |
| *Kapetan Prve Klase* | Captain (First Class) |
| *Kapetan Druge Klase* | Captain (Second Class) |
| *Poručnik* | Lieutenant |
| *Potporučnik* | Second Lieutenant |

## Non-Commissioned

| | |
|---|---|
| *Zastavnik* | Warrant Officer |
| *Narednik Vodnik Prve Klase* | Sergeant Major (First Class) |
| *Narednik Vodnik Druge Klase* | Sergeant Major (Second Class) |
| *Narednik Vodnik Treće Klase* | Sergeant Major (Third Class) |
| *Narednik* | Sergeant |
| *Podnarednik* | Second Sergeant |
| *Kaplar* | Corporal |

## Appendix 2: Lucien Karchmar on Order Number 370

Back at the end of September or beginning of October, the nationalists of Lower Vasojevići, taking advantage of the cooperation which temporarily existed between the Četniks and the Partisans in the Sandjak and Western Serbia, sent out another envoy to locate the mysterious Mihailović and discover what he was up to. The choice fell on Capt. Rudolf Perhinek, a Slovene who had taken up residence in Berane and had participated in the July uprising. Perhinek made his way to Ravna Gora, and gave Mihailović an ample report on the situation in northeastern Montenegro, including the names of the most important nationalist leaders.[10] Mihailović probably did not know Djurišić, but he must have known Lašić, a fellow general staff officer, at least by reputation. On October 15, he gave Perhinek two rather laconic authorizations, one appointing Lašić to organize Četnik formations in Montenegro, and making him the Regional Commander for that area, and the other giving Djurišić the command of the Četnik *odredi* which he was to establish in the Lim river valley and the Sandjak.[11]

Perhinek did not depart Ravna Gora immediately, and a few days later, with the outbreak of the civil war in Serbia, he was cut off from Montenegro by a belt of hostile Partisan territory. He finally got away at the beginning of December, avoiding the advancing Germans, and on December 18 reached Mount Golija near the borders of the Sandjak.

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[10] Živanović, Vol. I, p. 135.
[11] *Zbornik,* Vol. III/4, p. 467; *Dokumenti o izdajstvu ...,* pp. 7-8, #1; Marjanović, "Prilozi...", p. 202.

Meanwhile, Djurišić became impatient at the lack of news from Serbia. The situation in Montenegro had deteriorated, and contact with Mihailović was now far more urgent: his official status, daily proclaimed on the London radio, made him the natural leader of all nationalists, enabling him to issue the directives which would unite them and tell them what to do. In early December, Djurišić gathered a large escort and made his way to the Sandjak, reaching Golija on December 20.

Around this journey, the Montenegrins later built a legend which today has become enshrined in Četnik hagiography, and, for different reasons, in Partisan historiography. On his return, Djurišić claimed to have visited Mihailović at his headquarters. This version later acquired virtually the strength of dogma: Djurišić receiving from Mihailović's own hands anointment as the Četnik prophet of Montenegro. But in reality Djurišić never reached Mihailović. The country north of Golija was saturated with German troops, Ravna Gora had been overrun by the enemy, and it was uncertain whether Mihailović was still alive. However, Djurišić was now intercepted by Perhinek, who handed over the brief authorizations,[12] and also the news of the real situation in Serbia; the insurrection defeated, the Četniks scattered, and Mihailović a fugitive in the hills, and possibly dead. It was not quite the cheering tidings which Djurišić had hoped to bring back to the Vasojevići.

[12] Živanović, *loc. cit.*

The reconstruction of Djurišić's next move is partially conjectural, but all indications point to its validity. It would appear that Djurišić, a resourceful and enterprising man, now sat down and wrote himself a lengthy directive, the famous, or infamous, Order #370, to which he boldly signed Mihailović's name.[13]

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[13] The reasons for assuming that Djurišić forged Order #370 are the following:

a) No original of this document seems to have been found, but only a copy attested by Djurišić as being genuine (Marjanović, "Prilozi...", p. 181).

b) The order is firmly connected in Četnik memorial literature with the presumed personal encounter between Mihailović and Djurišić; but this encounter did not take place. This is attested not only by Perhinek's testimony in Živanović, Vol. I, but also by various officers who were with or near Mihailović's headquarters during this period, and who aver that Djurišić never came, and that Mihailović met him for the first time in June 1942. It is symptomatic that the various stories do not agree on *where* the meeting took place; e.g. Joksimović, in *Njegoš* 1, p. 99, says that it was on Mt. Golija, whereas Minić (p. 124) chooses Ravna Gora.

c) The order is dated 20 December which makes it physically impossible that Djurišić could have obtained it from Mihailović and brought it back with him to Montenegro. Djurišić left Zaostro in the first half of December and took about 10 days to get to Golija, which he barely reached on December 20. He took about the same length of time to return, since he was back in Zaostro on January 1 or 2. Had he continued with a round trip from Golija to Ravna Gora, his journey would have lasted at least two or three weeks longer; witness the time it took Perhinek to get from Ravna Gora to Golija. Not only would he have had to dodge German and Nedićite troops, but the problem of locating Mihailović would have consumed much time; the latter was in constant movement about the hills of Western Serbia, and his own staff was sometimes unable to contact him. The same time element makes it impossible that a courier bearing a document dated from December 20 could have caught up with Djurišić before his return to Montenegro. There would have been, in any case, no *reason* for Mihailović to write the order and rush it off posthaste to Djurišić (to whom he had already sent the authorization of October 15) unless he *knew* that Djurišić was in Serbia; again, the time element makes this impossible. But Djurišić had to date the forgery so that it would accord with his story of having been to visit Mihailović; i.e. to the midpoint of his journey.

d) The document refers at least twice to verbal instructions and explanations on various points given to Djurišić by Mihailović. Since their meeting never took place, such instructions were impossible. Djurišić obviously put in these bits to allow himself, later on, to manufacture "official" policy on any point he forgot to include in the order.

e) The tone and contents of the document are far more "Montenegrin" than "Serbian", and in particular seem to reflect the character of Djurišić rather than that of Mihailović. The blood-thirsty intransigence, and especially the grim hatred of the Moslems, are essentially Montenegrin; to the *srbijanci,* unlike the Vasojevići, the Moslem problem was of secondary importance. The primary problem to Mihailović was NDH and the Ustaše, and he would doubtless have wanted to turn the Montenegrins in that direction. The order hardly mentions the Croats, but goes on and on about action against the Moslems.

f) The fact that the document contains some genuine Mihailović ideas (e.g. the liberation of Istria, federation with Bulgaria, creation of a large Serbian unit within Jugoslavia) is easily explained. Perhinek, having spent several weeks at Mihailović's headquarters, would have been conversant with the ideas expressed by the latter and by his staff, and would have communicated them to Djurišić.

The inescapable conclusion is that the authorizations of October 15 are genuine, but that Order #370 and the other two authorizations dated December 20 were manufactured by

This forgery, whose putative authorship is generally accepted by Četnik authors just as firmly as Djurišić's story of having received it from Mihailović's own hand, was later to become one of the prime pieces of Partisan propaganda against Mihailović.[14] But in the meantime, Djurišić, who seems to have already decided that he was the man to smash the Communists and save Montenegro, had a detailed and well-defined political platform on which to unite the nationalists. The document, besides repeating the appointments of Djurišić and Lašić to the posts foreseen by the original authorizations, proclaimed loyalty to the dynasty, a struggle against the Partisans, and war to the hilt against the Moslems, who were to be eliminated altogether from Jugoslavia; other than that, its expressed ideas came basically from Great Serbian ideology. To complete the job, Djurišić wrote two more authorizations: one to allow Lašić and himself to order the mobilization of all officers and other ex-Jugoslav military personnel under pain of death for failure to obey, and the other to permit the requisition of supplies under receipt.[15]

**Source:** Karchmar (1973) pp. 395-398.

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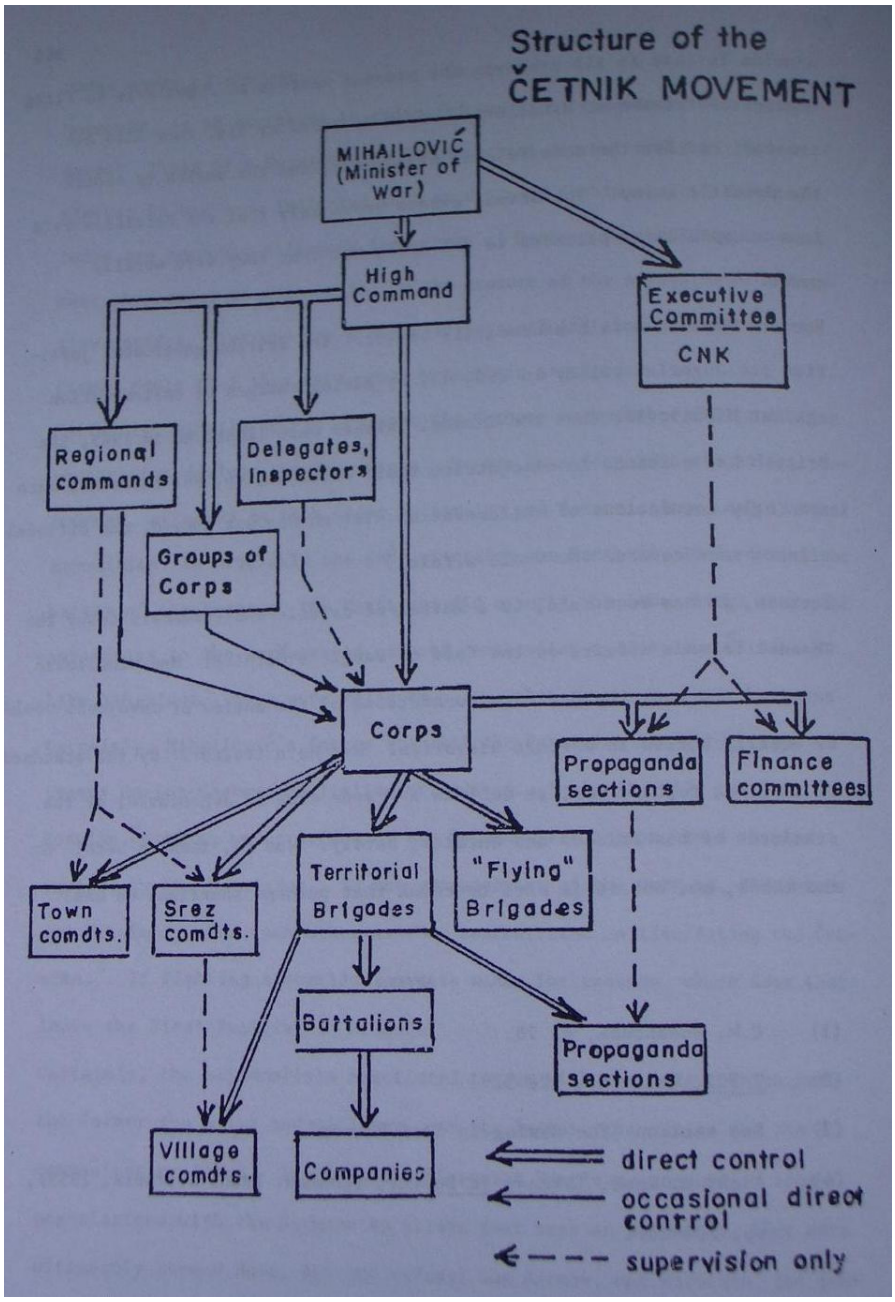
Djurišić after his meeting with Perhinek on Golija. Being a bold and decisive man, he doubtless felt that success would justify him and turn away Mihailović's wrath, whereas if he failed he would not be around to answer for it. He may also have assumed that Mihailović had perished; Mihailović's own staff had believed it for several days after the German attack on Ravna Gora, and it is possible that the rumor had been brought to Golija, by Perhinek or someone else.

[14] Its text (with some elisions) is given in *Dokumenti o izdajstvu…,* pp. 12-13, #3; and *Zbornik,* III/4, p. 456.

[15] *Dokumenti o izdajstvu…,* pp. 9-10, #2; *Zbornik,* III/4, p. 420.

Appendix 3: The Structure of the Chetnik Movement According to Lucien Karchmar




**Source:** Karchmar (1973) p. 947.

## Appendix 4: The Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes

(November 1920)

| **Parties** | **Seats** |
|---|---|
| Democratic Party | 92 |
| Radical Party | 91 |
| Communist Party of Yugoslavia | 58 |
| Croatian People's Peasant Party | 50 |
| Agrarian Union | 39 |
| Yugoslav Muslim Organisation | 24 |
| Slovene People's Party | 14 |
| Croatian People's Party | 13 |
| Yugoslav Social-Democratic Party | 10 |
| *Džemijet* | 8 |
| Croat Labourer's Party | 7 |
| Croat Union | 4 |
| Yugoslav Republican Party | 3 |
| Others | 6 |
| | **419** |

**Source:** Ramet (2006) p. 55.

## Appendix 5: List of Victims of the Jasenovac Camp System by Nationality and Year of Death, 1941-1945

(As at 18 April 2010)

| | 1941 | 1942 | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | Unknown | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Serbs | 4,186 | 32,981 | 2,293 | 4,725 | 1,362 | 376 | 45,923 |
| Roma | 2,233 | 12,821 | 297 | 618 | 60 | 16 | 16,045 |
| Jews | 2,885 | 7,962 | 618 | 484 | 365 | 451 | 12,765 |
| Croats | 224 | 910 | 372 | 1,060 | 1,505 | 127 | 4,197 |
| Muslims | 59 | 278 | 154 | 277 | 313 | 32 | 1,113 |
| Others | 22 | 114 | 41 | 256 | 202 | 27 | 662 |
| Unknown | 29 | 130 | 8 | 19 | 15 | 7 | 209 |
| Total | 9,638 | 55,196 | 3,783 | 7,439 | 3,822 | 1,036 | 80,914 |

**Source:** Jasenovac Memorial Site (*Spomen Područje Jasenovac*)

http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6711

# Appendix 6: The Resolution of the Muslim National Military Organisation

(31 December 1942)

THE RESOLUTION OF THE

MUSLIM NATIONAL MILITARY ORGANISATION

PASSED AT A MEETING HELD ON 31 DECEMBER 1942

After hearing the expositions of delegates and representatives of various regions concerning the situation of Muslims in our country, especially in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

RESOLUTION:

I

The Muslims of Bosnia, Hercegovina, and all regions of our country are a constituent and indivisible part of Serbdom and as such consider themselves enslaved in the Ustaša Croatian state and under the other occupiers, whose creations in our regions are ethnically unnatural and forced upon us.

II

We most sharply condemn the shocking deeds of the Ustaša evildoers, who we consider the cause of all the evil in our people and the beginning of all

disagreements and hate between the one-blooded Serbian brothers of the Orthodox and Islamic faith.

III

We most resolutely condemn all Muslim renegades who have joined the Ustaša Movement and thus attempted to soil the lofty tradition of tolerance and cooperation between the one-blooded brothers.

IV

Similarly, we condemn all those Muslim commissioned and non-commissioned officers who violated their oath of loyalty to HIS HIGHNESS KING PETER II KARAĐORĐEVIĆ and instead of fighting for freedom in the national ranks, serve the traitor and blood-sucker Pavelić.

V

The Muslim National Military Organisation is a component part of the Chetnik Movement, under the supreme command of Mister Minister of the Army, Navy, and Airforce, Army General Draža Mihailović, and is the only true representative of the Muslims in Bosnia, Hercegovina, and other regions of our country.

VI

The aim of our work and struggle is the firm collaboration of Serbs of both religions united in the struggle for King and the liberation of the enslaved

Fatherland so that a people's state might be created headed by the people's King PETER II KARAĐORĐEVIĆ, which will be organised on the principles of democracy and social justice and in which Muslims will be equal citizens.

For the Executive Committee:

1. Doctor Ismet Popovac
2. Fehim Musakadić
3. Mustafa Pašić

**Source:** Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 226, Folder 7, Document 11.

## Appendix 7: The National Composition of Yugoslavia in 1941 According to Bogoljub Kočović

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Serbs | 6,458,000 | 40.79 % |
| Croats | 3,572,000 | 22.56 % |
| Slovenes | 1,237,000 | 7.81 % |
| Muslims | 1,089,000 | 6.88 % |
| Macedonians | 712,000 | 4.50 % |
| Albanians | 601,000 | 3.80 % |
| Germans | 519,000 | 3.28 % |
| Hungarians | 482,000 | 3.94 % |
| Montenegrins | 395,000 | 2.50 % |
| Turks | 151,000 | 0.95 % |
| Slovaks | 81,000 | 0.51 % |
| Roma | 79,000 | 0.50 % |
| Vlachs | 79,000 | 0.50 % |
| Romanians | 75,000 | 0.47 % |
| Jews | 73,000 | 0.46 % |
| Other Slavs | 208,000 | 1.31 % |
| Others | 20,000 | 0.13 % |
| | 15,831,000 | |

**Source:** Kočović (1990) pp. 130, 150, 151.

## Appendix 8: The Number of Croats and Muslims Killed in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, and Srem According to Vladimir Žerjavić

(1 January 1994)

| | Killed in: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Camps | Communities | NDH[1] | Partisans | Total |
| **Croats and Muslims in Croatia and Srem** | | | | | |
| Croats | 7,000 | 28,000 | 47,000 | 29,000 | 111,000 |
| Muslims | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0 | 2,000 |
| Total | 7,000 | 29,000 | 48,000 | 29,000 | 113,000 |
| Killed by: | | | | | |
| Chetniks | 0 | 12,000 | 0 | 8,000 | 20,000 |
| Germans | 0 | 4,000 | 0 | 8,000 | 12,000 |
| Italians | 0 | 3,000 | 0 | 3,000 | 6,000 |
| NDH | 7,000 | 2,000 | 0 | 10,000 | 19,000 |
| NOV[2] | 0 | 0 | 35,000 | 0 | 35,000 |
| Partisans | 0 | 8,000 | 13,000 | 0 | 21,000 |
| Total | 7,000 | 29,000 | 48,000 | 29,000 | 113,000 |
| **Croats in Bosnia and Hercegovina** | | | | | |
| Killed by: | | | | | |
| Chetniks | 6,000 | 0 | 0 | 6,000 | 12,000 |
| Germans | 0 | 3,000 | 0 | 2,000 | 5,000 |
| Italians | 0 | 2,000 | 0 | 1,000 | 3,000 |
| NDH | 5,000 | 3,000 | 0 | 8,000 | 16,000 |
| NOV | 0 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 |
| Partisans | 0 | 6,000 | 12,000 | 0 | 18,000 |
| Total | 11,000 | 14,000 | 22,000 | 17,000 | 64,000 |

[1] The NDH armed forces (*Domobrani* and Ustaše).
[2] National Liberation Army (*Narodnooslobodilačka Vojska* – NOV).

| | Killed in: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Camps | Communities | NDH | Partisans | Total |
| Muslims in Bosnia and Hercegovina | | | | | |
| Killed by: | | | | | |
| Chetniks | 9,000 | 11,000 | 11,000 | 2,000 | 33,000 |
| Germans | 0 | 4,000 | 1,000 | 5,000 | 10,000 |
| Italians | 0 | 3,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 5,000 |
| NDH | 3,000 | 4,000 | 0 | 3,000 | 10,000 |
| NOV | 0 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 |
| Partisans | 0 | 2,000 | 5,000 | 0 | 7,000 |
| Total | 12,000 | 24,000 | 28,000 | 11,000 | 75,000 |
| Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia and Srem | | | | | |
| Killed by: | | | | | |
| Chetniks | 15,000 | 23,000 | 11,000 | 16,000 | 65,000 |
| Germans | 0 | 11,000 | 1,000 | 15,000 | 27,000 |
| Italians | 0 | 8,000 | 1,000 | 5,000 | 14,000 |
| NDH | 15,000 | 9,000 | 0 | 21,000 | 45,000 |
| NOV | 0 | 0 | 55,000 | 0 | 55,000 |
| Partisans | 0 | 16,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 46,000 |
| Total | 30,000 | 67,000 | 98,000 | 57,000 | 252,000 |

**Source:** Croatian Institute for History (*Hrvatski Institut za Povijest*).

# Appendix 9: The Number of Croats and Muslims Killed by the Chetniks (Combatants and Non-Combatants)

| **Location** | **Number** |
|---|---|
| Foča District | 3,487 Muslims[1] |
| Višegrad District | 2,446 Muslims[2] |
| Rogatica District | 1,751 Muslims[3] |
| Republic of Croatia | 1,643 Croat civilians[4] |
| Pljevlja District | 1,492 Muslims[5] |
| Bijelo Polje District | 1,400 Muslims[6] |
| Goražde District | 1,395 Muslims[7] |
| Vlasenica District | 1,340 Muslims[8] |
| Prozor District | 273 Muslims[9] and about 400 Croats[10] |
| Čajniče District | 587 Muslims[11] |
| Rudo District | 442 Muslims[12] |
| Gacko District | 222 Muslims[13] |

[1] Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284.
[2] Tucaković (1995) pp. 515-560.
[3] Tucaković (1995) pp. 372-469.
[4] Graovac (1998) pp. 216-217.
[5] Tucaković (1995) pp. 611-658.
[6] Report Number 23 by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 50.
[7] Tucaković (1995) pp. 309-335.
[8] Tucaković (1995) pp. 475-507.
[9] Tucaković (1995) pp. 601-610.
[10] Report by Captain Vigiac for the Chief of the Intelligence Section of the Sixth Army Corps, 18 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656 (Footnote 4).
[11] Tucaković (1995) pp. 343-354.
[12] Tucaković (1995) pp. 363-371.
[13] Tucaković (1995) pp. 569-573.

## Appendix 10: The Number of Croats and Muslims Killed by the Chetniks in Individual Massacres (Combatants and Non-Combatants)

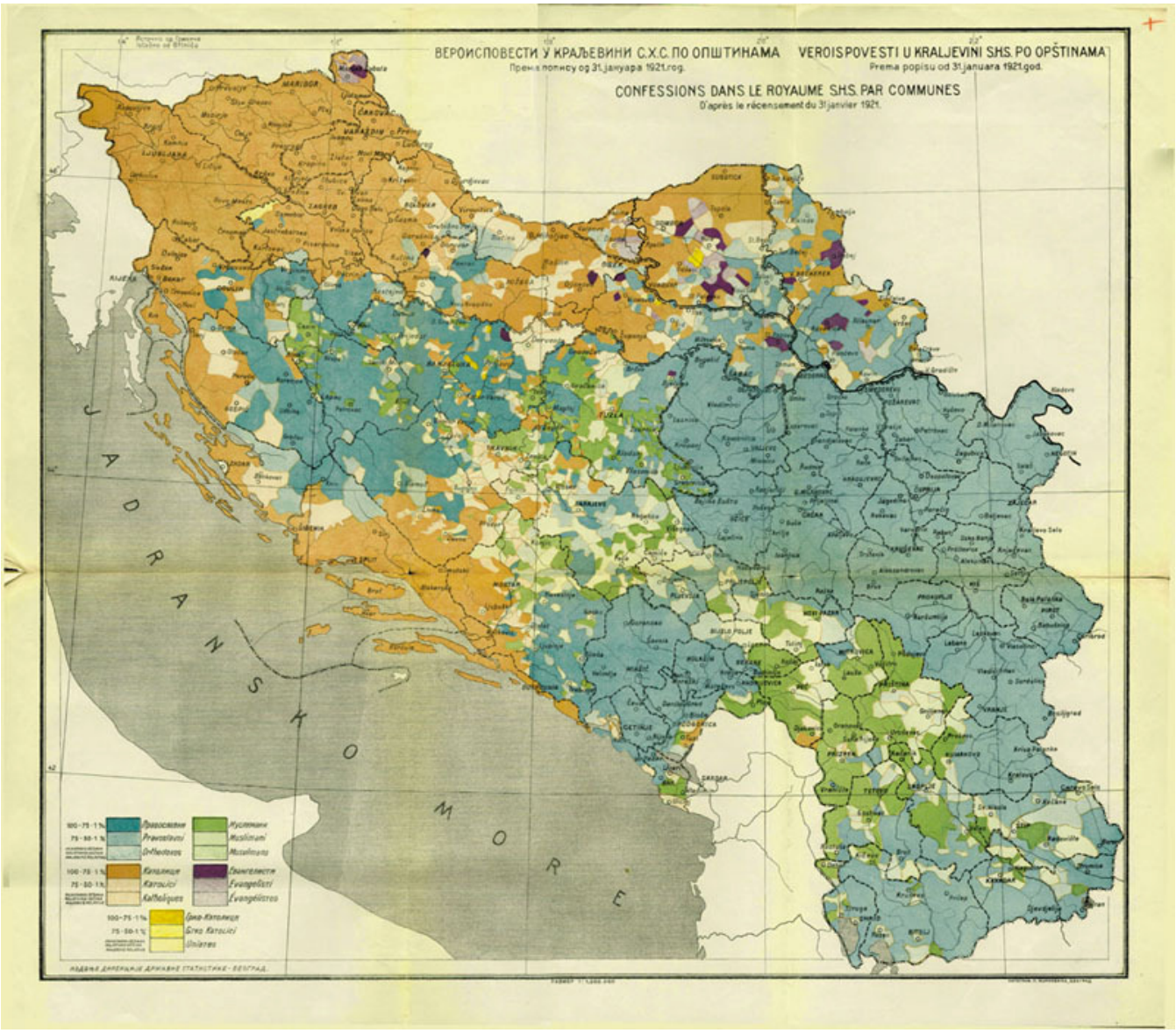
| **Period** | **Location** | **Number** |
|---|---|---|
| August 1942 | Foča District | 331 Muslims[1] |
| August 1942 | Southern Dalmatia (Operation *Albia*) | 900 Croats[2] |
| October 1942 | Prozor District (Operation *Alfa*) | 273 Muslims[3] |
| | | About 400 Croats[4] |
| January 1943 | Bijelo Polje District | 1,400 Muslims[5] |
| February 1943 | Čajniče, Foča, and Pljevlja districts | 2,219 Muslims[6] |
| October 1943 | Višegrad District | 353 Muslims[7] |

[1] Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284
[2] Telegram (Number 544) from Major Petar Baćović to Army General Draža Mihailović, 4 September 1942, in *The Trial of Dragoljub-Draža Mihailović,* p. 91.
[3] Tucaković (1995) pp. 601-610.
[4] Report by Captain Vigiac for the Chief of the Intelligence Section of the Sixth Army Corps, 18 October 1942, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 1, p. 656 (Footnote 4).
[5] Report Number 23 by Major Pavle Đurišić for Army General Draža Mihailović, 10 January 1943, *Zbornik* Volume 14, Book 2, p. 50.
[6] Pljevlja District: 1,370 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 611-658); Foča District: 400 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 225-284); Goražde District: 229 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 309-335); Čajniče District: 220 (Tucaković (1995) pp. 343-354).
[7] Tucaković (1995) pp. 363-371, 515-560.

# Maps

1. Confessional map of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (1921)
2. National map of Yugoslavia including the borders of the Croat *Banovina* (1940)
3. Partitioned Yugoslavia (1941)
4. Distribution of nations in partitioned Yugoslavia (1941)
5. The Independent State of Croatia
6. Postwar Yugoslavia as envisaged by Mihailović in 1941 (Territorial demands)
7. Postwar Yugoslavia as envisaged by Mihailović in 1941 (Internal divisions)
8. Postwar Yugoslavia as envisaged by Stevan Moljević in *Homogenous Serbia* (1941)
9. Partisan controlled territory in Yugoslavia at the end of 1942
10. Postwar Yugoslavia as illustrated in *Ravna Gora* (1943)

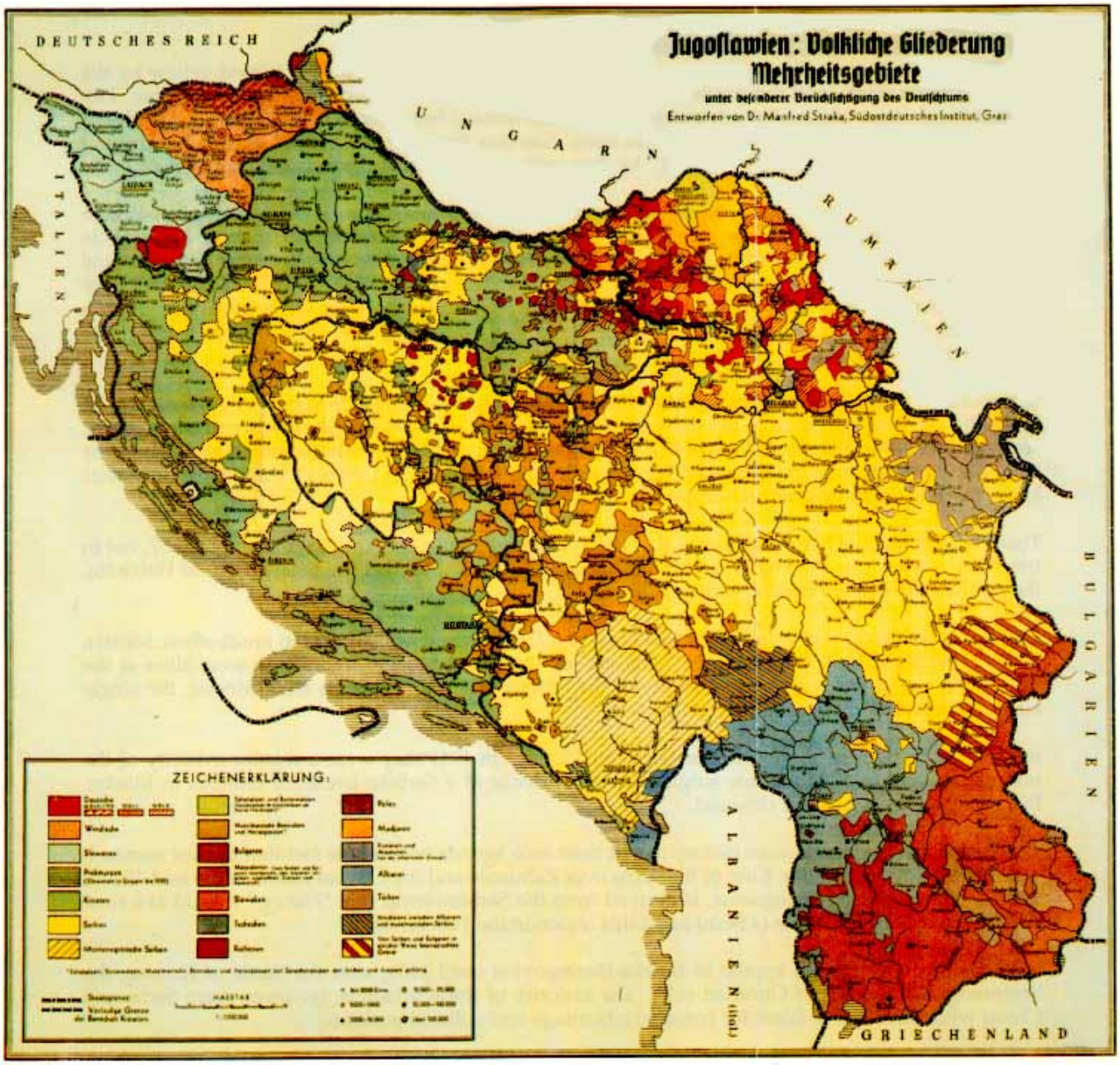
Map 1: Confessional Map of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (1921)




**Source:** Archive of Yugoslavia (*Arhiv Jugoslavije*)

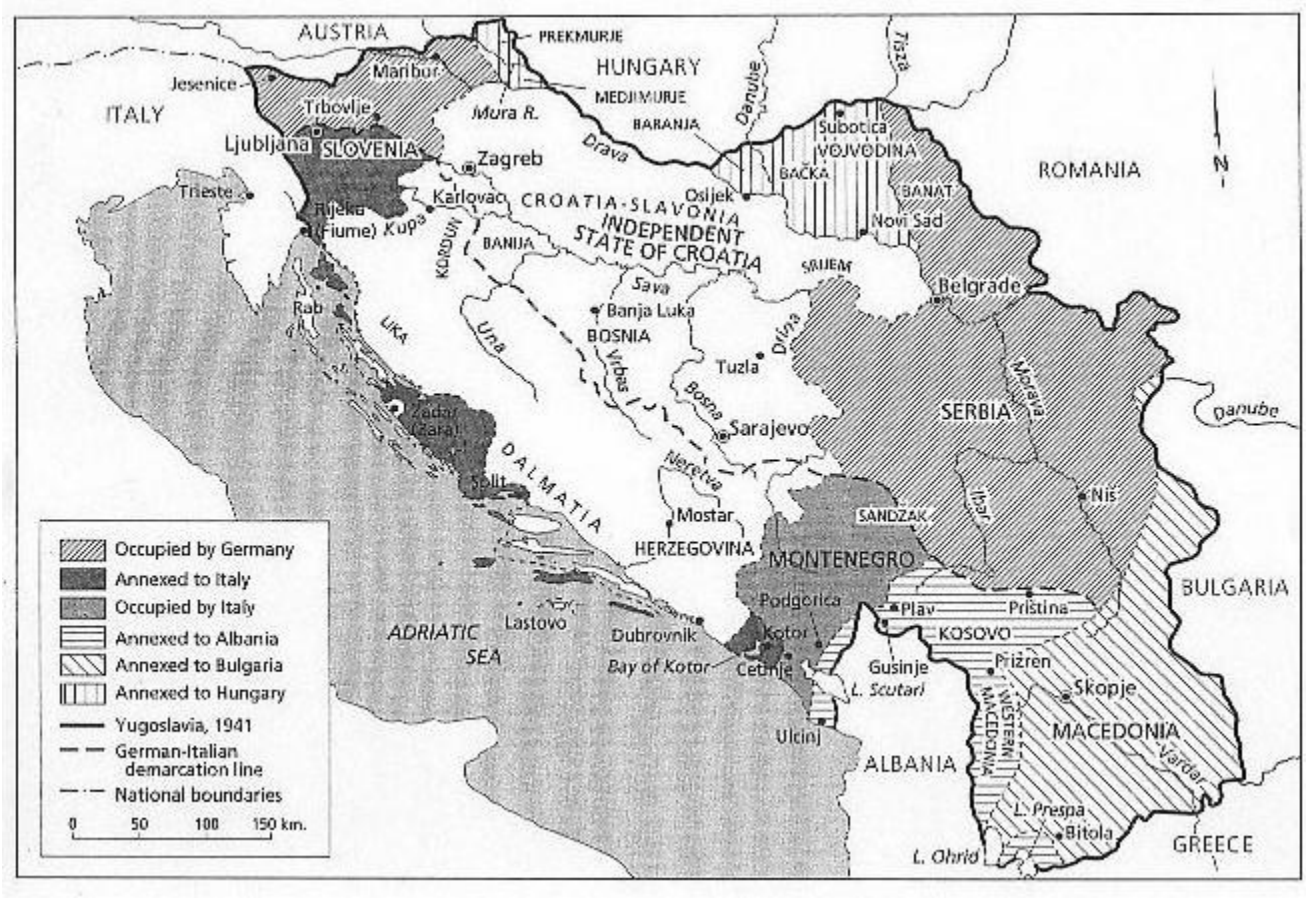
http://www.arhivyu.gov.rs/index.php?st_location=home&st_version=active&structure_template_type=zoom&lang=sr-latin&image_id=42005&w=800&h=728

Map 2: National Map of Yugoslavia Including the Borders of the Croat *Banovina* (1940)



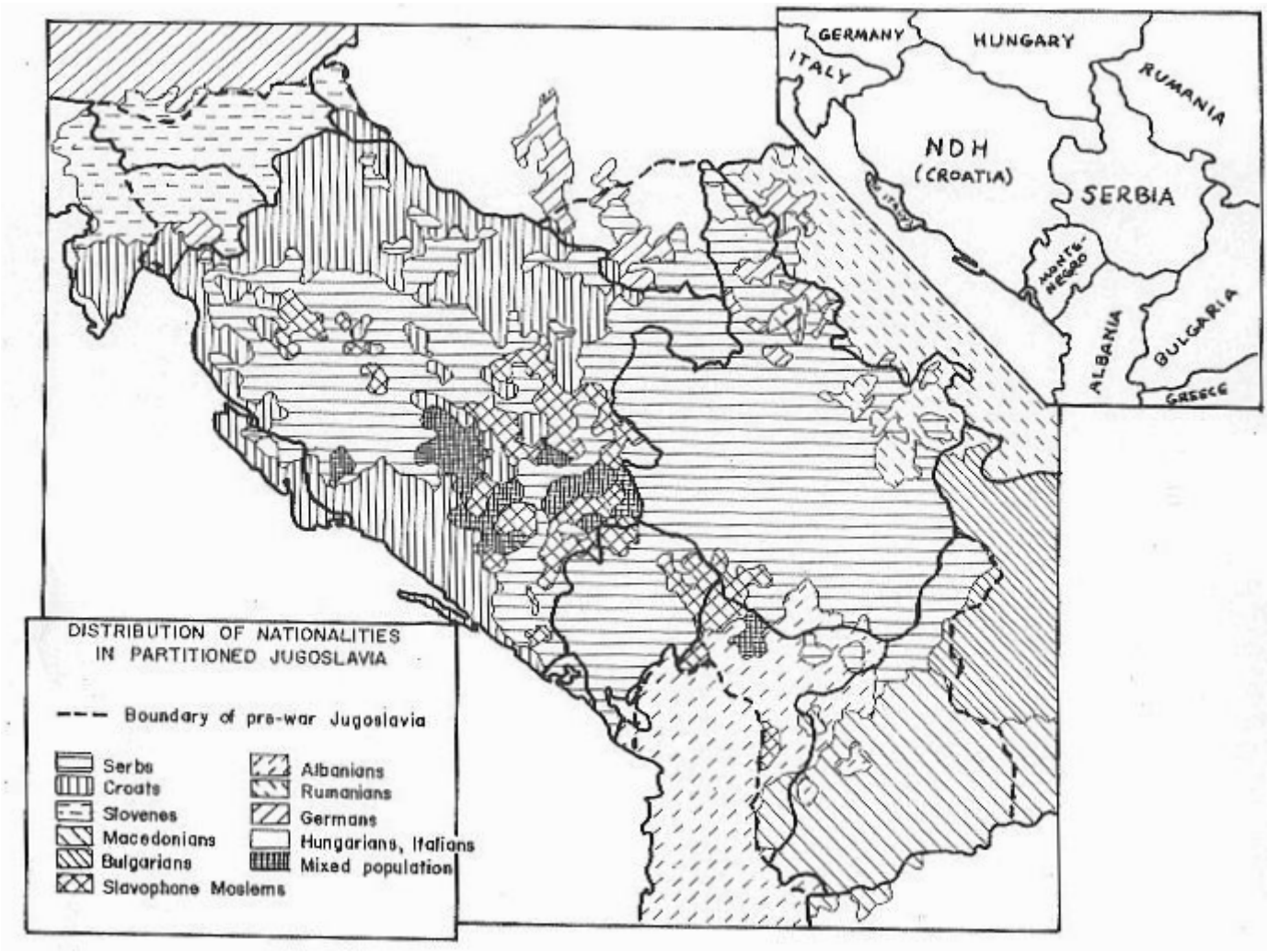

**Source:** http://www.srpska-mreza.com/MAPS/Ethnic-groups/map-Nazi-1940.html

Map 3: Partitioned Yugoslavia (1941)



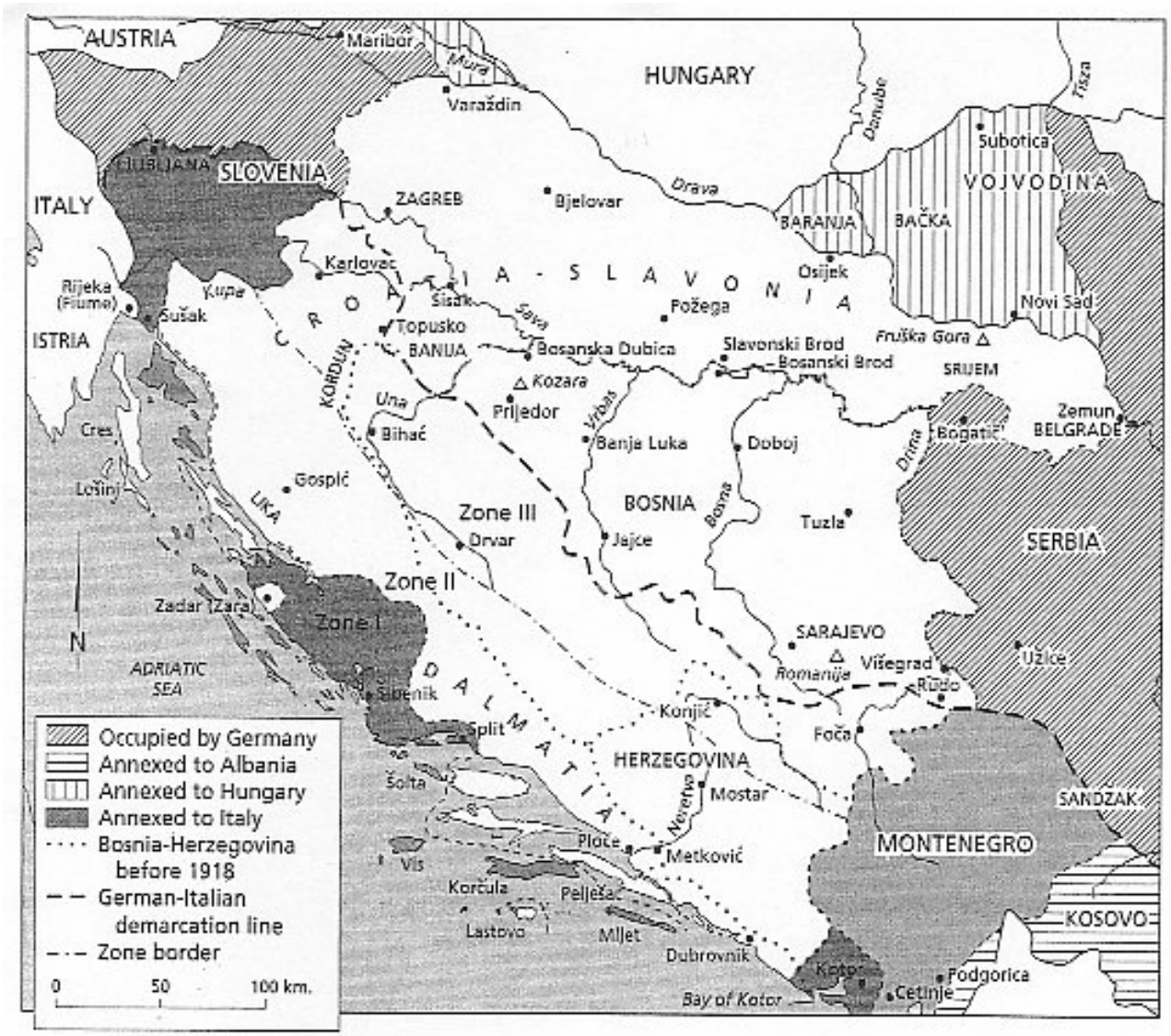

**Source:** Tomasevich (2001) p. 62.

Map 4: Distribution of Nations in Partitioned Yugoslavia (1941)




**Source:** Karchmar (1973) p. 28.

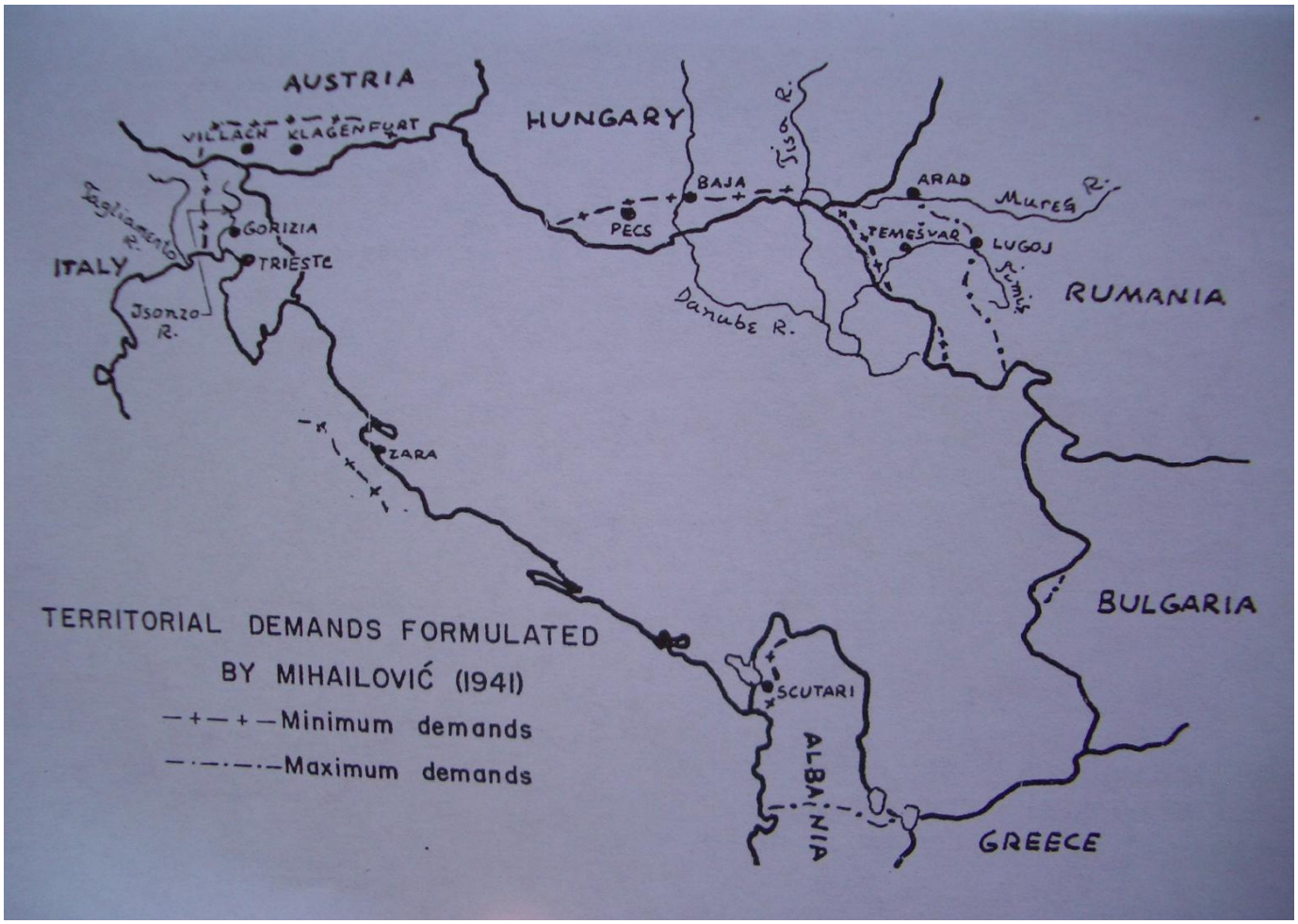
Map 5: The Independent State of Croatia




**Source:** Tomasevich (2001) p. 236.

Map 6: Postwar Yugoslavia as Envisaged by Mihailović in 1941

(Territorial Demands)




**Source:** Karchmar (1973) p. 950.

Map 7: Postwar Yugoslavia as Envisaged by Mihailović in 1941

(Internal Divisions)

**Source:** Karchmar (1973) p. 951.

Map 8: Postwar Yugoslavia as Envisaged by Stevan Moljević in *Homogenous Serbia* (1941)

**Source:** Stevan Moljević, *Homogena Srbija,* 30 June 1941, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 144, Folder 1, Document 4.

Map 9: Partisan Controlled Territory in Yugoslavia at the end of 1942

**Source:** Đonlagić, Atanacković, and Plenča (1967).

Map 10: Postwar Yugoslavia as Illustrated in *Ravna Gora* (1943)

**Source:** *Ravna Gora*, Issue 1, 1 February 1943, Military Archive, Chetnik Archive, Box 12, Folder 3, Document 12.

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### Archive of the Republic of Srpska (*Arhiv Republike Srpske*)

Formerly known as the Archive of Bosanska Krajina (*Arhiv Bosanske Krajine*)

**Location:** Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska

**Record Group:** Collection of Documents of the Central Bosnian Chetnik Corps (*Zbirka Dokumenata Srednjo-Bosanskog Četničkog Korpusa*)

### Croatian State Archive (*Hrvatski Državni Arhiv*)

Formerly known as the Archive of the Workers' Movement of Croatia (*Arhiv Radničkog Pokreta Hrvatske*)

**Location:** Zagreb, Croatia

**Record Group:** Dinaric Chetnik Region (*Dinarska Četnička Oblast*)

## Military Archive (*Vojni Arhiv*)

Formerly known as the Archive of the Military History Institute (*Arhiv Vojno-Istorijskog Instituta*)

**Location:** Belgrade, Serbia

**Record Group:** Chetnik Archive (*Četnička Arhiva*)

*High Command* (*Vrhovna Komanda*)

Boxes: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 15B, 16, 17, 18, 19

*Advance Section of the High Command* (*Istaknuti Deo Vrhovne Komande*)

Boxes: 161, 222, 231

*Command of East Bosnia and Hercegovina* (*Komanda Istočne Bosne i Hercegovine*)

Boxes: 170, 171, 172, 222, 231

*Command of West Bosnia* (*Komanda Zapadne Bosne*)

Boxes: 204, 205, 206, 226, 238

*Miscellaneous*

Boxes: 140, 157, 158, 165, 175, 213, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 229

## United Kingdom National Archives

**Location:** Kew, United Kingdom

**Record Groups:** Foreign Office Papers (FO)

*FO 371: Political Departments*

*FO 536: Embassy and Legation to Yugoslavia*

United States National Archives and Records Administration

**Location:** Washington, District of Columbia

**Record Group:** Captured German and Related Records (242)

*T-311: Records of German Field Commands: Army Groups*

Roll: 192

*T-501: Records of German Field Commands: Rear Areas, Occupied Territories, and Others*

Roll: 265

*T-821: Collection of Italian Military Records, 1935-1943*

Roll: 252

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