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THE WAR IN CROATIA, 1991-1995

◆ Mile Bjelajac and Ozren Žunec ◆

Introductory Remarks

Methodology and Sources

Military organizations produce large quantities of documents covering all aspects of their activities, from strategic plans and decisions to reports on spending for small arms. When archives are open and documents accessible, it is relatively easy for military historians to reconstruct events in which the military participated. When it comes to the military actions of the units in the field, abundant documentation provides for very detailed accounts that sometimes even tend to be overly microscopic. But there are also military organizations, wars, and individual episodes that are more difficult to reconstruct. Sometimes reliable data are lacking or are inaccessible, or there may be a controversy regarding the meaning of events that no document can solve. Complicated political factors and the simple but basic shortcomings of human nature also provide challenges for any careful reconstruction.

The armed conflict in the former Yugoslavia has become the subject of a vast literature. This includes several memoirs or “documentary materials” written by both key figures and lesser participants in the conflict, ranging from international intermediaries and local politicians to soldiers, civilians, and journalists who were witnesses to events. Scholarly research is also expanding. However, many of the books and articles reflect the subjective perspectives of their authors. In the memoirs of participants who served in either the political or military apparatus, there is usually a strong apologetic effort to vindicate one’s own assessments and actions. The publication of such works often provokes discussions in which former opponents or adversaries of the author push for their views. This

rarely brings a balanced result; more frequently it just renews old disputes without opening new perspectives.

The war in Croatia from 1990 to 1995 is no exception to this. Beside obvious reasons why it is difficult to expect that a scholarly, nonpartisan, objective, and balanced historical account could be written only a decade after the end of the conflict, there are also many specific obstacles and impediments that make it hard to achieve such results. These obstacles continue to influence many current views among the public and in academic communities.

First, some of the most important developments in the war were never documented in the first place; many far-reaching and crucial actions were the results of deliberations that were made by decision makers and discussed in small circles without any written record. Given the nature of these decisions and the fact that many important power centers consisted essentially of nonstate actors without proper administrative infrastructure and culture, this poses very serious problems for historical reconstruction. Moreover, basic hard data—as, for example, the precise number, type, and structure of casualties, especially on the Serbian side—do not exist.

Second, many documents were simply lost or deliberately destroyed because of wartime circumstances or because authorities or individuals wanted to destroy the evidence of their activities and intentions.¹ Some participants, such as the wartime Croatian Serb civil and military authorities and organizations, vanished altogether in the war, and their documentation was only partially salvaged.

Third, the archives of former belligerents are for the most part still closed to scholars, and important documents are still inaccessible. On the other hand, many individuals for various reasons took possession of documents that would normally be part of the official archives (in Croatia, archivists estimate that at least the same number of original documents is in private hands as in the state archives). Access to the archives is still subject to the discretion of authorities who carefully weigh whom to admit; eligibility is not formally proscribed, but it is decided on an individual basis. Without being able to work systematically in archives, scholars will not be able to achieve precise insights into what happened and why.

Fourth, the war has left some smoldering fires. In the first place, there is the question of protracted prosecutions of war crimes. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), established by the UN in 1993, is still prosecuting violations of international humanitarian law. Extraditions of key inductees from their home countries to the ICTY were processes that took a very long time. Political elites feared that their regimes would be destabilized by the indictments or by the extraditions of persons considered to be national heroes in some circles, and heated political discussions ensued in all ethnic communities. On the other hand, many war participants were reluctant to write or talk about

their war experiences, fearing that they also could end up in The Hague. All these circumstances create adverse conditions for free, unbiased, and independent research. Any published book or paper could be seen as additional evidence in the prosecutors' hands. The researcher is thus involved not only in the judicial process before the ICTY but also in domestic political struggles that surge almost every time the results of research are publicized. In addition to that, political development and even the current identities of the nations that participated in the war depend very much on an interpretation of recent history. Events and personalities tend to be seen in black and white. Every nation developed a corpus of "truths" that simply cannot be questioned and that have the status of sacred cows in both national ideology and politics. The "other" is always to be blamed. Direct victims of the war, or even entire populations for that matter, simply cannot accept that their fate was not only a consequence of the malevolent and criminal acts of the enemy but also due to the wrong assessments and blunders of their own leaders. Researchers themselves often feel an obligation not to rub salt into the wounds of their own nation; they tend to be biased without even knowing it.

Fifth, the conduct of the war in Croatia had many peculiarities that cannot be explained by the usual logic of history or social science. In this war there were many military operations that simply do not make sense in purely military terms; established motives, objective circumstances, and the known effects of certain actions sometimes simply do not match and do not present a coherent story. Perplexed by the impossibility of rational explanation, the general public and researchers alike consequently tend to give explanations based on various forms of conspiracy theories or on oversimplified historical explanations. Events that are complicated in themselves are explained by even more complicated interpretations. The reason for this is obvious. All wars are fought for political purposes, and military actions usually only translate political goals into practical military objectives. Sometimes military actions can be clearly understood as the logical means for accomplishing openly proclaimed ideological values and political goals (e.g., Nazi racist theory, the quest for *Lebensraum*, and the attack on the Soviet Union in 1941); but in other cases, when for different reasons political goals are not clearly articulated, military actions also become unintelligible and hard to understand. The political goals of many different actors in the war in Croatia often were not only badly defined, confused, and based on wrong pre-suppositions, but they also changed radically over time. This means that military operations cannot be judged from a single perspective, valid for all situations and all times. There is also a general tendency for monocausal explanations that cannot bear fruit in complex historical situations.

Sixth, there is a general problem of sources for recent history. Working with data available in open sources brings also many dangers. Both media reporting and memoirist literature are often biased by the political opinions, affiliations,

and agendas of their authors and editors. It is hard enough to find out what really happened, but many authors who played responsible roles and are aware of the portent of their actions choose sometimes to hide their real intentions and agendas. This often makes the research anything but an exercise in a logical ordering of things.

At the end of the day, one is left to one's own devices and cannot do much more than try to assess which interpretations seem most likely to be true based on available documentation and a reconstruction of the chronology. There are, of course, some honest and dependable accounts and collections, such as *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* by Laura Silber and Allan Little—certainly the most quoted work on the Yugoslav drama—and works by Tim Judah and Marcus Tanner.² The media as a source for the history of the recent conflicts do pose problems that concern many prominent scholars of Balkan and Yugoslav history. Some scholars have labeled all efforts to use media reports as sources as nothing more than attempts at “instant history.” However, without media reports most research on the war would be impossible.

Inter- and Intraethnic Controversies

All these and other obstacles make research on the war in Croatia difficult and complicated. Even if facts are verified and both sides agree on their existence, their meaning could still be interpreted in contradictory ways for different communities. Everything depends on who is talking, and thus the academic work becomes a perfect example of how the social construction of reality works.³

The list of controversial issues in the war in Croatia is a long one. The divide runs between mainstream Croat and mainstream Serb interpretations that are usually mutually exclusive. There are also some interpretations by foreign researchers, by a small number of domestic researchers and, sometimes, even by government officials that differ from these widely accepted national narratives. Given the nature of war and different attitudes toward it in various social strata and groups, the war in Croatia has at least three main types of controversies: *Croat–Croat*, *Serb–Croat*, and *Serb–Serb*.⁴

This classification helps us to understand and evaluate different approaches in the scholarly literature. Sometimes these three controversies overlap. That is to say that some specific issues like ethnic cleansing, the engagement of the international community, or the role of the JNA, apply to each of these three types of controversy. Opposing views, such as those of the Croats and Serbs, can be considered as pictures of the past that emerged at one time and never ceased to exist. The historian or analyst should recognize this as a part of the mosaic of the past. No one can deny that the majority of the Croats saw the JNA as an aggressor

against the Croatian homeland or state. On the other hand, Serbs in Croatia have insisted that their resistance was a form of legitimate self-defense against the violation of their constitutional rights and for the protection of their lives. In some aspects, neither Croats nor Serbs can come to terms among themselves.

The issues deal very much with national affiliations and identities.⁵ In spite of this, controversies are often characterized by their similarities on both sides. The army generals quarreled among themselves on merits or failures and pointed out correct predictions or blindness. Controversies also emerge within each ethnic or other socially defined group when someone dares to reveal unpleasant facts, including those that challenge established truths.

Regarding interethnic disagreements, it should be noted that Serbian and Croatian views are a constituent part of the complex historical picture of the past (the war in this case) and should be taken as such. If cleared of obvious exaggerations, manipulations, and myths, these views have a certain legitimacy and should be taken seriously. Simple compromise among scholars cannot constitute the basic methodological principle in attaining definitive truth concerning the events in question. Future readers will not be best served by uncontroversial accounts of the events but will always have to deal with at least some discrepancies in the accounts and will then have to draw their own conclusions. A survey of controversies that existed and will probably exist in the future and the array of arguments concerning these controversies should not dim the picture but only help scholars find better interpretations.

Robert Hayden has summarized the problem of intellectual orthodoxy in dealing with conflicts involving living political communities. He warns:

Protracted international conflicts often produce more partisans than scholars; if truth is the first journalistic casualty of war, objectivity is the first scholarly one. Academic debates on the former Yugoslavia are as polarized as those surrounding the creation of Israel or the partition of Cyprus, with criticism of a study often depending more on whether the work supports the commentator's predetermined position than on the coherence of its theory or the reliability and sufficiency of its arguments. When one side in such a conflict wins politically it usually also wins academically because analysis that indicates that a politics that won is, in fact, wrong tend to be discounted. Political hegemony establishes intellectual orthodoxy.⁶

Certainly political settlements cannot serve as a blueprint for scientific research. Scholars dealing with recent history or with social developments are not completely helpless in taking on their task. However, as already discussed, they are facing obvious limits.

Survey: Some Controversial Episodes and Issues

Causes of War

One of the biggest controversies of the whole conflict concerns the reasons for the Serb insurgency. A Croat interpretation of the causes of war includes a belief that the Serbs had an elaborate plan for establishing a Greater Serbia. This interpretation argues that Serbian Socialist Party (SPS) leader Slobodan Milošević encouraged the Croatian Serbs to rebel in order to take substantial parts of Croatia for Greater Serbia, while suggesting that the Serbs never had valid reasons for their armed insurgency. According to this school of thought, this plan originated in various nineteenth- and twentieth-century political theories and programs and was later accepted by Serbian intellectuals and Milošević. The main reason for the war was to proceed with the territorial expansion of Serbia. Among the evidence for this argument are some indisputable facts: (a) through various putschist policies Milošević abolished the autonomies of Kosovo and Vojvodina and thus abrogated the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974; (b) Milošević proclaimed that “All Serbs must live in one state,” which neglected the fact that republics were states, thereby opening the way to a “rectification of borders”; (c) Croatian Serbs staged demonstrations and other activities in 1989, claiming, “This is Serbia.” This was before any political developments had occurred in Croatia that could have been seen as dangerous for the existence and status of Serbs there.

The Serbian side claims routinely that the promulgation of the new Constitution of the Republic of Croatia in December 1990, created among the Serbs a fear that the suffering that the Serbs endured under the Ustasha regime of 1941–1945 would now be repeated. They were opposed to the wording in the constitution, which deprived the Croatian Serbs of their status of “constitutive people” and “reduced” them to the status of a “minority,” and they were apprehensive of the extremist nationalistic politics of the new ruling party—The Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ).

The HDZ certainly did not show much sensitivity toward the Serbs in Croatia and did almost nothing to persuade the Serbs of their good intentions. Croats intended to leave Yugoslavia as part of their national and political liberation, but this legitimate goal was sometimes clouded with other political incentives that frightened Croatian Serbs. It is true that in some extreme right political circles there was a nostalgia for and a desire to resuscitate the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), a fascist puppet state during World War II.⁷ It must be kept in mind, however, that in socialist Yugoslavia almost every voice for national rights, no matter how democratic its demands were, was branded as nationalistic and extremist. Thus Croats were often labeled Ustashe by Serbs, although it is

important to note that in 1990–1991 there was a certain amount of Ustashe revivalism in Croatia.⁸ This not only generated fear among the Serbs but played right into the hands of the nationalistic program of Milošević. Some Serbs began to fear a repetition of 1941 and looked on socialist Yugoslavia as the guarantor of their personal and national security. Several Croatian historians have provided many documented details that corroborate the thesis that some Croat actions must have provoked the Serbs.⁹

The Serbs felt uneasy about developments that they deemed similar to the situation they faced in 1941–1945, when they were victims of persecutions and even genocide. However, their situation was not at all similar to what they had faced in World War II. To begin with, there was no plan to expel or execute members of Croatia's Serb minority. Moreover, the international community closely watched developments in Yugoslavia, so that even if the Croats had wanted to resuscitate the NDH they would have been unable to introduce the politics of terror, persecutions, and genocide against the Serbs. Although some representatives of the Serb people in Croatia—including Orthodox bishops—had warned that any repetition of 1941–1945 was highly unlikely and in fact impossible,¹⁰ Serbian propaganda pounded its audience in Croatia with horrifying pictures from the past, stressing that Croats were genocidal killers by nature and that nothing could change that. Various propaganda tricks were employed to persuade Croatia's (and Bosnia's) Serbs that history was repeating itself, including reburying the victims of Ustashe persecution from World War II in elaborate rituals.

One can conclude that the Serbs in Croatia were exposed to various forms of discrimination¹¹ but that this discrimination was far from the persecution experienced in World War II. It is also important to remember that any killings or other forms of violent persecution directed at Serbs in Croatia in places like Gospić, Pakračka Poljana, Sisak, Osijek, and Paulin Dvor began only after the outbreak of full-scale armed conflict in the summer of 1991. Thus these crimes by Croats cannot serve as a justification for the rebellion because they happened after the insurgency and war were already in full swing.

The behavior of the Croats was partly a consequence of a growing fear that Milošević would use the JNA to launch an attack on Croatia immediately after the first multiparty elections, using local Serbs as pawns. After all, Belgrade had already been instrumental in mobilizing Croatia's Serbs and, later, in encouraging their armed insurgency in Croatia. Belgrade promoted various manifestations of the "antibureaucratic revolution," and it sent emissaries and helped to coordinate actions between various Serb nationalists in Serbia and in Croatia. The confiscation of the Croatian Territorial Defense weapons by the JNA in May 1990 ominously seemed to be paving the way for the attack.

Within Serbia itself a number of noted intellectuals, former prominent party or state leaders, generals and admirals, and NGO activists are more likely to

agree with some of the standard Croatian claims about the causes of the war, notably the role of Serbian nationalism and the “Great Serbian Project.” Few would deny the key roles played by Slobodan Milošević and by the army.

A number of Western analysts also consider the project for a Greater Serbia to be the primordial cause of Yugoslavia’s collapse and the ensuing tragedy. These include such scholars as James Gow, Michael Libal, and Paul Garde.¹² On the other hand, some Western analysts argue as well that this plan for the establishment of Greater Serbia did not function in the later stages of the war. The evidence for this is that many declarations and plans for the unification of “Serb lands” (RSK, RS, Serbia proper, and Montenegro) were never realized; moreover, other Serb lands did not come to the aid of the RSK during the final Croatian operations in the war.

Some distinguished and influential foreign scholars have advanced the theory that the real and deeper cause of the war can be found in the disintegration of governmental authority and in the breakdown of a political and civil order. Susan Woodward argues, for example, that “the conflict is not a result of historical animosities and it is not a return to the pre-communist past; it is a result of the politics of transforming a socialist society to a market economy and democracy.”¹³ The situation was aggravated by declining social standards and an unfavorable international situation in which the former Yugoslavia was no longer of great importance.

Any resolution of the differences here should be found by taking into account all the facts on which these interpretations are based and discarding all the conclusions that do not follow from them. Beyond this it is necessary to take into account the dynamic aspect of wartime politics and changes in the policies of the main actors.

The Nature of War and Its Politico-Legal Character

Another controversy that directly stems from the first is connected with the political and legal character of the war. Ethnic Serbs in both countries claimed that the conflict was a classic instance of a noninternational or civil (internal) war. Serbs claimed that they were defending their very existence from the genocidal politics of a new Croatian regime. In this view, because the Croats had seceded from Yugoslavia the conflict was a clear case of two civil wars, neither of which had state actors on both sides (nonstate Croats against Yugoslavia, and nonstate local Serbs against Croats). The main argument for this claim is that the insurgent Serbs were citizens of Croatia who rebelled against Croatia’s central government.

Conversely, Croats claimed, and were endorsed in these claims by much of the international community, that (a) Yugoslavia was simply in a “state of decomposition”; that (b) Croatia was proclaimed a sovereign state (25 June and 8 Oc-

tober 1991), which was duly recognized by dozens of countries (January 1992); and that (c) Milošević usurped federal Yugoslav institutions such as the JNA and rump presidency) thus effectively eliminating the federal state of Yugoslavia. According to this picture, Yugoslavia and Croatia were two separate countries, with Yugoslavia having its troops (JNA) on Croatian soil. Croatia insists that the armed conflict in Croatia was an international war, with Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the JNA as the aggressors as defined in international law.

It is evident that both claims are designed to achieve a more favorable status of victim for the respective claimants (Croatia as victim of external aggression, Croatian Serbs as victims of the Croatian government). This could in turn ameliorate their overall status and attract sympathy.

Both of these claims, although they look irreconcilable, are founded in facts and in law. There is no doubt that the resistance of local Serbs against the Croatian central government was not an international armed conflict, but it is also evident that rump Yugoslavia led an international war and was the aggressor between October 1991, at the latest, and the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops from Croatia in June–October 1992. The claim of local Serbs that they could not be aggressors or occupiers in their own country is correct, but it is equally correct to say that by leading an armed insurgency they abetted the foreign aggression committed by rump Yugoslavia and its institutions. In order to provide a legal framework for the conflict, the ICTY chose to consider the war in Croatia after 8 October 1991 as an international armed conflict.¹⁴

Establishment of Croatian Armed Forces

As already mentioned, Croatian Serbs felt threatened by the Croatian government's actions. In the second part of 1990 there were instances of discrimination against Serbs, who were dismissed in large numbers from their jobs, especially in the security sector (i.e., police, Territorial Defense [TO], etc.). The Serb minority in Croatia—581,663 people according to the 1991 census, or 12.2 percent of the republic's population of 4.8 million—was overrepresented within both the Communist Party membership (22.6 percent in 1984) and the political elite (17.7 percent of appointed officials in Croatia were Serbs)¹⁵ and especially in the Ministry of the Interior (MUP), including the police (28–31 percent). Serbs were also overrepresented in federal institutions, especially in the JNA, where 57.1 percent of officers were Serbs. Contrast this with the fact that only 36.3 percent of the population of Yugoslavia was Serbs.¹⁶ It must be noted, however, that the representation of Serbs in the republican police decreased in the late 1980s to a level of 17–18 percent,¹⁷ but this was too late to change the long-existing perception of Serbs as guardians of the Communist regime—a regime that was eventually usurped by Milošević. Croats were afraid of Milošević's project of "All

Serbs in One State.” Because they lived in an environment where the concept of the independent citizen was virtually unknown and where people existed only as members of a group, it was easy to equate *all* Serbs with Serb nationalistic politics. The Serbs’ overrepresentation in critical services and institutions (police, military, party) was seen as a threat that had to be remedied if Croatia wanted to gain independence. Discrimination in the republican police was thus more the consequence of perceptions and mistrust between ethnic communities than it was a political program.

A CIA report clearly identified the personnel questions in the police force as one of the central issues in events that would eventually lead to the war:

The crux of the dispute centered on Croatian efforts to alter the size and character of the republic’s police force by building additional Croat-majority police stations and reducing the number of ethnic Serbs in the existing force. By bringing additional ethnic Croats into the regular force, the Croatian Government clearly hoped to decrease both absolute and percentage terms, as well as to move Croatian personnel into police stations in Serb territory. But the Croats’ heavy-handed efforts to dominate the police force poured salt on an open wound and enraged ethnic Serbs everywhere.¹⁸

The Croatian police actually provided the only legal avenue to establish a military force in Croatia. According to General Anton Tus the Croatian government used the framework of the Ministry of the Interior after 30 May 1990, rather than that of the Territorial Defense (as was the case in Slovenia), to create the new Croatian army.¹⁹ By buying weapons for the police, the Croats circumvented the ban on republican paramilitaries imposed by the federal presidency and managed to compensate for their losses when the TO arsenals were taken over by the JNA in May 1990.

The expansion of the Croatian police forces went hand in hand with growing unrest. On 17 August 1990 militant Serbs in Krajina closed all communications in northern Dalmatia, and the police in Knin, led by Milan Martić, future president of the Republic of Srpska Krajina (RSK), proclaimed that Serb police would not obey directives from Zagreb. By January 1991 the original force of 10,000 Croatian police had been nearly doubled. The centerpiece of the MUP’s efforts to develop a military force, however, was the expansion of its special antiterrorist unit into “special police” battalions organized along military lines. By January 1991 the program created several battalion-size military units with 3,000 members.

To back up these regular forces, the MUP also began an expansion of its regional reserve formations estimated to number 10,000 personnel organized in sixteen battalions. In May 1991 the MUP’s special police forces and reserve formations were transformed into the Croatian National Guard Corps (ZNG) and

subordinated to the Ministry of Defense. Foreign monitors concluded that Croatia

was going to have to go to war without the robust command and control structure necessary to direct combat operations in the field. In particular, the lack of strong regional commands to control Zagreb's often ill-disciplined and inadequately trained troops, combined with poor coordination between the MUP and the ZNG.²⁰

Croatia's efforts to create its own armed forces, along with its political moves to separate from Yugoslavia, were closely watched by the JNA, which saw itself as the only federal institution still able and willing to thwart Croatia's secessionist intentions. Having dealt with the potential Croatian military threat, the JNA turned its attention to the political threat, drafting plans to remove the Croatian (as well as Slovenian) government. The JNA leaders intended to allow Croatia and Slovenia to proceed with their announced steps toward independence so that the JNA's planned military action could be amply justified. Although the JNA successfully confiscated Croatian Territorial Defense armaments in May 1990, it failed to foil the Croats' armament acquisition program from late 1990 to early 1991. In the fall of 1990, the JNA discovered those activities but could not get adequate support from the divided presidency for Operation Shield, designed to disarm the Croatian military organization and put its leaders on trial. In January 1991 the presidency ordered the Croats to hand over their arms, but the whole action failed. Nor could the JNA's effort in mid-March 1991 to impose a state of emergency garner support in the presidency. Although Milošević's ally Borisav Jović attempted to create a power vacuum by resigning as president of the presidency, the JNA was unable to exploit the opportunity.

First Incidents and the Outbreak of War

The inability of senior politicians to achieve a solution to the crisis and the unwillingness of the JNA to act ensured that the rising tensions within Croatia would eventually lead to open clashes between armed Croatian Serbs and Croatian government forces. The brief clashes that erupted at the town of Pakrac (3 March 1991), at Plitvice Lakes (31 March), and at the village of Borovo Selo (2 May, where at least twelve police died) were the first shots in the war that would consume Croatia for the rest of 1991. Both Serbs and Croats realized that all-out war was likely, and emotions reached the boiling point. Their fights and threats drew the JNA's Croatian garrisons into the role of peacekeepers, a role that did not fully satisfy either the Croatian Serbs, who wanted the JNA to defend them, or the Croats, who believed that the JNA was explicitly or tactically backing the rebellious Serbs.

The Borovo Selo incident marked the beginning of violent clashes throughout Croatia. Croatian Serbs erected barricades on many roads and posted village sentries, which caused fear, panic and hysteria on both sides. All these actions were a kind of “crawling advance” by which the Serbian leadership wanted to achieve its main objective: control over parts of Croatia where the Serbs were the relative majority. Croatian hardliners urged Tudjman to attack the JNA, but he refused, fearing that this would turn the international community against Croatia. Tudjman’s initial aim was to internationalize the conflict in Croatia rather than fight back with military force, hoping that the EC and the U.S. would recognize Croatian independence and put pressure on Belgrade to halt its operations against Croatia. In the meantime, the JNA acted under the pretence of separating the Serb and Croatian forces. It was not successful, however, and the Croatian side accused the JNA of being biased and helping the Serbs.

The summer saw clashes in the Banovina (Banija) region in Central Croatia. The Serbs tried to take control of the towns of Glina and Kostajnica, attacking police stations. The Croats lost both towns—Glina in June where the Serbs were substantially aided by the JNA, and Kostajnica in September where Croat forces suffered serious casualties that alarmed the public. Slavonia was the theater of a large Serb operation to take the rich Baranja region between the Drava and Dunav rivers, and after the successful completion of that operation the Serbs turned their attention to some important cities in eastern Slavonia, especially Osijek, Vukovar and Vinkovci. It was a “small war” where units of volunteers exchanged mortar and light artillery fire with their adversaries. In northern Dalmatia, where the Chetnik movement during World War II was stronger than in Banovina or Slavonia, the JNA played a more active role and led attacks on Croatian villages around Knin. The capture of Croatian Kijevo in August provoked anger in the Croatian public and further radicalization. Following this event workers’ unions organized a protest in front of the JNA Command Center in Split, and in the ensuing brawl a JNA soldier from Macedonia was killed. Serb forces also took the Maslenica Bridge on the main road connecting northern and southern Croatia. From that time on traffic between Dalmatia and Zagreb was dependent on ferries and island jumping.

Under pressure from the European Community, on 7 July all sides in the Yugoslav conflict accepted a three-month moratorium on any declaration of secession by Slovenia and Croatia with the goal of bringing about a peaceful negotiation concerning Yugoslavia’s future. However, it was clear that all sides had other plans. Croat President Tudjman made the decision to go to war with the JNA in mid-September, launching a strategic offensive on 14 September to neutralize and capture its installations throughout Croatia. This added a new dimension to the defensive military strategy that Croatia had pursued throughout its conflict with local Serb forces during the summer. Zagreb intended to continue

on the defensive at the front while attacking the JNA in the rear. The assault on the JNA barracks was the key element in the Croatian efforts to expand the ZNG. The weapons that the Croats seized in the barracks were used to arm dozens of newly mobilized active duty and reserve brigades. These weapons either replaced or were the same ones that the JNA had confiscated from the republican TO in May 1990.

The American ambassador in Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmermann, indicated that he was informed well in advance about these plans:

In late August Tudjman told me of his plans to launch a “war option”—an all-out offensive against the JNA and “Četnik separatists.” I agreed with him that the JNA was not acting in a neutral fashion but asked him how he could possibly hope to take it on with his neophyte army. “Oh,” he said offhandedly, “your country will come to my rescue with military force.” I told him there wasn’t a speck of credibility in his assertion and urged him not to base any military calculations on an American bailout. I failed to puncture Tudjman’s serenity. “Perhaps I know more about your country than you do, Mr. Ambassador,” he said with a smile.

Shaking my head about his informants on American politics, I tried another tack. “Why don’t you try to end the Serbian resistance by offering them autonomy within Croatia? In effect they have it anyway, protected by the JNA. A magnanimous gesture on your part might help provide the missing element of trust, and it would be popular in the West.” Tudjman showed no interest in the idea. Nor did he want to discuss a proposal that his own ministers had been peddling—an “association of Yugoslav states.” The proposal, in which the U.S. government had shown some interest, limited the central government to token powers; defense and foreign policy would be the province of the individual states. Thus the “association” would look more like the twelve-state European Community than Switzerland—not, in other words, a big concession for Croatia to make. Tudjman’s only reference to it was his parting shot: “If this war goes on, don’t mention any Yugoslav association to me.”²¹

These intentions also could not be kept secret from the army and the rest of the Yugoslav presidency and thus provoked suspicions on the other side and countermeasures. On 14 August 1991 General Veljko Kadijević gathered the most trusted in his cabinet (General Blagoje Adžić, S. Milošević, M. Bulatović, B. Kostić, and B. Jović) and informed them:

According to information from different sources—and the Greek one is definitely reliable—the Croats have decided to escalate the conflict with the JNA expecting that the greater scale of combats will provoke military intervention from abroad. The current situation does not help them. They have support

from the Vatican and the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the good will of the Americans.²²

However, the Croatian decision to wage the war could be seen as a face-saving action at a time when the JNA and Serb insurgents had already launched their offensives and controlled much of the national territory. There was not much choice: the Croatian government could either yield to Milošević, the JNA, and Serb insurgents, or it could try to defend what was left. In the summer of 1991 its ramshackle forces could not do much more than try to defend its positions, occasionally attacking blocked JNA garrisons in towns. Tudjman later publicly stated that Croatia had “chosen” the war, but this was not much more than his usual boasting.²³

It remains unclear why the rump presidency, with Branko Kostić as acting president, made moves that diminished the JNA’s capacity for resistance. For example, on 1 September the presidency issued the order to discharge from active service the complete September 1990 class of conscripts, which was the most numerous and the best-trained contingent in the JNA. Further, a 26 August JNA directive actually allowed officers to go on summer vacations.²⁴

In mid September Croats, including ZNG, police and various local volunteers’ units, were ordered to blockade JNA installations. Not only was this achieved, but phone lines, water, garbage disposal and other communal services were interrupted as well. Some smaller isolated posts or depots were quickly overrun, some after clashes. Croats captured large quantities of weapons and military gear, including those that the JNA had taken about the time of the first multi-party elections in April-May, 1990. The whole armory of the Thirty-Second Corps fell into Croat hands, only lightly damaged.²⁵

JNA’s Performance and Its Serbianization

In October, the JNA launched a full-scale strategic offensive to defeat the Croatian militarily and force them to capitulation. The general staff’s strategic offensive plan—probably drafted in the spring of 1991 and actually launched in September—called for slicing up Croatia and defeating it militarily to compel the surrender of the Croatian political leadership and the renegotiation of a Yugoslav confederation. A key objective added in September was to relieve all the JNA barracks blockaded by the Croats. This plan conflicted with Milošević’s war aim of a rump Serbian-led Yugoslavia.

The JNA Command envisaged a complicated strategic operation conducted by five corps and with extensive mobilizations in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The idea behind the mobilization was to impress Croats but also to prepare and deploy substantial forces so that they were in favorable positions

for the next operations. Full mobilization was necessary to enable the JNA to carry out the full-scale plan that General Kadijević envisioned:

Impose a full air and sea blockade on Croatia. Link the attack routes of the main JNA forces as directly as possible in order to liberate the Serb regions in Croatia and the JNA garrisons deep inside Croatian territory. To that end, intersect Croatia along the lines Gradiška–Virovitica, Bihać–Karlovac–Zagreb, Knin–Zadar and Mostar–Split. Liberate eastern Slavonia using the strongest grouping of armored-mechanized forces, and then quickly continue operations westward, hooking up with forces in eastern Slavonia and continuing on toward Zagreb and Varaždin. At the same time impose a land blockade on Dubrovnik with strong forces from the Herceg Novi-Trebinje region and penetrate the Neretva valley, thus working together with the forces moving along the Mostar–Split line. After achieving specific objectives, secure and hold the border of Serb Krajina in Croatia, withdraw the remaining parts of the JNA from Slovenia, and then withdraw the JNA from Croatia.²⁶

Somehow the JNA deterred Croatia—or at least President Tudjman — from siding with Slovenia in late June and July. However, the JNA operation failed to impress the Croats. Instead of launching a major strategic offensive, the JNA had to defend its installations, barracks and depots scattered throughout Croatia. There were not enough troops for securing the installations, let alone for a major operation. Mobilization was ordered, but a poor response by reservists, especially in Serbia, was disappointing. It made it altogether impossible to launch the envisaged operation that would give the JNA and the Serbs the upper hand in Croatia. Many units, half-manned, had to be merged with other units in order to function; and to counter this lack of personnel the JNA had to accept the services of volunteer paramilitary units organized by Serbian extremist parties (e.g. Vojislav Šešelj's Radical Party). Undermanned and unable to conduct a promised breakthrough, the JNA began to lose credibility among the Serbs. That led the JNA to ask the combined rump federal and Serbian presidency to authorize general mobilization, but there was no response. According to Jović, Kadijević abandoned his pro-Yugoslav stance at the end of September and advocated the "protection of Serb lands," thus embracing Milošević's policy of "All Serbs in One State."²⁷

The JNA initiated a small-scale operation on 14 September to relieve the Vukovar barracks. It was an operation that would become its main effort and would last until the second half of November. The army lost its timing and resources, but the most significant losses were its combat morale and credibility in the eyes of personnel and public alike. The Fifth Corps from Banja Luka crossed the Sava River and took part in actions in western Slavonia. Farther west, it supported Serbian TO forces in Banija and Kordun, helping them consolidate their control

over the territory around Karlovac and relieve the blocked garrison there. There were other important operations in Kostajnica, Petrinja, and Slunj. The Ninth (Knin) Corps launched operations around Zadar on 16 September, two days after the garrison was attacked. Because of mobilization problems and difficulties in Hercegovina, Operation Mostar–Split never materialized. The Dubrovnik sub-operation began on 1 October, following mobilization of the Montenegro-based JNA forces and the Montenegro TO.

The newly formed Croatian general staff organized the expansion of the ZNG during October with captured weapons. Beginning in September, ZNG and MUP forces proved able to stop the advancement of the JNA, and field-unit commanders began to urge the general staff to authorize counteroffensives. The new offensives, however, were to have only mixed success. Beginning in late October, Croatian forces in western Slavonia went on the attack, continuing their relatively successful operations until the end of the conflict in January. The Croats also attempted two unsuccessful operations to relieve the siege of Vukovar in October and November. Attacks in the Banija area near Sisak and Petrinja were only partially successful. Great success was achieved in western Slavonia, where the Croats gained control over large parts of formerly Serb-held territory. Elsewhere they remained on the defensive, while maintaining their blockades of the barracks. Indeed, the barracks remained surrounded until the agreement with the JNA for the withdrawal of their garrisons in December 1991 as part of the negotiations that led to the Vance Plan.²⁸

The military performance of the JNA in the opening stages of the war is usually rated as very poor. This is evident in the colossal fiasco in Slovenia (June 1991) and in the JNA's inability to conduct successful mobilization in Serbia proper and other locations. These deficiencies had critical operational consequences in conducting unfocused operations that were either unsuccessful (although opposed by much weaker forces) or stopped before attaining the objectives that were already at hand. The JNA conducted operations contrary to all military logic (i.e., the unnecessary siege of Vukovar) and, most importantly, was unable to fulfill its role of protecting the population against violence or assisting in a peaceful solution of the Yugoslav crisis in 1990–1991.

Some have argued that the JNA had already prepared in 1985 for an internal armed conflict and for the loss of Slovenia and those parts of Croatia where Serbs were not a majority. In that year it created a new organizational format with three theaters of war instead of five or six army districts that were more or less identical with the republican boundaries. It is evident that in 1991 the JNA tried to delineate new boundaries through the use of force, and thus, the reorganization of the late 1980s could be a part of the plan for the territorial expansion of Serbia; on the other hand, the JNA's very strong Yugoslav sentiment prior to the debacle

in Slovenia suggests a contrary conclusion. In this context, the Rampart-91 Plan (RAM) should be thoroughly investigated.

Recognition of Croatia as a Precipitant to the War

The recognition of Croatia in December 1991–January 1992 by the international community, especially the EC, has sometimes been characterized as a powerful precipitant to the war and its eventual expansion to Bosnia-Herzegovina. This view is held especially by Serbs but also by various international scholars and politicians.²⁹

The highest German and French officials of the time held completely opposite views on Germany's role in pushing for the recognition of Slovenian and Croatian independence. The French thought that the Germans were pushing for recognition for domestic political reasons and that the action would not help to stop the conflict. The chief of François Mitterrand's cabinet (and future French foreign minister) Hubert Vedrine wrote that Paris was fully aware of Germany's actions and did not condone them.³⁰ On the other hand, Michael Libal, former chief of the Southeast Europe Department in the German Foreign Ministry (1991–1995), dismisses any German responsibility for the war's continuation and spread. According to Libal, Germany did determine its policy much differently than the rest of the EC and the U.S. He advocates the view that the EC failed to acknowledge in a timely manner the basic threat to the unity and stability of Yugoslavia that Milošević's policy posed.³¹ Like Warren Zimmermann, the last U.S. ambassador to prewar Yugoslavia, Libal believes that the problems started in 1987, the year Milošević came to power in Serbia.

Borovo Selo Incident

Many individual events and episodes in the war in Croatia in 1990–1991 are either not fully documented or sustain contradictory accounts. In mentioning only a few of them we do not pretend to give either a complete list of such events or the most important of them. The interpretation of these and other similar events cannot change the overall meaning of the war, but it can aid in our understanding.

One of the episodes that opened the way to an escalation of the conflict is the controversial Borovo Selo incident. On 1 May, following two weeks of incidents and heightened tension, residents of the predominately Serb village of Borovo Selo hoisted Yugoslav flags, carrying the five-pointed Communist star, presumably to commemorate the traditional workers' day. Upon learning this, four Croatian policemen from Osijek drove into the village determined to replace one of the flags that stood in the center of Borovo Selo with the Croatian

flag, which bore the red and white checkerboard shield, or *Šahovnica*, that was hated by the Serbs. The policemen ran into a hail of gunfire. Although two of the officers escaped, the other two were captured.³² The next day a Croatian police convoy entered the village in order to liberate the prisoners. Instead, it ran into an ambush laid by Serb militiamen that killed twelve policemen and wounded more than twenty others. The JNA intervened with an armored unit and rescued the Croatian police detachment trapped in the center of the village, taking them to safety outside of the village.³³ The Serbs claimed that the real reason for the Croatian police attack was to instigate fighting and eventually provoke an all-out war. Some of the Serb participants in the incident have alleged that more than one hundred Croatian police were killed,³⁴ which is absurd and probably meant to serve as an argument that the Croats wanted to conquer the village and start a full-scale war.

Directly connected with this incident is a story that appears only in Silber and Little's book. During a tour in eastern Slavonia by widely regarded HDZ hawks Defense Minister Gojko Šušak, Deputy Interior Minister Vice Vukojević, and their aides, someone in their party fired three shoulder-launched Ambrust missiles on Borovo Selo. The chief of the Osijek police department, Josip Reihl-Kir, who was accompanying Šušak's party, later expressed disgust over this obvious provocation by high-ranking Croatian officials and the ensuing deterioration in interethnic relations.³⁵ The story served to illustrate that HDZ extremists wanted the war and tried to provoke it. The story cannot be verified in other sources³⁶ and appears rather incredible because top politicians have other means to provoke conflicts and do not have to walk around and fire rockets to do so. Nevertheless, it circulated widely, probably because of its rather sensational nature. Significantly, Reihl-Kir, who was committed to peaceful solutions, was killed by Croatian extremists soon thereafter. Clearly some circles did want to escalate the conflict.

The Siege of Vukovar

In August 1991, the JNA, local Serbian TO, and paramilitary units from Serbia attacked this eastern Croatian town situated just south of Borovo Selo. After three months of siege, they entered the devastated town at the end of November, giving way to the most horrible atrocities of the entire war. Why was Vukovar put under prolonged siege when military logic would dictate that the town be left isolated and attacks continue on towns and other objectives farther west? In this siege the JNA used armor and infantry in separate attacks, contrary to all principles of the art of war, and suffered thousands of casualties and the loss of more than 400 pieces of armor. Norman Cigar notes that Vukovar became a symbol of Serbia's determination to promote the cause of Croatia's Serbs. For the Croats, Vukovar became a symbol for the defense of its independence and territorial integrity.

Most importantly the battle of Vukovar went a long way toward swinging international opinion in Croatia's favor.³⁷

According to the Croatian census of 1991, the ethnic composition of the municipality of Vukovar was mixed and almost balanced among two major groups: 31,445 (37.35 percent) Serbs and 36,910 (43.8 percent) Croats. In the central area of the city the numbers were 47 percent Croat and 32.3 percent Serb. It is worth mentioning that according to the census 35 percent of the marriages were mixed.³⁸ Before major operations took place in September 1991, some 8,000 Croats, including 6,000 children, were evacuated to the Adriatic Coast, while some 14,000 Serbs went to Serb-held territory.³⁹ When the JNA and Serb paramilitaries finally took control of the town, the entire population was evacuated. People could choose to go to Serbia or to Croatia. According to one source, in the fall of 1994 some 29,000 Serb refugees from western Slavonia and the Croat-held territories found shelter in the municipality of Vukovar.⁴⁰

General Anton Tus, then chief of the Croatian general staff, maintains that the Croatian army fulfilled its task. It embarrassed the JNA, which had intended to crush Croatia within twenty days in a full-scale operation. The Twelfth (Novi Sad) and Seventeenth (Tuzla) JNA Corps, along with a guard brigade from Belgrade, suffered so many casualties that the offensive came to a halt. That enabled the Croats to undertake a successful counteroffensive against the Serbs in western Slavonia. Tus estimates that in the siege of Vukovar alone the JNA and Serb paramilitary units lost 5,000 killed; 600 tanks, armored personnel carriers, and combat vehicles; and 20 aircraft, against 4,000 Croatian dead.⁴¹ In his memoirs, Tus's adversary General Kadijević boasts that the battle of Vukovar was a victory over the main forces of the Croatian army, totaling at least 6,000–8,000 soldiers, although the city was actually defended by fewer than 2,000 men.⁴²

The Serbian (Yugoslav) side acknowledges that at the Ovčara farmhouse local TO forces executed some 200 wounded and sick prisoners of war taken from the municipal hospital after the city was sacked. In its indictments against Milošević, Hadžić, and others, the ICTY counts 260 victims in the Ovčara killings. Seven guards who actually did the killing were charged and sentenced for war crimes by a special court for war crimes in Belgrade. The precise number of all who were killed after the fall of the city will probably never be known.

The Attack on Dubrovnik

Dubrovnik was surrounded and attacked by the JNA in October 1991 with no clear military justification. There were no JNA installations or Serb population to defend, while Croatian forces in the city were too weak to mount any significant attack against them. The consequence of this attack was a public relations catastrophe and the loss of all credibility that the JNA might still have had. As

noted earlier, Kadijević's 1991 war plan contained a part dedicated to Dubrovnik that aimed "to impose a land blockade on Dubrovnik with strong forces from the Herceg Novi-Trebinje region and penetrate the Neretva Valley, thus working together with the forces moving along the Mostar-Split line."⁴³ He was resolute against the JNA's capturing the inner city area and opted for a blockade from a distance and well out of Croatian artillery range. The JNA had been interested in securing the strategic Dubrovnik-Trebinje route into eastern Hercegovina. But was Kadijević telling the whole truth?

More than eighty civilians were killed during the shelling of the city, which was not taken, although the occupied environs were subjected to wholesale looting and wanton destruction. JNA General Pavle Strugar and Admiral Miodrag Jokić, at the time in charge of the operations on the southern flank, were later indicted and sentenced for war crimes by the ICTY. The tribunal found that they bore command responsibility and did not prevent violations of war customs and laws. The Dubrovnik operation is still a very controversial issue. On the Croatian side, some politicians and academics have accused the Croatian government of letting Dubrovnik and its population fend for themselves.⁴⁴

Few episodes in the war are as perplexing as the siege of Dubrovnik. "The Pearl of the Adriatic," Dubrovnik is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a popular tourist destination with well preserved medieval and renaissance fortifications, gothic and baroque churches and palaces. The JNA, advancing in the south according to its all-out offensive plan, besieged and attacked the city itself, subjecting it to shelling and bombardment, and causing extensive destruction and many civilian casualties. However, the Croat defenders managed to hold their positions in the city itself and in the old fortress on the hill above the town. In contrast to that, the surroundings of Dubrovnik were taken, occupied and heavily looted by the JNA regulars. The fate of Dubrovnik, a city which hosts the prestigious Inter-University Center, concerned many international scholars and attracted the attention of the international community which expressed its outcry and rushed to aid the beleaguered town and its population. The siege and bombardment of Dubrovnik definitely damaged the reputation of the Serbs, their leadership and the JNA. To this day the real purpose behind this operation remains unclear. It certainly was without the slightest military advantage to their cause.

Srdja Pavlović writes that the case of Dubrovnik still provokes lengthy and passionate debates among historians and politicians, leaving many questions unanswered, while ordinary Montenegrins and Serbs are left to their own devices to cope with their feelings of uneasiness about the recent past. They struggle with many questions such as who initiated the process and who is to blame for its catastrophic results? Pavlović maintains that, during the early fall of 1991, Montenegro's political leaders and the JNA's military brass rationalized the attack on Dubrovnik as a necessary move not only to stop the so-called unconstitutional

secession of Croatia but to protect the territorial integrity of Montenegro and Yugoslavia and to prevent a potential ethnic conflict.⁴⁵ Montenegrin Prime Minister Milo Djukanović raised the hopes of many nationalists in Montenegro when he stated that the “Croatian authorities want to have a war and they will have it. If Croatia wants to secede then the international borders must be revised.”⁴⁶

Some Serbian analysts have emphasized that Dubrovnik had been a demilitarized city for more than two decades but had been militarized by Croats once again in 1991. Yet the small Croatian garrison in Dubrovnik and its limited capacity for military action hardly justifies the attack. General Kadijević did invite President Tudjman to demilitarize the city under EC control, offering at the same time to allow foreign military attachés to visit the area. The JNA was convinced that such visits would change the mostly negative opinion in the West toward the JNA. The visit took place at the end of October but backfired. The Dubrovnik operation became the biggest public relations disaster for the JNA, Milošević, and the whole Serb bloc.

Operations Flash and Storm

The end of 1994 brought some prospects for a possible peace accord. In December, representatives of the Croatian government and the insurgent Serbs agreed on certain confidence-building measures that included the opening of the Zagreb–Belgrade highway, an oil pipeline, electric power grids, and waterlines. At the end of January 1995, Western negotiators tried to promote a comprehensive peace settlement between the Croatian and the Krajina Serb governments. This so-called Z-4 Plan envisaged the return of all refugees and substantial autonomy for an area consisting of eleven small and economically undeveloped municipalities around Glina and Knin that comprised roughly a third of the territory controlled by the Republika Srpska Krajina.⁴⁷ Zagreb tentatively welcomed Z-4, but the Krajina Serbs refused to discuss it unless the Croatian regime renounced their intention to block renewal of the UNPROFOR mandate for Croatia. Negotiations were prolonged over the next two months. Under pressure Zagreb finally agreed that the UN would remain, albeit under the new name United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation UNCRO. Throughout these months HV Chief of Staff General Janko Bobetko stated repeatedly that any closure of the Belgrade–Zagreb highway would bring a Croatian military response to reopen the road.⁴⁸

The Croatian side made systematic preparations for a final showdown in case peace negotiations failed. In November 1994 the HV took Kupres, opening the way along the Dinara range. During the winter, HV engineer corps made roads through the area, and in the spring of 1995, the HV gained tactical control over the key Knin–Grahovo pass and other positions suitable for putting the Krajina Serb artillery positions under fire. Meanwhile, in UNPA Sector West,

or western Slavonia, traffic along the Zagreb–Belgrade highway went smoothly until April, when RSK President Milan Martić ordered a one-day closure of the highway to protest Croatian customs procedures. At the end of the month there were violent incidents involving civilians, which resulted in several deaths on both sides and the highway's closure. On 30 April Tudjman ordered that the highway would be opened on 1 May at five o'clock in the morning. The HV main staff had, in fact, finished its campaign plan for the recapture of western Slavonia in December 1994, which envisioned a breakout to the Sava River. The idea of the two-pronged attack was to advance along the highway from both Nova Gradiška and Novska, meet at Okučani, and cut off Serb forces. The Croatian order of battle comprised some 15,000 troops with armor, artillery, infantry, and air force units. The Krajina Serb Eighteenth Corps had three undermanned brigades with a total of 2,000 troops on active duty and 4,000–5,000 reserves.

The Croatian attack, code-named Operation Flash, began on 1 May 1995 with almost no warning, leaving the Serbs minimal time to call up reservists or even deploy formations into appropriate defense positions. The HV attack struck the Eighteenth Corps artillery with both artillery and air strikes, creating chaos and panic in the rear flank of the Army of the Serbian Krajina (SVK). This left a withdrawal route to Bosnia open via the Bosanska Gradiška Bridge. In the early afternoon of 2 May, the HV took Okučani and proceeded to clean out pockets of resistance in the Mount Psunj foothills. Artillery and rocket fire was used to flush SVK troops from their hiding places and into a cordon of HV and MUP units surrounding the area. The tactics were instantly effective and, by the end of 4 May, some 1,500 had surrendered.⁴⁹

The Eighteenth Corps of the SVK suffered one of the swiftest and most humiliating defeats of the whole war. The corps commander left his command post immediately after the Croatian attack began, thus leaving his troops without leadership. The Serb resistance was disorganized, weak, and short-lived. Military units, along with civilians, fled to Bosnia before Croat military and police even arrived. At least half of western Slavonia's Serb population is estimated to have left their homes. On their way to the bridge over the Sava River, mixed columns of troops and civilians came under fire, leaving casualties. Unable to stop the Croatian offensive, President Martić ordered retaliatory rocket attacks on Zagreb on 2–3 May that killed seven and wounded more than two hundred. Although the UN initially accused the HV of war crimes, it appears that Croatian forces did not commit many violations of humanitarian law during Operation Flash. The UN subsequently withdrew the accusations.⁵⁰

The rapid collapse of the SVK defenses in western Slavonia provoked heated discussions among the political elite of the insurgent Serbs. The politicians and soldiers blamed each other. The rocket attack on Zagreb that was part of the Serb strategy of deterrence backfired, with Martić being promptly indicted before the

ICTY in July 1995.⁵¹ Although everything indicated that the whole insurgency had reached a dead end, nothing was done to improve the situation, except for Milošević's dispatching General Mile Mrkšić from Belgrade to serve as the new SVK commander. Nor did the RSK leadership offer anything new to the Croatian regime to find a peaceful political solution to the conflict.

Operation Storm: Context

After the success in *Operation Flash* and with no peace initiatives on the table, the Croatian government continued with preparations to crush the insurgency. The reaction of Bosnian and Croatian Serbs toward the HV advance along the Dinara was weak, with the Bosnian-Serb Army of the Republika Srpska (VRS) losing one position after another. Meanwhile, the VRS launched substantial operations elsewhere in Bosnia in order both to achieve territorial advantages before the final settlement and to free up troops to face the coming HV offensive. In the first half of July, the VRS overran the Muslim enclave and the UN safe area of Srebrenica, killing thousands of prisoners; two weeks later the VRS swept into Žepa, another safe area in eastern Bosnia, expelling the whole population from the town (see chapter 6, "Safe Areas"). At the same time, the VRS and the SVK mounted another attack on the Bihać enclave in northwestern Bosnia. The international community, already humiliated by its inability to prevent the Srebrenica massacre, now feared that the fall and sack of Bihać might end in an even greater slaughter. The UN, NATO, and individual countries warned the Bosnian Serbs against repeating the horror of Srebrenica in Bihać and asked that the attack be immediately cancelled. In the last days of July the Serbian attack was, however, still in progress.

Why the Croatian Serbs took part in the attack on Bihać in the summer of 1995 is still incomprehensible. On the one hand, there were serious military reasons not to participate in the VRS offensive in northwestern Bosnia. The SVK was undermanned and low on morale; the advance of the HV along the Dinara and Livno Valleys should have made the defense of the approaches to Knin their first priority. Instead of defending the key towns of Grahovo and Glamoč, the SVK deployed most of its troops around Bihać. On the other hand, the concerns of the international community should have offered serious political reasons for not participating in the Bihać campaign. It was obvious that the project of uniting all the "Serb Lands" was no longer feasible and that Milošević and the Serb bloc had already radically reduced their war plans. Furthermore, there was nothing to expect from the VRS if the HV attack took place; the Bosnian Serbs had not come to the rescue of the SVK's Eighteenth Corps during Operation Flash. In July the ICTY indictments arrived against Karadžić and Mladić for genocide in Bosnia and against Martić for the rocket attack on Zagreb two months before. It

was clear that the international community did not consider these people political leaders but rather criminals with whom it would not negotiate.

Moreover, on 22 July 1995 Tudjman and Izetbegović worked out an agreement in Split for mutual defense, making it possible for Croatian troops to operate in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Resolution 43/49, The Situation in the Occupied Territories of Croatia, the UN General Assembly expressed the view that the Serb-controlled territories were under occupation, clearly showing that it did not consider the insurgent Serbs primarily as fighters for freedom and national liberation. All these signs should have led the Croatian Serbs to change radically their hitherto intransigent politics of secession from Croatia and unification with “All Serb Lands.” The obvious and only rational course of action for the Croatian Serbs should have been to disentangle immediately from the Bosnian Serbs’ attack on Bihać and to negotiate for a political solution with Zagreb. But no efforts were made in this direction and, when Grahovo and Glamoč fell in the last days of July, many inhabitants of the RSK, including government officials and their families, started to pack for Serbia.

Aside from Srebrenica and Žepa, the Serb offensives in Bosnia that summer were failures. On 5 May 1995 the VRS started Operation Flame-95 (*Plamen-95*) to wipe out the Croat Orašje pocket south of the Sava River in northern Bosnia, but on 10 June the action was called off. Soon after, the more energetic General Mrkšić, freshly sent from Belgrade, assumed command over the SVK. Plans were made for operations against the HV/HVO in the mountains above the Dinara and Livno Valleys, which were the most immediate threat to the RSK. However, on Belgrade’s advice, the plan was changed, and the attack on the Bosnian Army’s Fifth Corps at Bihać was given priority. The plan optimistically anticipated the quick collapse of the Bosnian forces, which were not only well led but numbered some 17,000 men. In fact, the final attack (Operation Sword-95) on 17 July deployed only a slightly larger force that included 5,000 assault troops, 9,000 garrison units, and 4,000 men provided by the renegade Muslim leader Fikret Abdić. The offensive not only failed to eliminate the Fifth Corps but left the initiative to the HV, which did not miss the chance to improve its own position by defeating weak Serbian defenses on 28–29 July and entering Grahovo and Glamoč.⁵² Although the VRS and the SVK now halted their attack on Bihać, it was simply too late to regroup to face the impending HV attack.

The HV preparations for Operation Storm were completed in July. The plan envisaged attacks on UN Sectors North and South, which constituted all of what was left of the RSK except for Sector East (eastern Slavonia). The taking of Knin from newly acquired positions a few miles above the town was a top HV priority, given the symbolic and political meaning of the town as the seat of the insurgency. The general idea was to undertake a fast-paced operation, attacking first command and communication posts and then troops on the ground. As shown by

a transcript of a meeting of Tudjman and his top military brass held at Brioni on 31 July, it was predicted that the Serb population would leave soon after the HV attack began, as had been observed already during Operation Flash. This was considered to be a critical factor for lowering the morale of the VSK troops and, thus, was an expedient for the swiftness of the operation.

It was a high priority that the operation be conducted and finished very quickly. In his testimony at the Milošević trial before the ICTY, the then U.S. ambassador to Croatia, Peter Galbraith, attested to the desperation of the international community. Having failed to stop the Serbian offensive against Bihać, it was very apprehensive over the offensive's impact. Tudjman had already assured Galbraith that his forces were ready and willing to relieve Bihać while crushing the Serbian insurgency in the process. According to Galbraith's testimony and Tudjman's words to his generals, there was a mutually beneficial understanding that Tudjman would save Bihać and the international community would leave him to restore order in his own Krajina backyard. The only conditions were that the operation be swift and that no crimes against the civilian population be committed.⁵³ When the UN special envoy Yasushi Akashi reached an agreement with Martić and other insurgent leaders to disengage the SVK from Bihać (30 July), Galbraith set in motion another peace initiative with the aim of preventing the Croatian attack. He met with Babić, who hesitantly agreed to negotiate with the Croats on the basis of Z-4, but Martić refused, and Milošević declined to receive the negotiators. Tudjman made his final decision no later than 31 July and agreed on negotiations with RSK representatives in Geneva on 3 August only to conceal his real intentions. The negotiations broke down and, at five o'clock in the morning of 2 August 1995, Operation Storm ensued.

The attack managed to break the Serb defenses everywhere, and in a day or two the HV attained all its main objectives. The Croatian advance and the collapse of the Serbian lines were facilitated by Martić's controversial order for the evacuation of the civil population, issued on the evening of 4 August immediately before Martić himself left Knin. Except for the situation around Petrinja, where poor leadership delayed the HV for a day, the situation on all fronts was the same: the SVK fled in disorder, as did almost the entire civilian population, leaving behind only those who were unable to move. Knin fell around noon on 5 August after an artillery barrage and without any resistance from the SVK infantry and armored units that were supposed to defend the town. The Serb military and political institution collapsed so quickly that even the Croats were surprised by their successes and the low intensity of resistance they encountered after entering Serb-held territories. The Serbs everywhere fled, carrying all the belongings they could take with them. Only in Kordun were the escape routes closed, leaving the SVK's Twenty-First Corps and civilian masses with no way out. In order to avoid further casualties, the HV and local Serb commanders agreed on the surrender

of the Twenty-First Corps. The military personnel and civilians were free to go wherever they wanted, which meant Bosnia and Serbia. After five years' existence, the insurgency was crushed militarily in only four days. The Serb military experienced one of the most bitter and most humiliating defeats in history.

Final Operations: Croat–Croat Controversies

In the aftermath of operations Flash and, especially, Storm there were public celebrations in Croatia marking them among the most important events in the nation's history. The day Knin fell was inaugurated as a public holiday, the Day of Homeland Thanksgiving (*Dan domovinske zahvalnosti*, 5 August). The ruling Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) tried to enforce its own legitimacy by virtually creating a myth around these achievements. Military commanders who led the troops in the offensives wanted their share, too. Both the HDZ and the army encouraged the public to celebrate the fact that the HV had become "a regional power."

The Croatian chief of military intelligence at the time of Operation Storm, Admiral Davor Domazet, abetted the view that the HV had proven itself as a regional power after these two anti-insurgent actions and that Operation Storm was in scale and military performance comparable only to the original Desert Storm in 1991. Indeed, Operation Storm was an example of the air-land battle that had been developed by the U.S. military for fighting the Warsaw Pact and had been applied so successfully in the Arabian Desert. These claims made no sense at all and should be seen for what they were: exaggerations with political or propaganda aims.⁵⁴ In addition to this, Croatia's success can only be evaluated by remembering as well the political-military situation of the insurgent Serbs. Their troops were demoralized, as was the civilian population; the whole Serb project was doomed and had no real future, either politically or militarily. This made it possible for the Croatian troops to record a great and important victory even when some of those troops—especially the reserve component—were poorly equipped and trained. The adversary simply evaporated before them.

Nor was there any public evaluation of the role of the Fifth Corps of the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina (ARBiH) in Operation Storm. Moreover, except for a few texts, the Croats say nothing about the largely accidental support by NATO aircraft against Serb antiaircraft positions. These aircraft were on a routine patrol and opened fire on some SVK integrated antiaircraft positions after they had sensed Serbian radar. After this they quickly withdrew. Although this did not influence the outcome of the overall operation, it did encourage the impression that NATO was assisting the Croats. In repeated interviews with the Croatian weeklies and dailies in 1997–1998, Galbraith underlined the decisive role that the U.S. had played in the reintegration of Croatia and the victories in 1995. The

U.S. did not condone Operation Flash, but to Storm it at least turned a blind eye.⁵⁵ Croatia would have encountered more problems in crushing the insurgency if there had been no economic sanctions imposed upon Serbia and if there had not been a NATO–U.S. military threat to Serbia, as U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright once reminded President Tudjman. In addition the U.S. turned a blind eye to the arms trafficking going into Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ambassador Galbraith said that he knew about the plans for launching *Operation Storm* two weeks before it took place and advised his government to do nothing about it.⁵⁶

Before Galbraith's interviews and testimony, American officials were reluctant to acknowledge U.S. involvement. The analysts however concluded that

US officials did not turn a blind eye, they assisted the Croatian army's *Operation Storm*. Retired US military consultants provided tactical training and operational planning under the guise of "democracy training"—with the blessing of the Clinton administration. Indeed, there is evidence that U.S. assistance . . . may have included air strikes and psychological warfare operations.⁵⁷

One could ask why it took Croatia so long to undertake these operations to gain control over its territories. Certainly they needed time to prepare the available military resources, and they were waiting for the strategic situation to improve, which it started to do in late 1994 when they took Kupres and advanced along the Dinara Mountains. Perhaps Croatia was awaiting the denouement in Bosnia, where it previously had broad ambitions. Another possibility is that Croatia waited for the best timing of its final operations in order to have backup from the international community. The siege of Bihać proved to be a perfect moment, and Croatia used it. There was also an opportunity in 1994 when the ARBiH Fifth Corps advanced from Bihać into Serb-held Bosnian Krajina. But besides the operational support that the Fifth Corps could provide at that time, the other two prerequisites for success—battle-ready troops and international support—were simply not in place.

Perhaps more interesting than questions concerning the performance of the Croatian war machine are the events in the aftermath of Operation Storm, when the Croatian authorities tried to resume control over the liberated territory. It is a well-documented fact that after the military part of the operation was over, the chaos of wholesale looting started, and several hundred Serbs, the majority of them elderly, were murdered. Some, including government officials and institutions, claim that this was the work of criminals who acted on their own, whereas various journalists, scholars, political and nongovernmental activists, along with the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTY, think that it was a premeditated and organized operation.

The events after Storm became perhaps the most controversial issue surrounding the war in Croatia. In October 2001 a small Croat company presented a documentary film on Croatian television titled *Storm over Krajina*, that showed how much of the Krajina was looted and burned to the ground. The movie caught many by surprise, and the reactions were intense. Each of the prominent Croatian dailies commented on it, and even the Croatian parliament put it on its agenda. The prime minister gave his public announcement; local radio stations received opinions by e-mail; Web discussions centered on the film; and the leaders of most political parties commented on it as well. Organizations like the Croatian Helsinki Committee welcomed the film, and opinion polls showed that the majority was in favor of broadcasting it.⁵⁸ Was the documentary anti-Croat Serb propaganda? Was it a first step in the revision of the homeland war? Certainly some felt this way, especially some of those who participated in the war and some who believed that the film offended their patriotic sentiments.

What really happened after Storm, and why did not the Croatian authorities assume control and responsibility over Krajina, leaving it instead in the hands of looters and murderers? These are still unanswered questions. To close the area and deny access to civilians was a relatively easy task, but it was not done. Perhaps the Croatian authorities did not think that far in advance. Obsessed with the operation and with crushing the Serb insurgency, they forgot to think about what might happen next. It is, however, interesting to note that the Croatian police were given the task of protecting all of the Orthodox churches in Krajina—only a small percentage of which was desecrated or destroyed. Why did authorities fail to protect other public facilities, such as schools, medical facilities, factories, railroad infrastructure, and other valuable assets of Croatia's national wealth? And why did they not care to protect some 8,000 Serbs who were left behind? All this remains a mystery. Surely Operation Storm was a genuine success and a great Croatian victory; what followed was an equally great and totally unnecessary mistake.

Final Operations: Croat–Serb Controversies

The main controversy between Croats and Serbs concerning the events in 1995 is whether what happened was the liberation of occupied territories (Croatian view) or the occupation of the Republic of Srpska Krajina by Croats who willingly provoked the exodus of almost the entire population (Serb view). No less an important controversy involves the character of the exodus. On the Croat side some say that the Serbs fled willingly in spite of invitations made by President Tudjman to remain. Others claim that the Serbs fled out of fear of revenge, or “because they know what they have done to us [Croats].” Serbs, on the other hand, claim that,

given their experience in Gospić (1991), Medak (1993), and western Slavonia (1995), they could not simply wait for the same destiny.

In his recently published contribution on this issue, Nikica Barić endorses what can be considered the standard “moderate” Croat view, a rational explanation that comes closest to what happened.⁵⁹ He offers selected arguments in support of the basic thesis that the Serbs, because they had sided with Milošević’s policy, did not want to live with Croats at any price and opted to flee rather than to stay and live with the Croats. He further argues that they feared revenge for their expulsion of Croats in the first stage of the war. He also points out the important difference between the Croat attitude in their liberated areas and the Serbian attitude in the Srebrenica region in the summer of 1995.⁶⁰ Although not excusing the crimes committed in the aftermath of Storm, American historian Elinor M. Despalatović contextualizes them by emphasizing that they came only at the end of a war that had been started by Serbs and by their acceptance of the aggressive policy of Slobodan Milošević.⁶¹

Why did the Croatian leadership opt for a military solution despite a suitable opportunity for a political resolution of the crisis? The CIA’s analysts note that the UN worked frantically to avert a Croatian offensive against its renegade minority, trying to bring the two sides together in Geneva on 3 August. Prime Minister Milan Babić—the same Babić who had led the Serbs out of the Croatian state in 1990–1991—made a last-ditch peace offer, pledging his acceptance of a modified Z-4 Plan. His efforts failed, however, despite their endorsement by the U.S. and Galbraith.⁶² Why, then, did Croatia choose war instead of a peaceful political solution for which the Serbian side, including Babić and a few others (though not Martić), was allegedly ready. Some say that this was because Tudjman knew that a military operation was the only means to “get rid” of a substantial part of Croatia’s Serb minority, a result he could never expect from a political solution. Arrayed against such an interpretation, however, is the fact that Croatia accepted the Z-4 Plan and was prepared for a political solution. It was actually the Serb side that refused to discuss it. But the Croats could not wait forever, and at the end of July, they prepared a military operation. Part of the Serb elite—namely Babić—did indeed accept the negotiations, but it was obviously too late and too unconvincing. It came only hours before the operation was scheduled to start, and it looked like the Serbs were only trying to buy more time but were not sincere in their efforts. It should not be forgotten that as late as the end of July the RSK assembly was discussing unification of the RSK with the RS, which was certainly not an action that would contribute to productive talks with Zagreb.

There is no doubt that the deliberate Croatian attack was the reason why almost the entire population of the western RSK fled. The exodus is certainly one of the greatest tragedies in the history of the Serbian people, but Croats cannot be

blamed for this outcome. At the first phase of the war Croats living in areas held or attacked by Serbs were expelled or had to flee. As of 1 December 1991 there were half a million refugees in Croatia, almost all of them non-Serbs, who had had to leave their homes. The few Croats who remained in Serb-held areas were subjected to persecution and terror; from 1992 to 1995 several hundred of them were killed.⁶³ As Barić has shown, the very essence of the Serb insurgents' political project was a perpetual separation from the Croats and a refusal to live alongside other ethnic groups. This was achieved by taking parts of Croatia and was followed by the expulsion of Croats and other non-Serbs from the RSK. It was, then, natural to expect that Serbs would leave if the Croats eventually came back, especially in the event of a military action. On the other hand, the insurgency posed real problems for Croatia, making the situation unbearable. The country's main road and rail communications were blocked or cut off for five years. A large chunk of Croatia was not included in the national legal system and infrastructure. There were still hundreds of thousands of refugees waiting to go back to their homes, and the cities near the front line were occasionally subjected to SVK artillery attacks. Something had to be done, and if the Serbs were unwilling to make a political deal, then military action was the only possible course of action. Thus, given the situation, there were only two ways the exodus of the Serbs could have been avoided: either the Serbs would have had to reconcile with the Croats, which was impossible given the very essence of their political program, or the Croats would have had not to launch a military operation, which was also impossible given the staggering fiscal and economic costs that the armed insurgency imposed on Croatia. Military operation and exodus were thus consequences of the insurgency itself and could not be prevented.

Some authors, such as Svetozar Livada, claim that the Serbs were right when they chose to flee; what happened to those who stayed behind is proof that they would have been killed or otherwise persecuted. But this argument is based on the assumption that Croats are by their very nature Serb killers and that Croats will use every opportunity to harm Serbs. The peaceful reintegration of Serbs into Croatian society in eastern Slavonia between 1995 and 1998 showed that reintegration really was possible when done gradually and within the framework of a political agreement.

Other authors suggest that, from the onset, Tudjman hoped that the number of Serbs living in Croatia would be reduced in the course of the war or that the ultimate political goal of Croat extremists—Tudjman, and the HDZ included—was the wholesale expulsion of the Serb population. Jovan Mirić, a professor at Zagreb University and a bitter critic of Serb nationalistic politics, analyzed publicly available materials and sources and came to the conclusion that the expulsion was indeed the basic idea of the politics of the HDZ and of some of the other Croatian right-wing political parties.⁶⁴ Some other scholars, notably Nikica Barić, reject

this and other arguments that Mirić makes as absurd. Croatian President Mesić, giving his testimony at the ICTY in the Milošević trial, testified that Tudjman told him that he *supposed* that the number of Serbs by the end of the war would be diminished to 5 percent of the population, down from a little more than 12 percent in 1991.⁶⁵ But his testimony does not imply that this was Tudjman's plan, only that it was what he expected would happen. It was easy to come to that conclusion. In 1995, well before Operation Storm, one of the authors of this present chapter predicted that the number of Serbs would be significantly diminished.⁶⁶

Invited to comment on the ICTY indictment of the Croatian generals for "joint criminal enterprise," Nikola Visković, professor at the School of Law, University of Split, expressed his view that it is not correct to link ethnic cleansing with Operation Storm alone. Visković emphasized that such action started in the beginning of the 1990s. According to him, the diehard nationalists always saw the Serbs as a permanent cause of instability and obstruction, or a threat, for Croatian statehood. All the plans for diminishing that historical threat were encouraged. So the Serbs were exposed to harassment, plundering, or even killings (Sisak, Osijek, Pakrac, Zagreb), from which they could not expect any substantial legal protection. The region of Istria was the only exception to that practice.⁶⁷

Some foreign observers in Croatia have also remarked bitterly about Tudjman's attitudes toward the Serbian minority after 1990. The last American ambassador in the SFRY, Zimmermann has left the notes on his talks with Tudjman and on his failed attempts to convince the president to reverse the HDZ's confrontational policy toward the Croatian Serbs by calming their fears.⁶⁸ The former American ambassador to Croatia, Peter Galbraith described Tudjman as a "nationalist, in some ways fascist." Tudjman subscribed to Samuel Huntington's thesis about an inevitable clash of civilizations and often compared Bosnia's Muslims to the point of an Islamic dagger aimed at Europe. Although he took pride in the presence of some Croatian minorities, including Italians and Jews, he was an advocate of ethnic homogeneity who "believed that Croatia's 12 percent Serb minority was too much. He may not have a plan to expel the Serbs, but once they left he did not want them to come back."⁶⁹

Final Operations: Serb–Serb Controversies

The defeat of the insurgency, which was far more than a military defeat, has provoked a reexamination of the recent past among the Serbs themselves. Serbs from Krajina are likely to put the blame on the worthless promises made by Milošević, the JNA, and the international community. They use catchy slogans to describe what happened, like "Treason," "Krajina Betrayed," and "Milošević sold Krajina." They ask about the real mission of successive SVK Commanders-in-Chief General Milan Čeleketić and his post-Flash replacement General Mrkšić, who

lost Krajina militarily in such humiliating fashion. In addition, Serbs question the agenda and role of RSK Prime Minister Borislav Mikelić (April 1994–May 1995), who had been closely allied with Milošević since the late 1980s.⁷⁰

Politicians in Belgrade also accused the Krajina Serbs of deliberately fleeing their country instead of putting up a stout defense. In this view, if the Krajina Serbs had held on for at least a week, the international community might have intervened to halt the Croatian offensive and revive negotiations. Some accused them of stubbornness in their talks with Zagreb and the international community. According to Momir Bulatović, the Yugoslav Supreme Council of Defense on which he was then serving convened a special session at 5:00 p.m. on 4 August 1995 at the command post in Dobanovci, near Belgrade. He noted that the Supreme Council sent a cable to General Mrkšić encouraging him to organize firm resistance for at least two more days. After that Yugoslavia would be able to help him with all possible assistance.⁷¹

Some former military leaders have examined the deeper roots of the military defeat and found them in the SVK itself. They draw attention to factors that ruined morale, pointing out that Krajina was left alone to be retaken by Croatia, that its people were given false promises that both Republika Srpska and Serbia would come to their aid, and that the region suffered greatly from corruption, poverty, and pervasive uncertainty. They also blame the lack of discipline and the SVK's modest military capabilities. The region lacked men, qualified officers, and modern equipment. It adhered firmly to the former TO doctrine instead of adopting more mobile tactics, whereas the eccentric shape of Krajina's territory tended to obstruct maneuvers. These analysts also emphasize the unfavorable strategic situation that resulted from the joint HV–HVO–ARBiH strike from Velika Kladuša and Bihać into the rear of the Serbian front.

As mentioned before, it was Martić, acting in his capacity as the president of the republic, who ordered the evacuation of the civilian population. It is a fact that since 1993 the RSK authorities had made plans for a temporary evacuation of the population into shelters or, in the case of a major emergency, further to Bosnia. However, this is regular procedure in any military planning in order to avoid casualties among civilians and to leave the military's hands free for in-theater military operations. In that regard the Serbs were not unique, but the experience after Operation Flash called for serious reassessment of the plans for the protection of civilians.

It is also possible to interpret Martić's order for evacuation as pertaining only to Sector South (northern Dalmatia and Lika) and not to the whole territory of the RSK under attack. It is unclear whether Martić's order reached anyone beyond Knin because radio and TV ceased to operate and could not transmit or-

ders and information. As part of psychological operations, the Croats distributed thousands of fake leaflets in which the RSK military authorities ordered that the civilians be evacuated.⁷² Yet these leaflets could have had only limited effect, for the evacuation began not because the authorities ordered it in the first place but because people decided to leave for various other reasons.

Epilogue

It is hard to expect that a scholarly, nonpartisan, and balanced historical account can be produced less than a decade after the end of this conflict. This is because there are many specific obstacles and impediments that make it difficult to complete such an account.

Yet some facts can be established and some controversies can be resolved. We have offered here a survey of some of the more salient controversies and a narrative based on known facts. Having in mind not only the acts, but also the thoughts, mindsets, fears, perceptions, and emotions of all the actors who participated in the war in any capacity—including the international community—we have tried to give the most objective picture possible of these past events. We believe these to be the most plausible explanations and interpretations of Croat–Croat, Croat–Serb, and Serb–Serb controversies; every issue concerning the war in Croatia is echoed in all three sets. The controversies that will continue to cause discussions and dissent are the causes of the war in 1991 and the fate of the Serb population in Croatia. Was a peaceful solution possible at all?

The war cannot be forgotten, but societies and individuals must live on. The criminal prosecution of war crimes, be it before the ICTY or before national courts, can achieve many positive things in this respect. Trials will make entire ethnic communities face their past and can have cathartic effects. Even trials before national courts can have a positive impact on the process of reconciliation. This has been confirmed by the trial of the Ovčara murderers in Belgrade, where relatives of the Croat victims expressed their satisfaction with the fact that the Serbian side wanted to give satisfaction to the victims and to condemn the perpetrators. The trials also produced many documents of great importance that will have a profound effect on continuing research.

With its 22,000 dead on both sides (15,000 Croats and 7,000 Serbs), the war was detrimental not only for the country's Croats but also for its Serbs and other minorities. Croats were expelled from their homes and killed in summary or individual executions by their neighbors who tried to make "the westernmost Serbian land" ethnically pure. The Serbs also suffered. Their numbers and their role in Croatian society were drastically diminished as a consequence of what

was an absurd political project. Researchers have a responsibility and a kind of moral obligation to show how such a thing could happen, in the hope that it may not be repeated here or anywhere else. We trust that our contribution has helped to achieve this goal as well.

Notes

- 1 Misplaced or destroyed war-related documents played a significant role in the legal proceedings against war criminals even a decade after the end of the war. The International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) asked governments to produce thousands of documents. They usually obliged, although sometimes even the subpoena orders were not honored. A most recent example of this involves the medical files of General Ratko Mladić. Wishing to locate this indictee, the ICTY issued an order that these files, covering the period after 1995, be handed over to the prosecution. The Military Medical Academy (VMA, central military hospital) in Belgrade, where Mladić was treated after the war, reported that the hospital did not have these files. *Danas*, 12 January 2005).
- 2 Laura Silber and Allan Little *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York: TV Books, 1996); Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth, and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); and Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). The semiofficial CIA report on the war in former Yugoslavia, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of Yugoslav Conflict, 1990–1995* (Darby, PA: Diane Publishing Company, 2003), also depended very much on Silber and Little but did not surpass the accuracy of its source.
- 3 Among many examples of how a single fact can be differently interpreted, we will mention only one that illustrates vividly how social meaning takes precedence over every other characteristic. It is well known that the Yugoslav Peoples' Army (JNA) built many military installations in Croatia—barracks, dump yards, firing ranges, etc. The Croats objected that these installations were situated in Serb populated areas and that in this way the JNA showed its Serb character and mistrust toward the Croats. Mile Dakić, one of the ideologues and a chronographer of the Serb rebellion in Croatia, acknowledged that—“without a single exception”—installations were really situated in Serb populated areas, but he expressed the opinion that this was a part of the genocide against Serbs in Yugoslavia. Serbs, he explained, were forced to free their land for military installations (and were remunerated), but no Croat had to yield his or her lot, and so Serbs ceased to live on their ancestral lands. Mile Dakić, *Srpska Krajina: Istorijski temelji i nastanak* (Knin: Iskra, 1994), 43–44.
- 4 J. B. Allcock's insights and comments are very useful for the development of the ideas presented in this section. He observed that extremely vigorous disagreements exist in relation to most if not all of the areas of controversy with which we are dealing. The authors wish to note that it is not their purpose to arbitrate between various interpretations defined in this way or to judge who is responsible for the war or who has a particular historical right. Our aims are modest—first to indicate the existing controversies and their advocates in the public and in literature and scholarship, second to contribute to a better understanding of how those views were established. We would also like to offer our conclusions and insights concerning the intentions, events, military operations, and

consequences of the war in Croatia, based on broader research that cannot be reproduced here in detail. Our contribution is based on recently available sources, literature, and the personal views in memoirs and diaries of both prominent actors and ordinary people.

- 5 In the case of Serb–Serb controversies it is important to remember that the Serbs in (from) Croatia held different views than the Serbs in Serbia proper from the very beginning of the Yugoslav crisis, throughout the war, and after.
- 6 Robert Hayden, *Blueprints for a House Divided* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 18–19.
- 7 The Croat historian Ivo Goldstein gave a list of profascist attitudes in the opening of the democratization period in the early 1990s: “The great majority of Croats greeted joyfully the fall of Communism and the establishment of a new government with national remit. Mass meetings and various celebrations were organized in Zagreb and throughout Croatia. A large number of Partisan war memorials placed by the Communist authorities were demolished and there was a new emphasis on Croatian national symbols. Streets named after notable Serbs or towns with Serbian names were quickly given new names with a Croatian symbolism. The Victims of Fascism Square in Zagreb become the Square of Great Croats. A number of political exiles immediately returned to Croatia from the Diaspora, including some who were pro-Ustasha, bringing back with them their old extremist ideas which they were not afraid to express in public. Tudman proclaimed a policy of ‘reconciliation of all the Croats,’ which meant tolerance for extreme nationalism. Many members of the new government were drunk with success and behaved as if they had forgotten, or perhaps only underestimated, the fact that Croatia was still in Yugoslavia with over half a million Serbian citizens who relied on Yugoslavia and were being increasingly manipulated from Serbia.” Goldstein, *Croatia: A History* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 211–12. Goldstein emphasizes that in such a climate the free press began to address previously taboo subjects, and he notes attempts to rehabilitate the NDH or at least to improve its historic image.
- 8 Tudjman's first minister of defense, General Martin Špegelj, acknowledged later that the JNA's complaints concerning the revival of Ustashism in Croatia were well grounded: “The propaganda by the military top brass as well as from Serbia emphasized the emergence of Ustashism in Croatia, like in 1941. Unfortunately, that was partly accurate. This Ustashism was brought from the outside, by the return of extremist emigrants in Croatia. They were not ranking officers of the former NDH, but simply those who thought that the heritage of Ustashism would be a good foundation for the creation of new power in Croatia and for the attainment of personal profit. Indeed, they won power and personal profit; however, their presence in politics caused big problems which exist even today. This fact, together with the attacks on Serb houses in the spring of 1991, caused worse damage to Croatia's defense than the whole JNA aggression. We have suffered the consequences ever since and have witnessed the emergence of different sorts of neo-fascism.” Martin Špegelj, *Sjećanja vojnika*, 2nd ed. (Zagreb: Znanje, 2001), 55–56.
- 9 See for example Dušan Bilandžić *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 1999), and Goldstein, *Croatia*.
- 10 Bishop Simeon Zloković of Upper Karlovci in June 1990 pointed out the historical difference of the two situations: “It is not Hitler or Mussolini who are on the borders of Yugoslavia today, but Europe. . . . Tudman and all his followers, even the extremists among them, have to know that.” Radmila Radić, “Crkva i ‘srpsko pitanje,” in *The*

- Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis*, ed. Nebojša Popov (Budapest, 2002), 1:320. Militant Serb nationalists Vojin S. Dabić and Ksenija M. Lukić in their book on Serbian victims in eastern Slavonia concluded that in spite of alleged Ustashi ideology, the HDZ could not revive Ustashi politics: "The HDZ leadership could not repeat the Ustashi practice of mass liquidations of the Serbs. The international community would not allow it." Vojin S. Dabić and Ksenija M. Lukić, *Crimes without Punishment: Crimes Committed by Croatian Armed Troops against the Serb in Eastern Slavonia and Western Sirmium in 1991* (Vukovar: Serbian Unity Congress, 1997), 14.
- 11 See Momčilo Mitrović, "Etničko čišćenje Srba iz Zagreba 1992–1994," *Tokovi istorije* 3–4 (2003): 89–99; Tanner, *Croatia*; Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*; Svetozar Livada, *Etničko čišćenje—zločin stoljeća* (Zagreb: Prosvjeta, 1997); Jovan Mirić, *Demokracija i ekskomunikacija* (Zagreb: Srpsko kulturno društvo Prosvjeta, 1999).
 - 12 James Gow, *The Serbian Project and Its Adversaries: A Strategy of War Crimes* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); Michael Libal, *Njemačka politika i jugoslavenska kriza 1991–1992* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2004), translated as *Limits of Persuasion: Germany and Yugoslav Crisis, 1991–1992* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997); Paul Garde, *Vie et mort de la Yougoslavie* (Paris: Fayard, 1992).
 - 13 Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).
 - 14 See, for example, the amended indictment against Pavle Strugar et al.: "At all times relevant to this second amended indictment, a state of international armed conflict and partial occupation existed in Croatia. On 25 June 1991, Croatia declared its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia ('SFRY') and became independent on 8 October 1991. Up to and including 7 October 1991, this armed conflict was internal in nature. From 8 October 1991 an international armed conflict and partial occupation existed in Croatia," <http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/str-2ai031017e.htm>, accessed 13 October 2008.
 - 15 Drago Roksanđić, *Srbi u Hrvatskoj od 15. stoljeća do naših dana* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Vjesnik vremena, 1991), 158.
 - 16 Official JNA data presented by Dragan Nikolić, *Kadrovi i kadrovska politika* (Belgrade, 1989), 15.
 - 17 In the administration of the Ministry of Interior the Serbs' share, according to official data, was 28.6 percent in 1985; in the next five years it dropped by 10 percent. In 20 out of 114 municipalities in Croatia, a Serb was the head of police. In 1985 Serbs held 27.5 percent of the ruling posts in the ministry proper; this dropped to 16 percent in March 1990 (well before the HDZ came to power). See Ratko Bubalo, "Jesu li Srbi stvarno vladali Hrvatskom," *Arkzin* (Zagreb) 19/20, 5 August 1994, 7.
 - 18 Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990–1995* (Washington: CIA Office of Public Affairs, 2002), 83.
 - 19 Anton Tus, "Rat u Sloveniji i Hrvatskoj do Sarajevskog primirja," in *Rat u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini 1991–1995*, ed. Branka Magaš and Ivo Žanić (Sarajevo and Zagreb: Jesenski i Turk, 1999), 72–77.
 - 20 CIA, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, 86.
 - 21 Warren Zimmermann, *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and Its Destroyer: America's Last Ambassador Tells What Happened and Why* (New York and Toronto: Times Books, 1996), 154–55.

- 22 Borisav Jović, *Poslednji dani SFRJ, izvodi iz dnevnika* (Belgrade: Politika, 1995), 371.
- 23 In May 1992, speaking on Jelačić Square in Zagreb on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Croatian referendum for an independence, Tudjman said that there wouldn't be a war unless Croatia wanted it. In his words Croatia had perceived a war as the only tool to achieve independence (quoted in Mihaljo M. Vučinić, *Gradjanski rat u Hrvatskoj 1991–1995* (Belgrade, 2004), 6; Duško Vilić and Boško Todorović, *Razbijanje Jugoslavije 1990–1992* (Belgrade: DIK Književne novine—Enciklopedija, 1995), 25.
- 24 The order for the dismissal of the September class was issued after Croatia declared mobilization. Even the commandant of the Thirty-Second Army Corps (Varaždin) was supposed to go on vacation on 7 September, but he asked to remain in office. Instead, his deputy went on vacation. See *Slučaj generala Trifunovića* (Belgrade: Demokratski centar, 1995), 9. Dr. Branko Kostić tried to explain the decision, saying that he believed that the dismissed class would be easily replaced by reservists. Nikola Čubra, *Vojska i razbijanje Jugoslavije* (Belgrade, 1997), 215; Branko Kostić, *1991: Da se ne zaboravi* (Belgrade, 1996).
- 25 Tus, “Rat u Sloveniji i Hrvatskoj,” 78, gives details on the arsenal that fell into the hands of Croats: 200 tanks, 150 armored personnel carriers, 400 heavy artillery pieces, some 180,000 small arms, and 18 naval ships of various types.
- 26 Veljko Kadijević, *Moje viđenje raspada* (Belgrade: Politika, 1993), 135. Some analysts (i.e., CIA, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, 112n45) expressed the suspicion that Kadijević probably modified his memoirs in order to reflect a more pro-Serbian line rather than the pro-Yugoslav line he followed in 1991. The other possibility is that the 1991 planning did include options for pulling out of Croatia, but Kadijević's presentation or ideas were so muddled at the time that even Jović was unable to understand them. Another possibility is that the plan did not initially call for a withdrawal from Croatia, but after evacuating Slovenia, a further JNA withdrawal from Croatia could be added without modifying any of the planned campaigns.
- 27 Jović, *Poslednji dani SFRJ*, 387–88; this view is supported by the CIA, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, 92.
- 28 The Vance Plan, which had been unveiled during the last few weeks of 1991, called for setting up four sectors (east, west, north, and south) to be known as United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs). These would coincide roughly with three chunks of territory held by Serb and/or JNA forces. Upward of 10,000 UN troops would be deployed in the UNPAs for the protection of the people there. In return, the JNA would withdraw entirely from Croatia, and the Serb paramilitaries would be disbanded and disarmed, surrendering their weapons either to the JNA before withdrawal or, if they preferred, to the UN forces, who would store them intact at locations inside the UNPAs. The UN would form the blue line of separation.
- 29 Noam Čomski, *Novi militaristički humanizam* (Belgrade: Plato, 2000), 36. Originally published as *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (London: Pluto Press, 1999).
- 30 Hubert Vedrine, *Les Mondes de François Mitterrand* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), 641–43. The views of top French politicians expressed after the conflict in the Balkans had turned into war are summarized in the words of François Mitterrand on 23 February 1993: “All that was a sequence of errors: German action, American ignorance, hesitation of the Italians because of the intervention of the Vatican that paralyzed them. In fact, Germany considers itself as a legitimate inheritor of the former Austrian Empire,

- and thus takes for itself all of that ancient Austrian spirit of revenge against the Serbs.” *Ibid.*, 625.
- 31 Libal, *Njemačka politika*.
- 32 L. Silber, *Yugoslavia*, 141–42.
- 33 Davor Marjan, *Bitka za Vukovar* (Zagreb and Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2004), 52–54. Marjan showed that the Croatian Information and News Agency (HINA) incorrectly informed the public that the JNA had taken action against the police forces on this occasion.
- 34 See Jelena Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize 1990–2000* (Belgrade: IGAM, 2003), 1–2. In 1994, Guskova interviewed some of the participants from the Serbian side in 1994 (Milan Milanović, Časlav Nikšić, and Slavko Dokmanović) and some Croats from Osijek. Dokmanović mentioned some 150 dead, 13 of that number in the center of the village.
- 35 Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, 140–41.
- 36 Marjan, *Bitka za Vukovar*, 50, writes that he was not able to verify the story on missiles and the involvement of Šušak.
- 37 Norman Cigar, “The Serbo-Croatian War, 1991: Political and Military Dimensions,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 16 (1993): 297–338.
- 38 Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize*, 1:266. In 1931 the municipality had 46,100 dwellers, 19,300 (41.9 percent) Serbs, 12,200 (26.5 percent) Croats, and 7,500 (16.3 percent) Germans. In 1981 the proportions were 31 percent Serbs, 37.14 percent Croats, and 22 percent Yugoslavs.
- 39 D. Marjan, *Vukovar*, 96; J. Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize*, 1:269.
- 40 J. Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize*, 1:259. Interview with Borisav Mikelić, RSK prime minister, 26 September 1994.
- 41 Tus, “Rat u Sloveniji i Hrvatskoj,” 85. Goldstein, *Croatia*, 235, gives similar casualty data: 5,000–8,000 JNA killed and 600 tanks and other armored vehicles lost, against 2,500 Croatian dead.
- 42 Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize*, 1:270.
- 43 Kadijević, *Moje viđenje raspada*, 135.
- 44 See Petar Kriste, *Iznevjereni grad: Dubrovnik 1991* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing, 2000).
- 45 Srđa Pavlović, “Reckoning: The 1991 Siege of Dubrovnik and the Consequences of the ‘War for Peace,’” *Spaces of Identity* 1, no. 5 (April 2005): 1–47.
- 46 *Pobjeda*, Podgorica, 5 September 1991, 1.
- 47 Slobodan Jarčević, “Suština plana Z-4,” in *Republika Srpska krajina deset godina posle*, ed. Veljko Mišina Djurić (Belgrade, 2005), 177–84. Jarčević was the RSK’s minister of foreign affairs.
- 48 Janko Bobetko, *Sve moje bitke* (Zagreb: J. Bobetko, 1996).
- 49 CIA, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, 297–98.
- 50 What really happened to the Serbian civilians and captured soldiers? Some authors, like Guskova, claim that, according to UNCRO data, Croatian authorities would not let them or any other foreign observers into the area around Okučani and Pakrac before 5 May. Even Yasushi Akashi, special UN envoy was denied admission into Daruvar to look after the refugees. Experts among UNCRO doubted that security was the real reason for the ban and suspected that the HV was hiding or had eliminated evidence of numerous civilian deaths. Some UN officers, such as Swedish policeman Hans Anders Jarvestam were witnesses to these acts and horrible scenes. The Croatian ambassador repeated the official position that no crimes had been committed against civilians dur-

- ing what it characterized as a police operation conducted on a small scale in order to open the highway. Guskova, *Istorija jugoslovenske krize*, 2:233–39. Dr. Guskova was at the time in the UNPROFOR's headquarters in Zagreb, and she moved frequently around the areas in question. Her estimate of 12,000 refugees is very similar to what scholars determined at a later date.
- 51 Martić was convicted in June 2007 and is presently serving thirty-five years in prison for various crimes, including the rocket attack on Zagreb.
 - 52 Milisav Sekulić, *Knin je pao u Beogradu* (Bad Vilbel: Nidda Verlag, 2000), 158–66.
 - 53 See <http://www.b92.net/doc/brijuni/index.php>, accessed 15 October 2008. ICTY 2003a.
 - 54 See detailed analyses and comparisons of these operations and concepts in Ozren Žunec, "Operacije Bljesak i Oluja," in Magaš and Žanić, *Rat u Hrvatskoj*, 93–110.
 - 55 In an interview given on 11 May 1995, when the consequences of military action in western Slavonia were already known, Galbraith said that neither he nor the U.S. administration gave the green light for the operation: "We warned the Government of Croatia against any military action in Western Slavonia. We warned that it would have the consequences that it in fact had, which included these attacks on Zagreb. We feel that it was a very unwise decision and that it was a violation of the Copenhagen Agreement and we made that very clear. There certainly was no green light of any kind. In fact, there was a red light. We are very concerned at the departure of the Serbs from Western Slavonia. We are not interested in supporting the process of reintegration in Croatia if the end result of that process is an ethnically pure country. So we believe that all steps should be taken to try to make the Serbian community in Western Slavonia feel that Croatia is their home and, further, to encourage those Serbs who left in 1995, as well as those who left in 1991, to return home. That is one reason why we believe that the continued presence of UNCRO is essential. Of course, it is a fundamental human right to be able to travel freely if the Serbs do wish to leave, and that is their free choice. We would urge them to stay."
 - 56 Mirić, *Demokracija i ekskomunikacija*, 138–39.
 - 57 James George Jatras, "NATO's Myths and Bogus Justifications for Intervention," in *NATO's Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War*, ed. T. G. Carpenter (Washington, DC: CATO Institute, 2000), 26–27. See also "Four Navy Jets Bomb Serb Missile Sites," *Navy Times*, 21 August 1995, 2; Chris Black, "U.S. Veterans' Aid to Croatia Elicits Queries," *Boston Globe*, 13 August 1995, 12; Charlotte Eager, "Invisible United States Army Defeats Serbs," *Observer* (UK), 5 November 1995, 25; Yves Goulet, "MPRI: Washington's Freelance Advisors," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 July 1998, 38; Raymond Bonner, "War Crimes Panel Finds Croat Troops 'Cleansed' the Serbs," *New York Times*, 21 March 1999, A1.
 - 58 Boris Raseto, ed., *Storm over Croatia* (Belgrade: Samizdat B92, 2003). The book is completely documentary with records from parliament discussions, TV panels, Web discussion, and press clippings.
 - 59 Nikica Barić, "Je li 1995. godine Hrvatska počinila 'etničko čišćenje' Srba?" *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 36, br. 2 (Zagreb, 2004).
 - 60 The scenes in *Storm over Croatia* show that the Serbs had good reason to flee at least temporarily. In the report of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, presented in April 1999, in just one UN sector, South, preliminary investigation showed that 435 persons were killed during or immediately after Operation Storm (see HHO [Hrvatski helsinki odbor za ljudska prava] Izvještaj: vojna operacija "Oluja" i poslije,

- part 1 in *Srbi u Hrvatskoj i njihova sudbina*, ed. G. Babić (Belgrade: Adeona, 2000), supplements 37–232.
- 61 E. M. Despalatović, “Koreni rata u Hrvatskoj,” in *Susedi u ratu, Jugoslovenski etnicitet, kultura i istorija iz ugla antropologa*, ed. Joel M. Halpern and David Kideckel, (Belgrade: Samizdat B92, 2002), 132–33 (after N. Barić, *Pobuna Srba u Hrvatskoj*, 564).
- 62 CIA, *Balkan Battlegrounds*, 367. They quoted Reuters, 3 August: “US says no reason for Croatia War after Serbian Pact.” But this statement is questionable in the light of later available evidence. Mate Granić asserted on 6 August that Croatia had received advice from the U.S. on how to carry out mass assault on the Serbs in Krajina. See Stanko Nišević, *Hrvatska Oluja i srpske seobe* (Belgrade, 2002), 195.
- 63 See for example Marko Vrcelj, *Rat za Srpsku Krajinu 1991–1995* (Belgrade: Srpska kulturna društva “Zora,” 2002), who gives a detailed firsthand account of terror experienced by Croats living in RSK. Vrcelj was an SVK colonel.
- 64 Jovan Mirić, *Demokracija i ekskomunikacija* (Zagreb: Srpsko kulturno drustvo Prosvjeta, 1999).
- 65 ICTY 2002:10656.
- 66 Ozren Žunec, “Okučanski zaključci,” *Erasmus* 3/12 (1995): 7–20.
- 67 See an interview with Nikola Visković, “Zločinački pothvat počeo je još 1991,” *Feral Tribune*, 27 July 2005, 10–12.
- 68 Zimmermann, *Origins of a Catastrophe*.
- 69 Peter Galbraith, interview by Charles Ingrao, January 2004.
- 70 See Milisav Sekulić, *Jugoslaviju niko nije branio a Vrhovna komanda je izdala* (Bad Vilbel: Nidda Verlag, 1997).
- 71 Momir Bulatović, *Pravila ćutanja: istiniti politički triler sa poznatim završetkom* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga Alfa, 2004), 181–82.
- 72 Facsimile in HHO (Hrvatski helsinski odbor za ljudska prava) Izvještaj: vojna operacija “Oluja” i poslije, part 1 (1998), 8.