PART 2.

THE PRIJEDOR GENOCIDE REPORT

United Nations - Security Council

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Final report of the United Nations Commission of Experts established pursuant to security council resolution 780 (1992)

Annex V

The Prijedor report

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Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992)

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Annex V

The Prijedor report

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Part one  
I. The statements  

The statements were collected and presented by Commissioner Hanne Sophie Greve and Assistant to the Commission Morten Bergsmo.

For security reasons, the information gathered from victims and witnesses is kept confidential. These statements are contained in four separate volumes (a total of 911 pages) and are provided exclusively to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTFY).

II. General description  

Opstina Prijedor is a district located in north-western Bosnia and Hercegovina (BiH) in an area which is part of Bosnian Krajina. It is located in between the town of Sanski Most (to the south), the Bosnian-Croatian border towns of Bosanski Novi (to the west) and Bosanska Dubica (to the north), and the regional capital of Banja Luka (to the east). Except for the area of Sanski Most, the other neighbouring districts had Serbian majority populations before the armed conflicts started in BiH.

According to the 1991 census, Opstina Prijedor had a total population of 112,470 people, of whom 44 per cent were Muslims, 42.5 per cent Serbs, 5.6 per cent Croats, 5.7 per cent «Yugoslavs» and 2.2 per cent others (Ukrainians, Russians and Italians). In early April 1992, the total population may have been approximately 120,000 people, augmented, inter alia, by an influx of people who had fled the destruction of their villages in areas to the west of Opstina Prijedor.

Comparing the 1991 census figures with the results of a population count of June 1993, as published in Serbian-controlled media, gives the following overall picture:

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Thus, the total number of killed and deported persons as of June 1993 is 52,811 (including limited numbers of refugees and people missing). Since then, the number of non-Serbs in the district has continued to decrease. The extreme persecution to which non-Serbs are
subjected and their almost total lack of protection in the district is illustrated by the fact that the ICRC and the UNHCR asked permission from the Serbs, ultimo March 1994, to evacuate all remaining non-Serbs from Opstina Prijedor.

**III. Serbs take power on 30 April 1992**

According to Kozarski Vjesnik, a Serbian-controlled newspaper in Opština Prijedor:

«The man [Simo Driljača], who the Serbian Democratic Party of the Opština Prijedor put in charge of forming the Serbian police after half a year of illegal work, had done his job so well that in 13 police stations, 1,775 well armed persons were waiting to undertake any difficult duty in the time which was coming. In the night between 29 and 30 April 1992, he directed the takeover of power [by the Serbs], which was successfully achieved in only 30 minutes, without any shots fired. The assembly of the Srpske Opštine Prijedor, at the end of March last year [1992], appointed him Chief of the public security station [i.e. in charge of the secret police]. He was in charge of this job during the most demanding period and remained in the position until January 1993. These days he has been appointed Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs of the Serbian Republic. He will commence his new function in Bijelina on Monday.» *1

More than six months prior to the power change in 1992, the Serbs started to build up their own administration parallel to the legitimate authorities in Opština Prijedor, what they called the Serbian Opština Prijedor. This included, inter alia, a pure Serbian police force with secret service functions. The legitimate authorities in Opština Prijedor had been lawfully elected and the Prijedor Assembly reflected the ethnic composition of the district.

In early 1992, a very small Serbian paramilitary group took control of the television transmitter on the Kozara Mountain in Opština Prijedor. As a consequence, the population in the district could not receive television programmes from Sarajevo or Zagreb any longer, only from Belgrade and later Banja Luka. The television programmes from Belgrade insinuated that non-Serbs wanted war and threatened the Serbs.

Prior to the power change on 30 April 1992, Serbs secretly armed other Serbs in the district. Many soldiers from the JNA withdrew from Croatia to north-western BiH in early 1992. Instead of demobilizing those who returned to Opština Prijedor, the legitimate authorities were pressured to accept redeploying them to control all inroads to and exits from the district together with police and the TO. The pressure applied was an ultimatum. The legitimate authorities were invited for a guided sightseeing tour of two Croatian villages just north of Bosanska Gradiška which had been destroyed and left uninhabited. The message was that if the ultimatum was not met, the fate of Prijedor would be the same as that of these villages. The ultimatum was accepted.

**IV. Immediate consequences of the Serbs taking power**

An immediate consequence of the Serbian takeover was severed communications between Opština Prijedor and the outside world. It became more difficult to travel and the telephone system was no longer fully operational. A curfew was introduced in Prijedor town
- the main town in the district - and travel permits were required in many areas even to move among local villages. Bus services were closed down.

In the wake of the power change, most non-Serbs were dismissed from their jobs, be it as police, public officials or even manual workers. In all key functions such as police and local administration, the empty posts were taken over by Serbs.

Already before 30 April 1992, Serbs had started to visit the non-Serbs who were licensed to hold weapons and demand that they give their weapons up. This process was intensified after the takeover, and combined with a campaign where non-Serbian police and Territorial Defence Forces (Teritorijalna Odbrana or TOs) were instructed to hand over their weapons, and non-Serbian houses and villages were searched for arms.

Also, the local media, Radio Prijedor and Kozarski Vjesnik, joined in the anti non-Serb propaganda. The media slandered former non-Serbian leaders by criticizing everything from their alleged lack of efficiency to their private lives. In addition, the media claimed that many dangerous - in particular Muslim - extremists were in the area, preparing genocide against the Serbs.

V. The major Serbian military operations in the district

Following an incident in which less than a handful Serbian soldiers were shot dead under unclear circumstances, the village of Hambarine was given an ultimatum to hand over a policeman who lived nearby where the shooting had occurred. As it was not met, Hambarine was subjected to several hours of artillery bombardment on 23 May 1992. The shells were fired from the aerodrome Urije just outside Prijedor town. When the bombardment stopped, the village was stormed by infantry, including paramilitary units, which sought out the inhabitants in every home. Hambarine had a population of 2,499 in 1991.

On 24 May 1992, a large-scale attack on the entire Kozarac area east of Prijedor town, under the Kozara Mountain, was carried out with intensive bombardment from all directions by artillery, tanks, and small firearms. The bombardment lasted for more than 24 hours, before infantry and paramilitary groups stormed Kozarac and nearby villages and searched for people in every building. The affected area had a total population of almost 27,000 non-Serbian people.

On 30 May 1992, a group of probably less than 150 armed non-Serbs had made their way to the Old Town in Prijedor to regain control over the town. They were defeated, and the Old Town was razed. In the central parts of Prijedor town, all non-Serbs were forced to leave their houses as Serbian military, paramilitary, police and civilians advanced street by street with tanks and lighter arms. The non-Serbs had been instructed over the radio to hang a white piece of cloth on their homes to signal surrender.

Starting on 20 July 1992, a large area of predominantly non-Serbian villages on the left bank of the Sana River (the larger Hambarine/Ljubija area) was attacked in a similar manner to the Kozarac area. However, it was predominantly infantry and paramilitary groups that
carried out the destruction. At the time of the attack, the areas had a population of close to 20,000 people, including people who had come for shelter after their villages west of Opstina Prijedor had been destroyed.

Today, the former homes of almost 47,000 people in the Kozarac and Hambarine/Ljubija areas are empty and destroyed. Some were hit by artillery shells, while others were set ablaze in the initial attack. All the homes were pillaged and a large number blown up, one at a time from inside, destroying especially the inside and the roofs. Most of the artillery used during these attacks had been moved into position some time before the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992.

VI. Concentration camps and deportations

As non-Serbs were attacked in the villages and Prijedor town, hundreds, possibly thousands, were killed in their home areas, frequently after maltreatment. The survivors who temporarily managed to flee or hide were divided. Females, boys under the age of sixteen (sometimes the age limit may have been lower) and elderly men (older than 60 or 65) made up one group, while the other men comprised the second group.

The second group - the men - were taken to hastily opened concentration camps in a ceramic tile factory, Keraterm, next to Prijedor town and on the premises of the iron ore mine and processing plant at Omarska. Massacres, torture, and appalling living conditions quickly depleted the number of detainees.

In an interview of Simo Drljaca (Chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor), he stated that:

«In the collection centres 'Omarska', 'Keraterm', and 'Trnopolje' more than 6,000 informative talks were held. Of this number 1,503 Muslims and Croats were sent to the camp 'Manjaca', on the basis of solid documentation of active participation in the fighting against the Army of Republica Srpska, and also participation in genocide against the Serbian people. Instead of letting them get their deserved punishment, the powerful men of the world expressing disdain forced us to release them all from Manjaca.» *2

As the «informative talks» or interrogations basically took place in the Omarska and Keraterm camps, it can be concluded that more than 6,000 adult males were taken to these concentration camps in the short period they existed (from the end of May to the beginning of August 1992). Since only 1,503 were moved on to Manjaca camp according to Mr. Drljaca, a limited number transferred to the Trnopolje camp, and almost none released, it may be assumed that the death toll was extremely high, even by Serbian accounts. The concentration camp premises were sometimes so packed with people that no more inmates could be cramped in. On at least one occasion, this allegedly resulted in an entire bus-load of newly captured people being arbitrarily executed en masse. Some 37 women were detained in Omarska, whilst no women were kept over time in Keraterm.

The women's groups (almost all the females, the boys under the age of sixteen and the elderly men) were normally taken to the Trnopolje camp. Here the regime was far better
than in Omarska and Keraterm; none the less harassment and malnutrition was a problem for all the inmates. Rapes, beatings and other kinds of torture and even killings were not rare. Some of these detained women were released after a few days as there was a lack of space in the Trnopolje camp as well.

On their way to the concentration camps, some captives were detained for shorter periods at improvised detention facilities such as sports halls in schools and stadiums (notably in the Prijedor suburb of Tukovi, and in Ljubija).

As soon as the Serbs had captured the first groups of non-Serbs, the large-scale deportations of the women's group started. Some were deported straight from the improvised detention facilities, the majority from the Trnopolje camp. The majority of deportees had to walk almost 30 kilometres from where the trucks and buses dumped them in a desolate area on the outskirts of the Vlasic Mountain, to reach non-Serbian-held areas in central BiH. A few were deported the safer way to Bosanska Gradiška. Sizable numbers were taken by rail - many in cattle wagons - to Travnik, some were let off the trains in Doboj from where they were ushered ahead on foot in the direction of Tuzla. Some individuals perished during the transport due to the mid-summer heat and next to suffocating conditions both in cattle wagons and on closed military trucks where the deportees were also deprived of food and water.

**VII. The strategy of destruction**

The Serbs took power in Opština Prijedor on 30 April 1992, after more than six months of careful planning. After this, the non-Serbs had their homes and communities destroyed, their families split, and their employment denied. The majority of the non-Serbs were soon captured, thousands incarcerated in concentration camps, and even larger numbers deported. This all happened after the Serbs had sealed off most exits from the area. The non-Serbs presented no real threat to the Serbs under these circumstances, the district of Prijedor being surrounded at the time by areas controlled and dominated by the Serbs (the non-Serb majority population in the Sanski Most district was purged simultaneously as in Prijedor).

Despite the absence of a real non-Serbian threat, the main objective of the concentration camps, especially Omarska but also Keraterm, seems to have been to eliminate the non-Serbian leadership. Political leaders, officials from the courts and administration, academics and other intellectuals, religious leaders, key business people and artists - the backbone of the Muslim and Croatian communities - were removed, apparently with the intention that the removal be permanent. Similarly, law-enforcement and military personnel were targeted for destruction. These people also constituted a significant element of the non-Serbian group in that its depletion rendered the group at large defenceless against abuses of any kind. Other important traces of Muslim and Croatian culture and religion - mosques and Catholic churches included - were destroyed.
VIII. The general lack of protection for non-Serbs

From the time when the Serbs took power in the district of Prijedor, non-Serbs in reality became outlaws. At times, non-Serbs were instructed to wear white arm bands to identify themselves. Non-Serbs were subjected to crimes without the new Serbian leaders attempting to redress the problem. For example, rape became a serious problem for many women who were left alone as their husbands had been detained. The impression was allowed to spread among Serbs that they would be exonerated if they made life difficult for non-Serbs so that the latter would ask permission to leave the district. According to new Serbian regulations, those leaving the district had to sign over their property rights to Serbs and accept never to return, being told that their names simultaneously would be deleted from the census.

IX. Responsibility

When the Serbs took power in the district of Prijedor, they immediately declared the existence of a Crisis Committee of the Serbian district of Prijedor (Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor). Some of the members of this crisis committee were the military commanders Colonel Vladimir Arsić and Major Radmilo Zeljaja, and other district leaders, such as Major Slobodan Kuruzović; the Chief of Police, Simo Drljaca; Mayor Milomir Stakić; the President of the Executive Board of the Assembly in Prijedor, Mico Kovacevic; the President of the Serbian Democratic Party (Srpska Demokratska Stranka or SDS) in Prijedor, Simo Miskovic; and the President of the Red Cross in Prijedor, Srdjo Srdić.

The military destruction of the non-Serbian habitations in Opština Prijedor took place when the area was under the command of Colonel Vladimir Arsić and Major Radmilo Zeljaja in close cooperation with military superiors, at least in the regional capital Banja Luka. Units stationed outside of Opština Prijedor assisted in the military destruction, as did paramilitary units whose attacks were timed to fit with the artillery attacks and the manoeuvres of the regular army units.

In the above-mentioned interview, Simo Drljaca stated that:

«[T]hey [the police force (including the secret services)] carried out my orders and the orders of the CSB [the Public Security Centre] Banja Luka and the Minister of Interior.

... the cooperation was excellent with the Army of Republika Srpska and with the officers of that army. The cooperation was manifested in the joint cleansing of the terrain of traitors, joint work at the checkpoints, a joint intervention group against disturbances of public order and in fighting terrorist groups.» *3

The secret police and the military police provided the concentration camps with interrogators and guards. For some of the most gruesome torture and killings of detainees, the assistance of paramilitary units and some locals was also called upon. The joint police and military intervention units were used to trace and capture the non-Serbian leadership. The latter units killed prisoners arbitrarily during transport to the Manjača camp and arranged mass-killings of «deported» prisoners in the Vlasic Mountain area.
The other members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor ran the community in which all these violations occurred. They participated in the administrative decision-making. The gains of the systematic looting of non-Serbian property were shared by many Serbs on different levels.

The Commission of Experts possesses the names of hundreds of alleged perpetrators at different levels and in a variety of capacities.

**X. Conclusions**

It is unquestionable that the events in Opština Prijedor since 30 April 1992 qualifies as crimes against humanity. Furthermore, it is likely to be confirmed in court under due process of law that these events constitute genocide.

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**Part two**

**The context**

«Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.»
-William Shakespeare, Hamlet

**I. Preface**

The Commission of Experts has been mandated to examine and analyze information gathered and to pursue actively its investigations with regard to, in particular, the practice of «ethnic cleansing».

This initial analysis of the context of the events in Opština Prijedor is based on almost 400 statements by surviving victims of and witnesses to these events currently living in different countries, local Serbian media reports of the events and research into the context of the events. The statements from almost 400 victims and witnesses are contained in four separate confidential volumes.

The hundreds of informants presented descriptions of different parts of the events and also various versions of the events - differences appear, however, only as far as details are concerned. When it comes to the overall and general picture, the witnesses speak as if with one voice - as the case often is with the expression of the collective memory of a population having shared in a major painful event. More often than not, available Serbian media reports and statements made by Serbian leaders to foreign visitors to the area - official delegations among them - support the general overall information obtained from the victims and witnesses.

When mapping experts map out alien territory, the obligatory reservation on each map reads, «Compiled in 19.. from best available source material». A similar reservation is necessary concerning the accuracy of this analysis. The analysis is, save for the reproduction
of generally available facts, based on allegations. As always in criminal cases, the judgement is for the court to make under due process of law.

**II. Opština Prijedor - general description**

**A. Geography**

An opština is an administrative unit in the former Yugoslavia. The neutral translation is a district.

Opština Prijedor is located in north-western BiH in an area which is part of Bosanska (i.e. Bosnian) Krajina. It is located in between the town of Sanski Most to the south, the BiH-Croatian border towns of Bosanski Novi (to the west) and Bosanska Dubica (to the north), and the regional «capital» of Banja Luka to the east. Save for the area of Sanski Most, the other neighbouring districts had Serbian majority populations prior to the disintegration of and violence in the former Yugoslavia.

More important in the context of the events from 1992 onward, Opština Prijedor as part of north-western BiH is clearly located inside any corridor that Serbs could want to clear between Serbia proper and the Serbian-occupied Croatian Krajina. One obstacle to such a corridor is that when crossing the Drina River (the frontier between Serbia proper and BiH) and moving westward through BiH towards the Croatian Krajina region, the population - before the violence started in 1992 - was multi-ethnic and the Serbs were not even a majority in many of these areas. Any Serbian demands for territory for a corridor was thus unlikely to gain political support in BiH. In 1993, Serbian military leaders in Banja Luka acknowledged the need for the conquest of a corridor as mentioned. It was a prerequisite for the «bringing in of humanitarian assistance».

The district Prijedor has one main town, which is also named Prijedor, two smaller towns called Ljubija and Kozarac, and numerous villages and hamlets. The Sana River flows through the district (which has a shape that resembles an irregular vertical rectangle) from the west towards the centre, and then bending to the south. Prijedor Grad (i.e. town) is located in the valley of the river, where the Sana River bends to the south. There is a large artificial lake for fishfarming to the south-east of Prijedor town. The district is mountainous especially in the northern and western areas, with the Kozara Mountain in the north and parts of the Majdanska Mountain in the south-west. The mountains are forested.

**B. Population profile**

Opština Prijedor, according to the 1991 census, had a total population of 112,470 people of whom 44 per cent were Muslims, 42.5 per cent Serbs, 5.6 per cent Croats, 5.7 per cent «Yugoslavs», and 2.2 per cent others (Ukrainians, Russians, and Italians). «Serb» is considered synonymous to Orthodox, and «Croat» is considered synonymous to Catholic. «Yugoslavs» were people of mixed ethnic/religious parentage, and people who for conscientious and/or political reasons did not want to declare themselves by ethnic/religious groups. Muslims probably counted for the majority of the «Yugoslavs».
Many people have stated that it never occurred to them that serious difficulties between the ethnic groups - not to say war - ever could happen in the area. None have said the opposite.

In early April 1992, the total population may have been approximately 120,000 people due to an influx of refugees from Opstina Bosanski Novi (see Chapter VII.A. infra).

Comparing the 1991 census figures with the results of a population count of June 1993 as published by the Serbs, give the following overall picture:

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The total number of killed and deported people as of June 1993 was 52,811 (including limited numbers of refugees and people missing). Since then, the number of non-Serbs in the district has continued to decrease.

In general, it is claimed that the population of BiH, heterogeneous as far as religions are concerned, had developed a unique and cohesive regional identity and culture. The people of BiH for centuries coexisted in a pluralistic society. One illustration of this is their proverb, «Sto sela, sto obicaja» (i.e. «One hundred villages, one hundred habits»). According to the 1991 census, more than one-fourth of the entire population in BiH had mixed ethnic/religious parentage. To many there were no marked differences between the ethnic/religious groups, save that Muslims could usually be recognized by their names.

Traditionally, both Croats and Serbs have claimed that the Muslims in BiH were actually Croats and Serbs respectively, of the Islamic faith. The Muslims have preferred to call themselves Bosniaks, a name with an ethnic rather than religious connotation.

Prior to the 1960s, the Muslims were ethnically undeclared in population counts, or they opted for the denomination «Yugoslav». In the 1961 census, they were for the first time allowed to register as «Muslims in the ethnic sense». In the 1971 census, Muslims were included as a distinct and equal nationality in all of the former Yugoslavia. Many people from BiH considered this move by Tito, in his old age, to be a trap. Why not let the people in BiH call themselves Bosnians as they wanted to, regardless of whether they were Muslims, Catholics or Orthodox? This way the people were forced into different groups, which created partially artificial linkage between Bosnian Serbs and Serbs elsewhere and Bosnian Croats and Croats elsewhere, rather than emphasizing the existing ties internally in BiH.

In retrospect, many of the refugees and deportees speak about what happened in Opstina Prijedor and elsewhere in BiH as an effort by those opposed to its pluralistic culture to dismiss the Bosnian soul (istjerati bosanski duh).

In 1574, Sultan Selim II issued a decree awarding tax privileges to Gypsy miners (inter alia, to Gypsies working in an iron ore mine near Banja Luka, possibly the mine - which is
said to be very old - in Ljubija in Opstina Prijedor, see Chapter II.D., infra). This is considered as the first recorded specific reference to Gypsies in BiH. The Gypsies had more or less the same rights as their Muslim or Christian brethren respectively. The majority of Gypsies in BiH were Muslim. During World War II, the Gypsies were targeted both by the Ustase and the Cetniks, and numbers of survivors took refuge in north-western BiH.

Opstina Prijedor is subdivided in the following naselje (i.e. towns and villages):

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(Some of the figures quoted vary slightly in the official statistics.)

**C. Some remarks concerning the history**

Opština Prijedor had a remarkably high percentage of Partisans (from all the different ethnic groups) during World War II. The district was the first to be a liberated Partisan area in 1942. It was recaptured by German, Ustasa, and to a lesser extent Cetnik forces, with many people killed not the least - but not only - Serbs. Both the World War II heros Esad Midzic (Muslim) and Mladen Stojanović (Serb) were locals. They even had a song about the Cetniks killing the latter. Kozarac has a war monument which reportedly surpasses any other war monument in the former Yugoslavia.

The district at large was anti-German during World War II.
It is said that the word Četnik is a traditional term for the much-heroicized bandit fighters of earlier Serbian history. There were Serbian veterans from World War I who called themselves Četniks. Many other Serbian groupings also made claim to the Četnik name during World War II. The main Četnik movement during World War II was that formed by the royalist, Yugoslav Army colonel, General Draža Mihailović. With reference to the latter group of Četniks, Noel Malcolm writes:

«Among the leading Četniks there were several rabid Serb nationalists whose desire it was to absorb not only Bosnia but Dalmatia, Montenegro, parts of Croatia and Slavonia, and even northern Albania, into the territory of Serbia. Such aims were nurtured by two dominant intellectuals in the Četnik movement: the Serbian lawyer and politician Dragisa Vasić and the Bosnian Serb lawyer (from Banja Luka) Stevan Moljević. In June 1941 the latter drew up a memorandum entitled 'Homogeneous Serbia', in which he demanded the inclusion in Serbia of the territories mentioned above, and explained that the 'fundamental duty' of all Serbs was 'to create and organize a homogeneous Serbia, which must include all the ethnic territory inhabited by Serbs'. In a letter to Vasić in February 1942 Moljević wrote that Serbian land should be extended all the way to Dalmatia, and that there should then follow 'the cleansing (ćišenje) of the land of all the non-Serb elements. The thing to do would be to send the offenders on their way: Croats to Croatia, and Muslims to Turkey or Albania.' With people like this influencing the policy of the Četniks (Moljević became political director of the movement in early 1943), there was clearly a theoretical basis for a virulently anti-Muslim policy. But on the other hand there is no definite evidence that Draža Mihailović himself ever called for ethnic cleansing. The one document which has frequently been cited as evidence of this, a set of instructions addressed to regional commanders in December 1941, is probably a forgery - though it must be pointed out that it was forged not by enemies wanting to discredit Mihailović but by the commanders themselves, who hoped it would be taken for a genuine Četnik document. Mihailović was certainly capable of using the rhetoric of Serbian nationalism. In one proclamation attributed to him there is a declaration: 'I am from Serbian Sumadija [district of central Serbia], from Serbian land and of Serbian blood. As such, I shall fight for the most sublime ideas which a Serb can have: for the liberation and unification for ever of all Serbian lands . . . Wherever Serbian graves are found, there is Serbian land.'» *4

The name Četnik awakens different emotions and allows for different interpretations. For some people, it is a genuinely patriotic and decent concept also in terms of fundamental respect for human beings as such. For others, and possibly most people due to the main events during World War II, it is as ominous and horrifying as Fascist and Nazi - associated with destruction and death for any and all envisaged enemies. The Četnik concept reinvigorated and incarnated by the Serbs in the 1990s in BiH has gathered followers among Serbs of different interpretational creeds, but in practical terms the re-awakened Četniks have taken up only the most gruesome of the Četnik traditions - linking the name once again to barbarous behaviour. Among non-Serbs in BiH, the word Četnik is used in the vernacular as a generic term for evil.
D. Rudnika Ljubija

The modern iron ore mine in Opština Prijedor was started in 1916 by the Austrians. Up to World War II, the leaders were Western-oriented, after the war the orientation shifted towards Belgrade and the USSR. Up to World War II, the production was some 300-400 tons a year. In the late 1980s, the production was three million tons a year: Rudnika (the mine) Ljubija was the largest and most important mine in the former Yugoslavia and one of the largest in Europe, and in terms of the quality of the metals produced, the mine was considered second only to the one in Kiruna, Sweden.

More than 85 per cent of the directors of the mine were Serbs, the rest were Muslims. Rudnika Ljubija was divided into three different main production areas: Ljubija, Tomasica and Omarska. The latter was the larger where the largest investments had been made. The mining company was in charge of all the three areas. The distance between the most distant part of the mines in Ljubija and Omarska was approximately 30 kilometres. In the late 1980s, the mine was fully modernized. All the republics in the former Yugoslavia had invested in the latest upgrading of Omarska. The mining company, Rudnika Ljubija, had 5,000 employees. Most of the Croatian and Muslim workers in the mine in the early 1990s have now been killed or deported.

E. Other economic activities

In addition to Rudnika Ljubija, there were smaller plants and production units in Opština Prijedor. The second largest enterprise was Celpak producing cellulose and paper. The paper mill was located on the outskirts of Prijedor town, to the south. It had 3,000 employees. There were also many small saw mills spread around in the forested parts of the district, including in the Kozarac area.

Several small factories were producing their goods (such as biscuits, soft-drinks, etc.) mainly for local consumption. The agricultural production was good, and animal husbandry played a significant economic role. Citopromet consisted of a flour mill and a bakery employing some 800 people.

Located in between and linking the nearby towns of Banja Luka, Sanski Most, Bosanski Novi, and Bosanska Dubica, Opština Prijedor offered employment in the transport section and related services. A railway crosses through Opština Prijedor from east to west. The Kozarac area with the Kozara Mountain and the World War II memorial attracted tourists.

F. Political and administrative structure

It was first in the early 1990s that nationalist political parties had been established. These parties had not existed one year earlier. There was initially a reasonable relationship between the Muslim party, called the Party of Democratic Action (Stranka Demokratske Akcije, the SDA), and the main Serbian party, named the SDS, in Prijedor. This, however, changed especially after Vojislav Seselj came to several SDS meetings and expressed surprise that the Serbs could live in such harmony with the non-Serbs.
In the local elections in Prijedor in 1990, the SDA won. Following the local elections, the Prijedor Assembly of a total of 90 seats had 30 representatives from the SDA, 28 representatives from the SDS, two representatives from the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica, the HDZ), and 30 representatives from the other, mainly leftist parties, including the Political Action Party (Stranka Politicke Akcije, the SPA), where the Serbs counted for the majority.

Although the Serbs made up only 42.5 per cent of the population in Opština Prijedor, they traditionally held almost all key positions in the Opština. The legacy from the Communist era - part and parcel of which had been the distribution of all leading positions to trusted party members - was not altered considerably after the first free elections. The Serbs said that Prijedor had been Serbian, and would remain Serbian. Thus, the Serbs tended to block proposals made by Muslims or Croats in the Assembly in Prijedor. The Serbs more or less tried to obstruct the work of the Assembly as such. To avoid conflict, the others more often than not let the Serbs have it their way. Thus, the Muslims also refrained from asking to take over a number of leading positions to which the election victory actually entitled them.

The Muslims were 44 per cent of the population, but held only a limited number of leading positions. It is claimed that from a total of 200 plants, only three were Muslim and two Catholic (i.e. Croatian). The Serbs were not underprivileged. Conversely, the Serbs held almost 90 per cent of the key positions.

In Prijedor, Marko Pavić was alfa et omega in the SDS; he had previously been mayor of the town. He studied law at the University of Zagreb. He worked for the police and the «Federal Security Service» (the Secret Service of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) which had close ties to the JNA (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija, i.e. the Yugoslav People's Army). Marko Pavić established the Reformist Forces Party (a reformed Communist party) in Prijedor before he joined the SDS. At the time when the Serbs took power in Opština Prijedor, he was director of the post, telephone and telegraph in the district. Allegedly, he played a pivotal role in the power change. Reportedly, Serbian de facto control of the post was used to facilitate financial transactions needed in this period. Apparently, the post office under the leadership of Marko Pavić was used, among other things, to channel and launder money during the advent of the Serbian takeover, and in the time following the power change.

Key Serbian people in commercial and service activities in Opština Prijedor were:

- Dir. Ostoja Marjanović, Rudnika Ljubija (the mining company),
- Dir. Dragan Kaurin, Celpak (paper mill, 3,000 employees),
- Dir. Vaso Cвиjic, Zitopromet (mill and bakery, 800 employees),
- Dir. Zivko Vujčić, Velepromet (the cooperation),
- Dir. Slobodan Gajić, Trgoproda (shops),
- Dir. Risto Banović, Bolnica (hospital),
- Dir. Aleksandar Bereta, Dom Zdravlja (outpatient clinic),
- Dir. Marko Pavić, PTT (post, telephone and telegraph),
- Dir. Milenko Vukić, EL (the electricity supplies),
• Dir. Drasko Dodos, Agrounija (the agricultural company), and

Radio Prijedor and the newspaper Kozarski Vjesnik were directed by three Serbs (whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). Twice a week they were driven in a Mercedes with drivers in JNA uniforms with the Yugoslav flag, without the Red Star, on their hats and jackets, to the main front in Croatia at Pakrac.

**III. Political and military background to the catastrophe**

Telford Taylor stated the following prior to the Nuremberg trials:

«It is important that the trial not become an inquiry into the causes of war. It cannot be established that Hitlerism was the sole cause of the war, and there should be no effort to do this. Nor, I believe, should there be any effort or time spent on appointing out responsibility for causing the war among the many nations and individuals concerned. The question of causation is important and will be discussed for many years, but it has no place in this trial, which must rather stick rigorously to the doctrine that planning and launching an aggressive war is illegal, whatever may be the factors that caused the defendants to plan and to launch. Contributing causes may be pleaded by the defendant before the bar of history, but not before the tribunal.» *5

The question of responsibility for causing the war/wars in the former Yugoslavia is not addressed by the United Nations Commission of Experts. It may, however, be useful for the general understanding of the context of the events in Opstina Prijedor to include a brief presentation of some relevant information concerning the political and military background to the catastrophe.

**A. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**

According to the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), dated 1974, Basic Principle I:

«The nations of Yugoslavia, proceeding from the right of every nation to self-determination, including the right to secession [emphasis added] . . . have, . . . united in a federal republic of free and equal nations and nationalities and founded a socialist federal community . . .

In order to carry these principles into effect the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia shall strive:

for the right of every nation freely to determine and build up its own social and political system by ways and means of its own free choice; for the right of nations to self-determination and national independence, and for their right to wage a liberation war to attain these aims;»

Article 1 of the Constitution continues:
The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a federal state having the form of a state community of voluntarily united nations and their Socialist Republics, and of the Socialist Autonomous Provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, which are constituent parts of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, . . .

In March 1989, the Serbian Assembly passed constitutional amendments which abolished the political autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo.

On 9 January 1991, the Presidency of the SFRY decided to arm paramilitary groups (primarily to counterbalance the Croatian national defence). Only about one month later, President Slobodan Milosevic reportedly delivered a speech on television stating that, inter alia:

«Yugoslavia has entered into the final phase of its agony. The Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has not functioned for a long time, and the illusion of the functioning of the Presidency of Yugoslavia and its powers, which in reality do not exist, has since last night finally expired.

the Republic of Serbia will no longer recognize a single decision of the Presidency under the existing circumstances because it would be illegal.» *6

B. Overall political changes

The Muslims and Croats wanted cooperation between and coexistence among the different ethnic groups in BiH. A number of Serbs dreamt of establishing Greater Serbia - a 600-year old dream. The once huge Serbian empire broke up soon after the death in 1355 of its creator, Stephen Dusan - King of Serbia. Nationalism in Serbia reached a new height in 1989, 600 years after the battle at Kosovo Polje (i.e. the field of Kosovo). President Milosevic went there to commemorate the 600th anniversary and then told the people what he wanted to achieve. Large numbers of Cetniks, possibly from different schools of thought, participated in the commemoration, sporting their Cetnik emblems and uniforms. Later, the general policy became increasingly nationalistic. Various kinds of Cetnik meetings were held. Suddenly, many people started whispering. The SDS made public statements to the effect that they wanted peace, but hardly ever tolerated a meeting in the parliament in BiH to be properly concluded.

The Orthodox church celebrates Christmas on 6 January. Even during that religious feast, Serbs went around shouting and singing an old Cetnik song from World War II, «Od Topole pa do Ravna Gora svud su straze Denerala Draza» («All the way from Topolje to Ravna Gora General Draza has his guards»). This was considered a highly ominous sign by the non-Serbs. Previously, such Cetnik songs had been banned in public.

C. The war in Croatia

When the war in Croatia started in August 1991, it was followed by general tension between the Serbs on the one side andCroats and Muslims on the other. Life became more difficult also in Prijedor. The Muslims and Croats did not want to join the Serbs in their fighting in Croatia against the Croats.
As the war in Croatia ended, the Serb-controlled JNA withdrew in part to or through BiH.

D. BiH

In elections held in BiH, on 18 November and 2 December 1990, the parties received votes reflecting the ethnic composition of the population.

The Republic's Constitution stipulated that decisions of vital importance to BiH needed consensus of the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats in the Republic.

In April 1991, Serbian politicians in Banja Luka initiated the proclamation of the Bosanska Krajina Srpska Autonomna Oblast (SAO, i.e. Serbian autonomous region). Opštine Banja Luka, Glamoč, Drvar, Bosanski Petrovac, Bosanski Novi, Bosanska Dubica, Bosanska Gradiska, Srbač, Prnjavor and Celinac all wanted to join this SAO. Opštine Prijedor and Sanski Most did not join. The decision to enter the SAO was made by the respective Opština assemblies after informal discussions.

On 14 November 1991, the Constitutional Court in BiH declared the so-called SAOs unconstitutional.

On 9 January 1992, the «Assembly of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina» adopted a «Declaration on the Proclamation of the Republic of the Serbian People of Bosnia and Hercegovina». The «Assembly of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina» described itself as «a legitimate, freely and democratically elected representative and protector of the Serbian people», and stated that by adopting the Declaration, it was «implementing its [the Serbian people's] will expressed in a plebiscite [see Chapter III.E. infra], and the decision based on this plebiscite to form the »Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina«, or as stated in the Declaration Article I, »on the basis of the plebiscite held on 9 and 10 November 1991, at which the Serbian people decided to remain in the joint State of Yugoslavia«. The members of the Assembly were the Serbian politicians who had been elected to the Parliament in BiH. The Declaration was to enter into force on the day of adoption.

According to Article II of the Declaration, the new Republic would remain within the Yugoslav Federal State as one of its units. Pending the promulgation of its own legislation, the new Republic was to apply federal regulations in its territory, as well as the regulations of the Socialist Republic of BiH as far as the Assembly did not deem the latter regulations contrary to the federal Constitution (see Article VIII).

The new Republic of the Serbian People of Bosnia and Hercegovina was established in the territories «of the Serbian autonomous areas in the region and of other Serbian ethnic entities in Bosnia and Hercegovina, including the regions in which the Serbian people remained in minority due to the genocide conducted against it in World War Two» (see Article I).

The Serbian point of view is that it was the Muslim and Croatian majority in BiH which acted in an illegal and illegitimate manner by requesting international recognition of BiH as an independent State. In other words, the Serbs claimed that by remaining within the
Yugoslav Federation, they did not make an unlawful disassociation from the rest of BiH. As far as the Serbs were concerned, they were still a part of the Yugoslav Federation even after BiH gained international recognition as an independent State.

On 15 January 1992, the Serbs in BiH withdrew the proclamation of an independent republic and wanted thence to negotiate for a cantonisation based on ethnic division.

On 13 February 1992, a dialogue was started between the three parties - the SDS (the Serbs), the SDA (the Muslims) and the HDZ (the Croats) - in BiH concerning the future of the Republic.

On 28 February 1992, the «Assembly of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina» adopted a «Decision on the Proclamation of the Constitution of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina» (as proclaimed in January the same year under the name the «Republic of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina»). By a later amendment to the Constitution, Amendment VI dated 12 August 1992, the name of the Republic was once again altered from the «Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina» (SRBiH) to the «Republic of Srpska».

On 22 February 1992, a meeting was held in Lisbon between the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats concerning the future of BiH. An agreement was reached that the Republic should be upheld within its existing borders with a Swiss-style cantonisation solution for dividing up the Republic on the basis of ethnic groups.

According to an article by Slobodan Kljakic printed by the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Serbia (i.e. Serbia proper):

«[T]he crucial contribution to the outbreak and expansion of the war was the fact that it was precisely on April 6 last year [1992] that the European Community recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and sovereign state.

. . .

. . . what preceded the April 6 events and the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and sovereign state.

What is involved were negotiations concerning the new constitutional and political set up of Bosnia and Herzegovina, conducted under the auspices of the European Community by Portuguese diplomats.» *7

On 7 April 1992, an Assembly of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina declared the independence of the SRBiH.

On 15 April 1992, the Presidency of the SRBiH proclaimed the immediate danger of war and gave an order of mobilization.

On 27 May 1992, deputies from the parliaments of the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro proclaimed a new Yugoslavia. The new country was named the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY); its flag would continue to be the horizontal blue, white and red bands, but without the red star.
On 30 April 1992, the Republic of BiH was accepted - with the consent of Belgrade - as a full member of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

E. The Serbian plebiscite

The basic version of the Serbian coat of arms is a double-headed eagle with a shield and four crescent-shaped flints, two pointing to the east and two to the west. There are two explanations as to why the Byzantine double-headed eagle has its two heads. One interpretation is that the two heads symbolize two powers; the other is that one head looks to the east and the other head looks to the west. Each crescent-shaped flint looks much like a C. Today the most powerful example of Serbian ichnography is said to be the symmetrical cross adorned with four Cs (the Cyrillic letter С), the two left-hand ones being printed as mirror images of the right-hand ones. It is referred to as an acronym for the phrase «Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava» (i.e. «Only Unity Can Save the Serbs»). The Cs may, however, also be an acronym for the phrase «Saint Sava is the patron saint of the Serbs».

On 9 and 10 November 1991, the «Assembly of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina» of which the members of the the SDS comprised the majority, organized a plebiscite in BiH which was considered unconstitutional by the Croatian and Muslim members of the government in BiH. The question posed read:

«Do you agree with the decision of 24 October 1991 by the Parliament of the Serbian People in Bosnia and Hercegovina for the Serbian people to remain in a common State of Yugoslavia with Serbia, Montenegro, SAO Krajina, SAO Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem and all others wishing the same?»

More than 98 per cent of the participants answered yes. The number of people who went to the polls corresponded with about 85 per cent of the approximately 800,000 Serbs who were eligible to vote. In the plebiscite, the Serbs had blue ballot papers, while the non-Serbs had yellow. According to the Serbs, the different colours were to distinguish between the different ethnic groups as the non-Serbs were given a ballot paper where the question was slightly different from the question to the Serbs, to reflect that these voters were non-Serbs. The non-Serbs perceived the difference as an example of discrimination against them, and even more so as the names of everyone voting were marked in the census.

Due to arguably different standing under international law, the Serbs decided to use a plebiscite form in contradistinction to a referendum.

When the Serbs were preparing their plebiscite (in November 1991), they went from house to house and counted the electorate. The non-Serbs charge that the Serbs included also those under-age down to children, Serbs from Serbia, and Serbs living abroad. (Among those active in the process were allegedly Dusan, alias Dule, Tadic from Kozarac - see Chapter VII.B, infra - and at least one of his immediate family members.) It was allegedly a strong Serbian pressure for all Serbs to vote.
**F. The referendum in BiH**

The European Community (EC) required a referendum in BiH as a pre-condition for recognition of BiH as an independent State. In the referendum, the people would be asked if they were in favour of a unified and sovereign BiH.

On 29 February and 1 March 1992, a referendum was held in BiH concerning the independence of the Republic. Participating were 63.4 per cent of the electorate, and of those more than 99 per cent voted in favour of independence. The election committee was the same as for the 1990 general elections.

Radovan Karadžić ordered all Serbs (approximately 32 per cent of the population in BiH) to boycott the referendum. As Serbs allegedly were threatened by fellow Serbs that they might even lose their jobs if they participated in the referendum; some, it is said, avoided the problem by arranging sick leaves. Most Serbs, thus, did not participate in the referendum, and it was commented on by their own people if they did. A member of the election committee in Opština Prijedor later commented that she had a feeling that her Serbian colleagues knew already what was going to happen.

Radovan Karadžić later used the lack of Serbian participation in the referendum to dismiss it as unconstitutional although there was an overwhelming independence vote by the Croats and the Muslims (and other smaller groups). In this context, it ought to be remembered that the Serbs unilaterally had changed the status of the two autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina respectively bringing them directly under Serbian control without paying adequate attention to the will of the people in those provinces and the formal procedures for such changes as enacted in the Constitution of the SFRY. This happened way before any of the republics opted for independence.

After the referendum, the Muslims and Croats in BiH favoured the withdrawal of the JNA, whereas the Serbs were against it.

In March 1992, the legal BiH authorities were still in power also de facto. The chairman of the election committee in Opština Prijedor for the legal referendum in BiH was later killed in Logor (i.e. the camp) Omarska (see Chapter VIII.A. infra). His name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. His name was called out three times in Logor Omarska. The first time he was beaten and maltreated so that his body had turned black when he was returned to the room where he was detained. Returning the second time he could hardly move at all. The third time his name was called out, he did not return. All the other members of the election committee were also detained in Logor Omarska. Their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. One, a man, was half blind, but he was a judge held in high esteem and chairman of the court. He was also killed in Logor Omarska. The three others are women who survived the horrors of Logor Omarska.

**G. The general situation concerning arms in Opština Prijedor**

From the early 1980s until the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia started, there had been a limited military presence in Opština Prijedor.
There were primarily a few soldiers guarding a small air field, called Urije, where there was a military cache. The Urije aerodrome was used for sports planes and located close to Prijedor town. The main military barracks were also located in the Urije area, near the aerodrome. In addition to a partisan brigade, the JNA had a motorized brigade in Prijedor. The JNA was officially considered as a Yugoslav entity, but in reality it was fully Serb-controlled, that is a full-fledged Serbian army.

The TO was an integrated part of the SFRY military system. The TOs were locally recruited to serve in their home areas. They received some basic military instruction and served in the TO when called upon. Save for a state of emergency, they retained their civil functions when enrolled in the TO.

Only four per cent of the Muslims in Prijedor had been licensed to have weapons. Many Muslims and Croats had had their applications for a license to carry arms turned down without any reason given. This was in contradistinction to Serbs, who normally would be granted permission to have weapons if they asked.

IV. Preludes to the catastrophe

As early as 1991, the Serbs organized an alternative and pure Serbian administration in Opstina Prijedor, or rather in what they called the Srpske (i.e. the Serbian) Opstine Prijedor. People in Opstina Prijedor were aware of this, but they did not take it seriously. The Serbian Assembly first met in a community building close to Urije, and later the meetings were moved to a building in Cirkin Polje. The members of the Serbian Assembly in Prijedor were under guidance from a central administration in Banja Luka. The Serbian Mayor was Dr. Milomir Stakić from the SDS who functioned as Deputy Mayor within the elected authorities of Opstina Prijedor.

Possibly in February 1992, so-called «Crisis Committees» (Krizni Stab) were established by the Serbs. There was a central «Crisis Committee» in Prijedor town, and other additional committees in different parts of the town, and in other towns and villages. In the beginning, the headquarters of the central «Crisis Committee» was in Urije, but later it was moved to Cirkin Polje. There are indications that in February 1992, the most important members of the central «Crisis Committee» were:

- **Zivko Knezevic**, retired police commander;
- **Bosko Petrovic**, secretary of the «Union of Communists» (the old Communist party) in Prijedor;
- **Cadjo Milutin**, retired policeman;
- **Slobodan Kuruzovic**, teacher in a primary school;
- **Vaso Skondric**, retired policeman;
- **Milan Dragojevic**, butcher and the president of the SDS for Urije;
- **Ranko Curcija**, driving instructor and local president of the Serbian Radical Party (the party of Vojislav Seselj, the self-proclaimed leader of the Cetniks in Serbia);
- **Savan Runjo**, teacher of «people’s defence»; and
- **Miodrag Grubljesic**, owner of a private transport company.
The «Crisis Committees» were, at least in some areas, organized by the TO.

**A. Moving the artillery and military personnel into place**

Probably in the summer of 1991, a heavy armour brigade (with tanks) - the Panccevo Brigade (or parts of this brigade) from Serbia - came to Prijedor where it was well-received by the Serbs. The pretext for its arrival was the war in Croatia, but the Panccevo Brigade did not primarily become involved in the that war. It established itself at the aerodrome Urije. In general, the JNA was still held in high esteem by the people at large. During the war in Croatia, numerous tanks from Banja Luka passed through Prijedor on their way to Kostajnica, Petrinja and Karlovac. Some units were allocated to Prijedor.

In 1992, an artillery unit of the JNA, which had participated in the war in Croatia, took up a strategic position in Benkovac on the Kozara Mountain. The Serbs also brought artillery into other areas which would be strategic positions if one would consider attacking Kozarac (see Chapter VII.B. infra).

Canons and a big number of tracked vehicles were brought to Prijedor by railway in the first months of 1992.

Some time before the Serbs took power, some 200 Serbian soldiers came from outside to stay in Hotel Prijedor in Prijedor town. They were a special forces unit, more disciplined than other soldiers. They were well-behaved and did not associate with others. By mid-May 1992, it is claimed that it was Arkanovci (Arkan's paramilitary men, see Chapter V.C. infra) who stayed in Hotel Prijedor.

The discipline of the soldiers staying in Hotel Prijedor stood in stark contrast to the general impression of other soldiers in the area at the time who were often drunk and ill-behaved, especially the soldiers returning from the war in Croatia. It was common that soldiers on their way to the front at Lipik/Pakrac in Croatia were troublesome and even fired their weapons randomly. During the war in Croatia, Serbian soldiers also used the Prijedor area for rest and recuperation, much to the dislike of the local inhabitants.

Due initially to the war in Croatia, there were many military men in Opština Prijedor and especially in the regional centre in Banja Luka, but also in the other neighbouring districts. This augmented military presence proved useful for the Serbs when they took power on 30 April 1992.

**B. Disrupted communications with Sarajevo**

In mid-April 1992, the Serbs arranged for roadblocks to be erected on all main roads to and from Opština Prijedor (see Chapter IV.G. infra). It started to become more difficult to travel even earlier, due in part to the war in Croatia and the related massive movements of troops and military equipment.

Belgrade Radio, on 14 April 1992, broadcasted that within troubled multi-ethnic BiH, «movement is strangled by Serbian roadblocks». 
On 28 April 1992, there was a regular programme on Radio Prijedor with guests in the studio. The guests were Simo Miskovic (from the SDS), Mirza Mujadzic (from the SDA, see Chapters VI.A, and VII.D. infra) and Drasko Velaula (from the leftist party, the SPA). The question to be debated was the influence of the general situation in BiH on life in Prijedor. By then Opstina Prijedor had started to experience a virtual blockade of communication with Sarajevo. The programme was prolonged by one hour. It was closed by an assurance given by Simo Miskovic and Mirza Mujadzic that people could sleep well - «This is Opstina Prijedor with its Kozara brotherhood, we shall continue to live peacefully as we always have!»

There never were United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) stationed in Opstina Prijedor. On 28 April 1992, the UNMOs in nearby Banja Luka were withdrawn due to the dangers inherent in their continued presence.

C. Serbian control over the television transmitter on the Kozara Mountain

The television relay station is situated near Lisina, where the peak of the mountain is 978 metres above sea level, and called Mali Vis.

The Serbs took control of the relay station/television transmitter on the Kozara Mountain possibly some time between 21 and 28 March 1992 (possibly earlier, see the next paragraph infra). At this time, the studio in Banja Luka was also under the firm control of Serbs. The transmitter on the Kozara Mountain was taken over by paramilitary Cetnik units from Lamovita, Bistrica, and Omarska, allegedly supported by special Units of the JNA in Banja Luka. They disarmed the local guards and forced the personnel to change the programmes together with some Serbian technicians. The paramilitary units mentioned were not the so-called «Wolves» from Prnjavor.

The «Wolves» from Prnjavor or rather Vukovi sa Vučjaka (i.e. the «Wolves from Vučjaka») took their name from the Vučjaka Mountain near Prnjavor. Apparently, this group was also at one time involved in taking control of the television transmitter on the Kozara Mountain - maybe at an earlier time. These paramilitary fighters were dressed in camouflage uniforms having a badge with a wolf on their upper arms. Following subsequent protests the JNA said that it was unable to control the «Wolves», although close by the television transmitter there was a JNA unit stationed. The police in Prijedor warned a group from a local peace movement not to approach the «Wolves» or the television transmitter as «something unfortunate might happen».

As a consequence, the people of Opstina Prijedor could no longer receive any television programmes from Sarajevo (only from Belgrade and Pale, and later also from Banja Luka). As with all other controlled transmitters, the one on the Kozara Mountain was now operational only for transmissions from Serbian-controlled television stations - neither Sarajevo nor Zagreb. The local Serbian military said that they would take action to retake control of the transmitter, but no efforts were made.

Like in the preparation for other wars, the programmes transmitted became more and more militant. Much propaganda was also broadcast. It was repeatedly broadcast that one
ought to be terribly afraid of Muslims, Albanians, Croats and Slovenians - only Serbs and Montenegrins were not dangerous. The Serbs and the Montenegrins were the defenders of Yugoslavia. Non-Serbs will insist that the latter was not true, most people favoured Yugoslavia as such - but leading Serbs were striving for Greater Serbia.

When the Serbs took over control of the transmitter on the Kozara Mountain, they already had full control over the main relay station for the whole of BiH on the Vlasic Mountain.

**D. The propaganda**

As writes Noel Malcolm:

«Having travelled widely inside Bosnia over fifteen years, and having stayed in Muslim, Croat and Serb villages, I cannot believe the claim that the country was forever seething with ethnic hatred. But having watched Radio Television Belgrade in the period 1991–2, I can understand why simple Bosnian Serbs came to believe that they were under threat, from Ustasa hordes, fundamentalist jihads or whatever. As the independent Belgrade journalist Milos Vasic put it to an American audience, it was as if all TV stations in the USA had been taken over by the Ku Klux Klan: ‘You must imagine a United States with every little TV station everywhere taking exactly the same editorial line - a line dictated by David Duke. You too would have war in five years.’» *8

The Muslims who made up the majority of the political leaders were blamed for everything that came with economic crisis, especially unemployment and inflation. In addition, they were branded as extremists, meaning Muslim fundamentalists or rather violent fanatics. The Croats were discredited as Ustase wanting revenge over Serbs for what had happened in the war in Croatia with Serbs taking power in Knin and Vukovar and other areas. Non-Serbs were portrayed as savages to be feared at the same time as they were used as scapegoats.

**E. Secret Serbian police activities**

Anxiety was building up in the police force for some months prior to the change of power on 30 April 1992. The Serbs were talking about dividing the police stations. The Serbs did not come regularly to work as they had to attend meetings most of the time. There was a lot of secrecy.

In this period, the Serbs were actually secretly setting up nine new police stations. At the time, there were only four police stations in Opstina Prijedor: in Prijedor town, in the towns of Ljubija and Kozarac, and in Omarska village.

Austrian Television reported on 1 April 1992 that Serbs left the police force in BiH to form their own purely Serbian police force. This paralleled the actions of Serbian police in Croatia at the outset of the crisis in that Republic.
According to an interview which journalist Siniša Vujaković had with Simo Drljaca (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, see Chapter V.B. infra) printed in the Serbian-controlled Kozarski Vjesnik:

«The man [Simo Drljaca], which the Serbian Democratic Party [SDS] of the Opština Prijedor put in charge of forming the Serbian police, after half a year of illegal work had done his job that well that in 13 police stations 1,775 well armed persons were waiting to undertake any difficult duty in the time which was coming. In the night between 29 and 30 April 1992, he directed the take-over of power [by the Serbs], which was successfully achieved in only 30 minutes, without any shots fired. The Assembly of the Srpske Opštine Prijedor, at the end of March last year [1992], appointed him chief of the public security station [i.e. in charge of the secret police].» *9

F. Serbs rearming other Serbs

Misha Glenny reports:

«... RAM, a plan whose name was never uncovered beyond its acronym. It has been alleged that the full extent of this programme was Milosevic's concept of a core Yugoslavia dominated by Serbia. ... It also, naturally envisaged Bosnia-Hercegovina as an integral part of the core Yugoslavia. There is no proof as to whether such a comprehensive plan existed ... That within the project of RAM there was a place for Belgrad's strategy for Bosnia-Hercegovina, however, is beyond doubt thanks to testimony provided by former Prime Minister Ante Marković, ... Organized from the Serbian capital by the SPS [i.e. the Socialist Party of Serbia] MP Mihalj Kertes, ..., at the heart of this programme lay the distribution of arms throughout the Serb communities of BiH. ... Throughout 1990, Kertes ordered the dispatches of hundreds of thousands of pieces of weaponry mainly to the two militant Serb regions of BiH, Bosanska Krajina in the north-west and ... Throughout 1991, Kertes's secret convoys of lorries bulging with guns and munitions ploughed their furrow with a diligence not usually associated with Serbs. Eastern Herzegovina and Bosanska Krajina were especially privileged recipients of this booty as they were both to play a critical logistical role during the war with Croatia. ... In August, when his humiliation was reaching its peak, the federal Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, revealed the existence of RAM and leaked a tape conversation between President Milosevic and General Nikola Uzelac, who ran the Banja Luka corps of the JNA with his own particular touch of evil. During this conversation, Milosevic ordered Uzelac to release weapons to the leader of the SDS, Radovan Karadžić.» *10

The Serbian army, in close cooperation with the SDS, distributed weapons to the Serbian population in Prijedor town and other towns and villages in the Opština. Often these deliveries took place openly in broad daylight. The distribution was mainly organized by trucks and seemed aimed at arming every Serbian male between the ages of 15 and 70. Many Serbian women and old men were provided with arms. Serbian policemen were also moving around especially at night handing out weapons to fellow Serbs.
Weapons and military equipment were even flown in by military helicopters to Serbian military officers. It is said that by the end, almost no Serbian house was without an automatic gun. Many Serbs may also have received grenades.

The pretext for the arms deliveries and the rearmament was that this was necessary for the defence against «the enemies of the people» - the Muslim extremists and the Ustaše.

The Serbs were provided with new automatic weaponry. Serbs who had been armed in this manner started to establish checkpoints in the villages.

Ample distributions of ammunition were also made, and even larger quantities of ammunition were stored locally. Approximately five kilometres from Malo Palanciste on the road to Knezica, there is an ammunition cache. A Serbian teacher (now director of the school), whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, who used to sign out ammunition for the heavy artillery there, boasted that there was enough heavy ammunition stored that it would suffice for one year if 1,000 rounds were fired each day.

In this period, some Serbs went around firing shots at random. Other people often tried to stop them. Sometimes these Serbs inflicted wounds on themselves, but once a woman and two children were injured. Some of the local Serbs returning from the war in Croatia were quite excited and very easily provoked - there were more and more Serbs in this category.

Many non-Serbs, who saw truck-loads of weapons being distributed in their home areas to Serbs, were so frightened that they did not dare to believe what they saw. In general, Muslims and Croats became scared. At the same time, Serbs had their informants among the Muslims and Croats who spread the word that Serbs had weapons for sale. One Serb (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), later ill-reputed and then belonging to a so-called intervention unit (see Chapters IX.C., XII.C. and XII.D. infra), and other Serbs, who later came to play important destructive roles when the Serbs had taken power, were involved in selling rather faulty weapons to non-Serbs. The sellers simultaneously registered the buyers for illegally being in possession of firearms. The people wanted, it seems, to buy these weapons as they were frightened and wanted to have something for self-defence. The number of such weapons around remained none the less limited.

When the later Serbian chief of police, Simo Drljaca, briefed visitors on the background of the events in Opština Prijedor, he insisted that the Muslims and Croats had been preparing for war for more than 22 years, and that the Serbs had «documents showing that 3,491 men who could fight from Kozarac, had accepted weapons». Simo Drljaca would obviously not quote a deflated figure; there are, however, reasons for believing that his figure is highly inflated. Considering the later attack on the Kozarac area and the interrogations conducted in the main concentration camps where the possession of arms seems to have been a main theme of accusations against camp inmates (see Chapters VII.B., VIII.A. and VIII.B. infra), it may be questioned whether the sale of rather faulty weapons to perceived enemies by key people in the Serbian military ranks was designed to give the Serbs a pretext.
Radio Prijedor was, prior to 30 April 1992, constantly broadcasting that people ought to hand over their weapons to the authorities. The TO and the police kept their weapons. People who had no license to own weapons hid them if they had any. Muslims and Croats who had legal authorization to have weapons (normally for hunting) were visited by Serbs and threatened to hand over the weapons which they legally possessed. It is noteworthy that the non-Serbs, who «illegally» bought weapons from and were registered by the above-mentioned ill-reputed Serb and others associated with or members of the Serbian military, were not similarly visited. People on these sales lists were, however, among the first to be liquidated in the later Serbian military attacks whether or not they had kept their arms and whether or not they had taken any recourse to arms.

G. The ultimatum and official rearmament of the TO

Not only the Serbs, but also the Muslims, had established their own checkpoints. At least in one of the Muslim villages on the left bank of the Sana River, this happened when a Serbian representative from the police came to the village and advised it to establish such checkpoints in order to protect the village. The Serbs even gave the Muslims some weapons to be used for this purpose. These weapons were, however, of a very bad quality. On duty at these checkpoints, there were normally two or three young males with very limited, if any, experience.

A meeting in the local National Defence Council in Prijedor in mid-April 1992 demanded that the soldiers returning from the war in Croatia be demobilized. The Council had politically appointed members, but was chaired by Colonel Vladimir Arsic, the military commander of the area. He allegedly gave the politicians an ultimatum not to demobilize the soldiers but to have them redeployed outside of Prijedor town, together with police and TOs (which were to be mobilized and armed), to control all roads to Prijedor - from Banja Luka, Sanski Most, Bosanski Novi and Bosanska Dubica. This would become a stranglehold on both the district and the town of Prijedor. The army wanted to control all movement there.

Major Slobodan Kuruzovic (who had returned from the war in Croatia, see Chapter V.B. infra) then invited those opposed to redeployment to come for a guided tour to Novi Varos and another Croatian village in Western Slavonia flattened and depopulated in the war, to see allegedly the fate that would befall Prijedor if the politicians rejected redeployment and mobilization of the TO. Some of them went with Kuruzovic. The ultimatum was met.

Radio Prijedor took active part in the propaganda to mobilize and rearm the TO. Some time earlier it had been decided that the weapons belonging to the TOs had to be stored in the military barracks in Prijedor town. Now the TOs were again provided with weapons. Many non-Serbian TOs seem to have been provided with old weapons, especially rifles. At the time, it is claimed that the weapons available for the TO in the entire Kozarac area were five machine guns. Moreover, the staff members had Dobosk (Russian rifles) with 72 bullets in the cartridge, calibre 762. The rest had old M 48 rifles (made in Serbia) and some hand carried grenade launchers, but no grenades. More or less, all of the weapons were substandard.
From this time, it was indicated that the TOs were to move into the army barracks and be controlled by the army. Then, the Serbs changed their mind and wanted the TOs to hand over their weapons and demobilize.

**H. A fake declaration of war**

On 29 April 1992, Radio Sarajevo stated that a feigned telefax was circulated. The fake fax pretended to be instructions sent from the Minister of Defence in BiH to the TO, inter alia, in Banja Luka and Prijedor, to attack the JNA. The Ministry of Defence in Sarajevo immediately denounced the fax as fraud, charging that the fax showed on Television Belgrade was fake and not rubber-stamped with the seal of the Ministry of Defence in Sarajevo. It also insisted that no such instructions to attack existed or ever had existed. Television Banja Luka was persistent that the telefax and the instructions were authentic.

The telefax which later was circulated by Serbian leaders to prove their claim that the fax and the instructions were genuine, had the following layout and wording (the original is in the Bosnian language):

«**BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA**
**TERRITORIAL DEFENCE STAFF**
**SARAJEVO**
29 04 1992

**VERY URGENT**

-------------

**ORDER TO CARRY OUT**
**THE DECISION OF THE PRESIDENCY**
**OF THE REPUBLIC OF BIH 02-11-327/92**


**I HEREBY GIVE THE ORDER**:

1. **CARRY OUT A COMPLETE AND MASSIVE OBSTRUCTION ON ALL ROADS ON THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA WHERE THE FORMER JNA HAS BEGUN THE WITHDRAWAL OF TECHNICAL MATERIAL, IN DIRECT COORDINATION WITH THE MUP [i.e. the Ministry of Interior].**

2. **CARRY OUT A BLOCKADE IN A WIDER REGION OF**
MILITARY OBJECTS FROM WHICH THE JNA WILL TRY TO TAKE OUT TECHNICAL MATERIAL, THROUGH DIFFERENT KINDS OF FORMATIONAL AND NATURAL HINDRANCES TO BE SAFEGUARDED BY UNITS OF THE TERRITORIAL DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BIH AND THE MUP.

3. PREVENT UNITS OF THE JNA, UNLESS AUTHORIZED OR ACCOMPANIED BY THE MUP, FROM LEAVING THE BARRACKS AND COMMUNICATING ON THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BIH.


COMMANDER
COLONEL
HASAN EFENDIC»

There is no evidence to sustain a claim that a telefax like the above-quoted ever was produced by the legitimate authorities of BiH. Conversely, they had every reason to facilitate the departure of the JNA as soon as possible. For the legitimate authorities in BiH to have declared war against the JNA at the time, would have been suicidal. Moreover, if the leadership in BiH would have wanted to confront the JNA by force, there is every reason to believe that they would have taken certain carefully planned steps and not let it all materialize by means of a rather casual telefax.

Misha Glenny reports:

«As early as September 1991, President Izetbegovic urged Lord Carrington's conference on Yugoslavia to pay immediate attention to the question of the JNA in BiH. With considerable foresight, Izetbegovic proposed that the European Community open a fund which could finance the pension of Bosnian officers and provide for the gradual dismantling of the JNA in Bosnia and the local military industries. Preoccupied with the war in Croatia, neither the conference nor anyone else heeded Izetbegovic's entreaties . . .» *11

Although the Serbian authorities did not later defend their actions in BiH on the basis of the fake declaration of war, it was one of several means successfully applied to agitate fellow-Serbs, especially the simple-minded ones.
V. The Serbs take power - 30 April 1992

A. The actual takeover

Two or three days before 30 April 1992, the Serbian army had established itself in all strategic positions on the mountains surrounding Prijedor town. In the town itself there were small groups of two or three JNA soldiers at all important places. The local population did not recognize these soldiers as coming from the area. The JNA soldiers looked tired, they were unshaven and were wearing shabby uniforms. It is believed that they may have arrived from the war in Croatia. They did not talk to anybody outside their circle. The groups of soldiers were, however, visited by officers driving around among them. They were provided with food which was distributed by army vehicles. After the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992, these soldiers, who were alien to the local population, were replaced by Serbian soldiers well-known in the district.

In the early morning of 30 April 1992, there were Serbian flags on all official buildings in Prijedor town. Sandbag shelters for soldiers with automatic weapons had been erected at all the main intersections, in front of the banks and other important buildings. There were snipers on the roofs of most tall buildings.

The JNA, paramilitary men, policemen, and local Serbs participated in the actual power change. Among the paramilitary soldiers were units from the Marticevci (the Krajina Militia, see Chapter V.C. infra).

The premises of Radio Prijedor were crowded with military people. There were some 40 to 50 armed people in the studio and a Serb employee of the radio, Mile Mutić, was with them. Milomar Stakić was introduced to the Radio Prijedor editor-in-chief as the new mayor in Opština Prijedor. At 6:15 a.m., the editor (who was a non-Serb) was presented by Serbs with a written text and told «We have taken power in Prijedor, and you have to read this text.» The editor requested that Milomar Stakić join him to read the text himself, and to answer questions from the editor. In the studio, he asked Milomar Stakić what it meant that they - the Serbs - had taken power. Milomar Stakić replied that they, meaning the Serbs, were only interested in areas where there were Serbs. The editor asked him, «What then about the Muslims?» Milomar Stakić replied, «The Muslims may organize themselves as best they can.» Thence the text was read by the speaker.

The key point in the statement was that the Serbs had taken power without one shot being fired against them. They had taken over control of all public buildings, and from then on everything was to be organized by them - the Serbs. From now on, it was the Srpske (i.e. the Serbian ) Opštine Prijedor. Earlier other institutions and activities had already been given the prefix «Srpske».

According to an interview with Simo Drljača (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor, see Chapter IV.E. supra, and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor):

«In the night between 29 and 30 April 1992, he [Simo Drljača] directed the take-over of power [by Serbs], which was successfully achieved in only 30 minutes, without any shots fired. The Assembly of the Srpske Opštine Prijedor, at the end of March last year [1992],
appointed him chief of the Public Security Service [i.e. in charge of the secret police and thus also the ordinary police]. He was in charge of this job during the most demanding period and remained in the position until January 1993. These days he has been appointed as Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs of the Serbian Republic. He will commence in his new functions in Bijelina on Monday.» *12

Bijelina is a town not far from the BiH border with Serbia proper, on the BiH side of the Drina River. It has been selected as seat for the Interior Ministry due to its geographical linkage between east and west, north and south. Earlier in the era of the SFRY, the secret police had an office in Prijedor.

The interview continues:

Vujakovic:
«Your work at the Public Security Station [i.e. the secret police] has recently been very much disputed. How do you consider your work during the last year?»

Drljaca:
«The situation concerning public order in the Opština [Prijedor] is described in a report on the work of the Public Security Service (Služba Javne Bezbednosti or SJB) in Prijedor during the last 6 and 9 months. The reports have been handed over to the Executive committee of the Opština and the SJB [the secret police] Banja Luka. My strong demand that the report should be made available to the Assembly was not successful, and the report was never put on the agenda of the Assembly. In 15 pages is presented the work of the SJB during the last 12 months. Since the SJB is under the control of the SJB Banja Luka and the Ministry of Interior (MUP) of Republika Srpska, the control was made by an expert group from the SJB Banja Luka. This station [the SJB Prijedor] got the highest esteem of professional work. Due to the insisting of the leader of the SDS and the demand from one leader from the authorities, a commission was formed inside the MUP, which carried out the control of the SJB's work. To the disappointment of those who ordered the investigation, also this commission of experts gave the best evaluations of this Station's work. In the taking over of power, the workers of the SJB, Serbs, one and all took active part. From the beginning of the military actions, the workers of the police took active part, until this very day.» *13

It was announced over Radio Prijedor that the Serbian people and the SDS had taken power and control to secure their survival. Reference was particularly made to the imminent threat posed by the above-mentioned (see Chapter IV.H. supra) and disputed «telefax». It was also argued that neither the Prijedor Assembly nor the local banks functioned properly; this was cited as further indication that the Serbs were endangered. Prior to the Serbs taking power, there had been pressure on the Služba Drustvenog Knjigovodstva (i.e. the Public Accountancy Service) to stop all transactions with Sarajevo and redirect them to Belgrade. The non-Serbs in Opština Prijedor had not agreed to this, which was the practice in the Bosanska Krajina SAO. After the Serbs took power, they changed the money flow according to their own wish; that is also financially they withdrew from BiH and made Belgrade their federal capital. Financial assets belonging to non-Serbs were frozen and
later confiscated together with everything else belonging to them (see Chapter X.D. infra),
and the financial links with the authorities in BiH were severed.

But as Simo Drljaca and other Serbian leaders in Prijedor later told visitors, the
underlying reality was that:

«The Serbs cannot allow a government in which they are a minority. The Serbs in this area
are a constituent nation. We will never accept Izetbegović as President. The Muslims did not
want to accept that policy. So, a war happened.»

The Muslims wanted to make the country an Islamic State again as it had been once
before in history, so the argument went. Although there were no real indications of that at
the time, it would be better for the Serbs to take pre-emptive measures against it, Serbs
asserted. «If we cannot reach an accommodation, we will fight to annihilation», Simo
Drljaca reportedly later told visitors.

Radio Prijedor also broadcasted an interview with Major Radmilo Zeljaja asking him
what was happening. He answered that he was not interested in civilian questions and that
the army was not involved. He added, however, that the army was on the alert as it had
intelligence information indicating that the army would be attacked. But the attack did not
materialize, and Major Slobodan Kuruzovic proclaimed himself on the radio as leader of the
TO of the Serbian people. According to the forged telefax, it was the TO which was
ostensibly to attack the JNA (see Chapter IV.H. supra).

Concerning the change of power in Opština Prijedor and the subsequent Serbian use of
force, this seems not to represent an aberration, but rather the events seem to an
unpleasant degree to follow a pattern well-established in the by then Serbian- controlled
areas in Croatia and the now Serbian-ruled areas in BiH.

**B. Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor**

A key position in the changes was held by the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor. Key
roles in the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor were held by the military, the police and the
SDS leadership.

All recorded information ascertains that the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor had,
among others, the following members.

**Military:**

a. Colonel Vladimir Arsić (from Banja Luka);
b. Major Radmilo Zeljaja (from Banja Luka);
c. Major Slobodan Kuruzovic (teacher from Prijedor later director of that same school,
   he was not in active military service before the war in Croatia).

**Civilian:**

a. Simo Drljaca, Chief of Police;
b. Dr. Milomir Stakic, SDS, Mayor;
c. Dr. Mico Kovacevic, President of the Executive Board of the Assembly in Prijedor (medical doctor);
d. Simo Miskovic, President of the SDS in Prijedor (retired policeman from Banja Luka, about 45-years old, no previous political activities);
e. Srdjo Srdic, President of the Red Cross in Prijedor (after the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992) and Representative of the SDS in the Assembly of BiH, later in the SRBiH (dentist, about 65-years old, amateur actor, well-known in public life, close associate of Radovan Karadzic).

Those here mentioned have identified themselves publicly as members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor. The names of four other identified members and three possible members are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. Among them are key people from the local industry, including the iron ore mine Rudnika Ljubija.

The chairman of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor was possibly Major Slobodan Kuruzovic.

The President of the Red Cross is said to have been responsible for the propaganda against the non-Serbian people. He is allegedly personally responsible for plunder and physical and psychological terror. As a President of the Red Cross, he made the false pretence that the Red Cross was helping prisoners in the concentration camps. He, moreover, is accused of having organized «ethnic cleansing» by using Red Cross vehicles.

Mile Mutic, reporter and (after the Serbs took power) editor-in-chief of Radio Prijedor, and editor of the local newspaper Kozarski Vjesnik, and Jovan Vukoja, Director of the Centre for Social Welfare, were probably not members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor. Both men have, however, been mentioned as members in some information.

Concerning his meeting, on 5 August 1992, with some of the members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor journalist Ed Vulliamy related:

«The next hurdle is a room full of local dignitaries on the first floor of the police station. There is the military commander of the region, Colonel Vladimir Arsic. There is the 'civilian' mayor Milomir Stakic (in military uniform) and his deputy, Milan Kovacevic, whose job it is to oversee the 'transit centres', including Omarska, and who was himself born in Jasenovac in 1941. He says that 'what you will find here are not concentration camps, but transit centres. We are people born out of concentration camps, determined to protect our nation from genocide yet again.' . . . Colonel Arsic and Major Milutonic stress that Omarska is run by the civilian authorities. Manja is available for a visit, but not Omarska. . . . and then some extraordinary inexactitudes from Mayor Stakic: 'We have tried to get the other side to live in peace with us. Our problems are with the extremists, not the population. We are trying to get Muslims not to leave the area, but to stay and live with us, but they want to go to Croatia, and Germany, or back to Bosnia [we are in Bosnia, aren't we?] while the extremists bring weapons into the area, kill the Serbian people and commit appalling atrocities . . . There are no camps, there are only transit centres where people are taken for their own protection. Others are people who want to leave and we are assisting them.' » *14
According to an interview Simo Drljaca (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor):

Vujakovic:

«How would you characterize the cooperation between the SJB and the civilian authorities, and the SJB and the military police?»

Drljaca:

«In the period of taking over the power, the cooperation between the SJB and the civilian authorities was satisfying. Everybody did his job. But after the change of authority the new people did not understand the true role of the SJB. The attempt that it should become an organ of the Opstina, which would execute the orders of the civilian authorities of the Opstina, was not acceptable, and the misunderstandings began. It was demanded that a total change of the staff should be undertaken and replaced by people from the SDS, regardless of their qualification and expertise. I think it was more appropriate that I leave, but the professionals should not be touched. They will remain professionals in every system, and so they are now - while SDS is in power. If something is not done well, I should be changed and not they, because they carried out my orders and the orders of the chief of CSB (Centar Sluzbi Bezbjednosti i.e. the Public Security Center [the superior to the SJB]) Banja Luka and the Minister of Interior.

It was unnecessary to make such a fuss about the chief of the SJB and insist so much on changing the chief. The change was demanded by those people who urged the present vice president of the Opstina Assembly to take over with his army the station in Omarska, what he also did. At this occasion he wounded a woman lodger at the second floor, destroyed an official car and took prisoner the commander and the staff on duty. All this he did when the police (500 men) this morning was about to go to Orašje. Against this person were brought 3 (three) criminal charges to the Military Court. A change was demanded by the present leader of the SDS, because I did not go [to him] every morning ‘in order to get wise’. In the Law on internal affairs it says that such ‘wisdom’ (orders) is given by the chief of CSB Banja Luka and the Minister of Interior (MUP). When two honest policemen and the honest family of Butinski were killed in Trnopolje, the same leader of SDS stated in front of me and my men that if their chief had been elected, the murders would not have happened. One knows who killed the two policemen and the Butinski family, I believe that no chair on earth is worth their lives.

For the first time I inform the public that I personally insisted to the Minister of Interior that I should not carry out this function any longer, in order not to raise dust about the leader of the SDS. After the presented arguments the Minister agreed that I should no longer have the function of chief of the SJB.

In contrast to the present civilian authorities (i.e. individuals), the cooperation was excellent with the Army of the Republika Srpska and with the officers of that army. The cooperation was manifested in the joint cleaning of the terrain of traitors [otpadnik which also may be translated as heretics, renegades, or deserters], joint work at the checkpoints, a joint intervention group against disturbance of public order and in fighting terrorist groups. Leaving this job I wish that the officers of the Army of the Republika Srpska and the army continue with a still better cooperation with the SJB in order to achieve the common goal.»
Vujakovic:  
«How do you interpret the completely different evaluation of your work by the Opstina and the Republika Srpska?»

Drljaca:  
«When we speak about change, it is a fact that the Opstina Committee of the SDS has removed those people who carried through the revolution, only the leader of the SDS is left. By replacing the chief [of the SJB] by their man (as if I were not their man), the Opstina would be complete as a state. I did not join this revolution in order to create a principality and a prince, but the Republika Srpska, and that is why I insisted to leave. Why have I been appointed by the Minister to this function? I believe that the Minister is well informed about my work so far by people who are competent to evaluate this.» *15

C. The military and the armed entities

The concept of the Krizni Stab existed already in military strategic theory in the former Yugoslavia prior to the wars. The military as such was in a sense always afraid of the people. The military were above the people and had privileges which easily could lead to the people turning against the military. The military consisted of rather conservative or reactionary Communists, whereas the people seemed to be progressing towards democracy. The military wanted to control the people and thus needed to give the people the impression that in actual fact, the people controlled the military. In this the military, generally speaking, succeeded. The worst case scenario contained the plan that the military would establish the Krizni Stab. Thus, the military would make sure to have included in the Krizni Stab people whom they trusted. Trust in this context means loyalty and subordination.

The Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor was involved in the logistic support and production for the army. The Krizni Stab was an instrument of gaining complete control of the entirety of Opstina Prijedor (or over any other geographic area where a Krizni Stab was proclaimed). Soldiers who worked for the interests of the army were posted also in industry and other production units to control the production, to gain support, and to control civilians.

The Krizni Stab also had as its function to arm the Serbs within its operational area. Other functions were to block communications and make provocations within mixed ethnic settings. The pivotal function, however, was to voice that the Serbian people as such were threatened by the non-Serbs, the consequence of which was the urgent need for the JNA to act to protect the people. The idea was to be able to mobilize strategically with the consent of the people, i.e. to take up positions with artillery and tanks, etc. and soldiers to «defend» the Serbian people.

On 30 April 1992, the JNA still existed. On 27 April 1992, the Presidency of BiH had issued a decree to the effect that the JNA was to leave the country. At the same time, JNA personnel were invited to join BiH's newly formed TO. As a cease-fire agreement was signed in January 1992 for Croatia, a sizable number of JNA military personnel withdrew to BiH.
When the Serbs took power in Opstina Prijedor, the army in the area was still officially under the leadership of the Minister of Defence in Belgrade, General Veljko Kadijevic. The Acting Federal Secretary for National Defence and Chief of General Staff at the time was General Blagoje Adzic (who later replaced Veljko Kadijevic as Minister of Defence).

Opstina Prijedor belonged to the 2nd Army District of the JNA. At the time, Lieutenant General Milutin Kukanjac was the commander of the 2nd Army District. His deputy was Lieutenant General Milan Aksentijevic. The regional command for Opstina Prijedor was in Banja Luka, where the 5th Corps was headquartered. In March and April 1992, the 5th Corps was under the command of Major General Vladimir Vukovic and his deputy Major General Momir Talic. Major General Vladimir Vukovic was ill at the time, and died later in the year in Belgrade; he thus is considered to have taken no active part in the military operations in Opstina Prijedor in 1992. (Also the 9th, 10th and 13th Corps were under the same 2nd Army District of the JNA. These corps were, according to Croatian military sources, engaged in military operations in Croatia from February to April 1992.) Colonel Arsic was among the brigade commanders in the 5th Corps.

The 11th Partisan Brigade of the JNA was stationed in Prijedor, its headquarters was the 5th Corps in Banja Luka. The commander for the 11th Brigade was probably Colonel Mainkovic. The 343rd Motorized Infantry Brigade (with its artillery support unit) of the 5th Corps is likely to have been stationed in Prijedor already by February 1992.

A partisan brigade is one of the regular brigades in the JNA. The JNA has motorized brigades, infantry brigades, mountain brigades, heavy armour brigades (with tanks), partisan brigades, and the TO. The JNA also has de facto ties to paramilitary groups. The different units are well-coordinated to work towards the same goals.

A partisan brigade is a light infantry brigade armoured with light weapons (including 60 millimetre and 80 millimetre mortars). Whereas a motorized brigade may have 6,000 members, a partisan brigade will be some 1,000-1,500 men large. Normally, the partisan brigades operate in the home areas of their soldiers where they are fully familiar with the terrain. Primarily, a partisan brigade will be stationed in an area where it is difficult for a motorized brigade to advance or operate at all. The small partisan brigades are ideal for the task of moving into an area to clear it.

On 4 May 1992, the Federal Presidency in Belgrade ordered the complete withdrawal within fifteen days of all JNA personnel (and their families) who were citizens of the FRY. On 8 May 1992, General Blagoje Adzic, the Acting Federal Secretary for National Defence and Chief of General Staff of the JNA, retired and 28 other commanders - Lieutenant General Milutin Kukanjac among them - were forced to retire, probably in order to placate outside concern over the fact that the JNA was Serbian-dominated.

From late May 1992, when the JNA ostensibly had left BiH territory as far as its members originating from outside BiH were concerned, the remaining Serbian military in the region of Banja Luka (as well as in other regions) officially converted the remaining JNA into the Army of the SRBiH (also known as the BSA, i.e. the Bosnian Serb Army). The transformation essentially was characterized by a change of name and insignia. The Army
SRBiH was to be commanded by General Ratko Mladić. When he was appointed to his new duty in the first half of May 1992, General Ratko Mladić was still commander of the Knin Corps (based in the Croatian Krajina). Under his leadership, large areas had been laid waste during the war in Croatia. The overall command structure, the lion's share of the military personnel, the weaponry and the ammunition of the JNA, remained in place with the Army SRBiH. In Banja Luka, the 5th Corps of the JNA thence became the 1st Krajina Corps. The commander was Major General Momir Talic (who had previously been the deputy commander of the 5th Corps). His deputy commander was Bosko Kelecevic. When the SRBiH changed its name on 12 August 1992 to the Republic of Srpska (see Chapter III.D. supra), the Army SRBiH changed its name and acronym to VRS (Vojska Republika Srpska, i.e. the Army of the Republic of Srpska).

It is recalled that the Republic of Srpska was proclaimed as a separate entity only in the sense that this new Republic would remain within the joint State of Jugoslavia (now the FRY) as one of its units (see Chapter III.D. supra).

Under the new regime, the 5th Corps, as mentioned, became the 1st Krajina Corps; the partisan brigades were renamed as light infantry brigades; and the 343rd Motorized Infantry Brigade thenceforth became known as the 43rd Motorized Brigade.

The 1st Krajina Corps has two divisions, the 30th and the 10th Division - including the 1st and the 2nd Armoured Brigade. The 1st Krajina Corps uses the T-12 cannons, 120 millimetre calibre. The light infantry brigades equal the partisan brigades. These are the brigades which together with the paramilitary groups have caused the most destruction. In the case of the military attacks in Opština Prijedor, the military forced the non-Serbian inhabitants to hand over their property to the military. As far as the military operations were concerned, the military had the command and the civilian administration had marginal direct influence.

The 43rd Motorized Brigade was stationed in Prijedor. It is said about the Brigade that it fought fiercely in Hambarine, Kurevo and Kozarac (as in many other areas outside Opština Prijedor). *16 The 6th Battalion of the 43rd Brigade was formed in the village Ljeskare (a village in the Ljubija area in Opština Prijedor) in June 1992. The 6th Battalion is also known as «Ljubija» or «Bilbija's» after its commander, Rade Bilbija. «Combatants of this Battalion played an important role in the 'cleansing' of the Kurevo area». *17 According to Commander Rade Bilbija:

«Regarding the ethnic structure of the population in the region where the 6th Battalion was formed, it included a large number of Croatian and Muslim combatants. This did not reduce the military alertness and the fierceness of this Battalion.» *18

To add a sense of urgency, fully enlist the local Serbs in the military course, and take advantage of their capabilities, local inhabitants were also used as infantry. In order to persecute the non-Serbs (who cannot be distinguished from the Serbs by appearance and not automatically by language) with military means without wiping out the entire population, thorough knowledge about the people in the district was required. The declared enemy was not an entity of combatants.
According to former high-ranking military personnel in the JNA, there was within every military corps a recognized need for having (concentration) camp personnel. The personnel to be available for the camps were from:

a. the military police;
b. the public security (služba bezbjednosti) or secret police; and
c. an intervention unit.

The intervention units were to trace and capture the potential camp inmates. The military police would guard the camps. The služba bezbjednosti personnel would interrogate, torture, and kill camp inmates and be in charge of the psychological part of the operation. The most brutal functions of the služba bezbjednosti personnel could alternatively be carried out with the assistance of paramilitary units. Among such paramilitary units were the Red Berets (also reported on by Television Banja Luka). The Red Berets were trained in the Kozara military barracks in Banja Luka. They were so-called SOS forces (Srpske Obrambene Snage i.e. Serbian Defence Forces). The Red Berets were possibly also used in Prijedor town when the Serbs staged their coup on 30 April 1992, these Red Berets were particularly well-armed.

Concerning the composition and functions of the intervention unit in Opština Prijedor, Simo Drljača (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor) in an interview stated that:

«[T]hey [the police force (including the secret services)] carried out my orders and the orders of the CSB [the Public Security Centre] Banja Luka and the Minister of Interior. . . .

. . . the cooperation was excellent with the Army of Republika Srpska and with the officers of that army. The cooperation was manifested in the joint cleansing of the terrain of traitors, joint work at the checkpoints, a joint intervention group against disturbances of public order and in fighting terrorist groups [emphasis added].» *19

The intervention unit was in other words an amalgamated entity with shared responsibility for the police and the military. The intervention unit was used, inter alia, to trace and capture the non-Serbian leadership, and allegedly members of the intervention unit killed prisoners arbitrarily during transport to the Manjača camp and participated in mass-killings of «deported» prisoners in the Vlasic Mountain area (see Chapters XII.C. and XII.D. infra).

Several paramilitary forces were operating in Opština Prijedor in 1992 and possibly later. Among them were units from the Marticevci, the Krajina Militia created by Milan Martić - Milan Babic's Interior Minister and military organizer. The Marticevci units have earned the reputation as one of the most terrifying organizations which participated in the fighting between Serbs and Croats during the war in Croatia. Another entity was Arkanovci - or Arkan's Tigers. Željko Raznjatović - alias Arkan - is a Montenegrin by birth. Arkan himself reportedly claims that he has a past as an assassin for the secret police in the former Yugoslavia. He was probably called upon by the same secret police to take the leadership in the fan club of the Red Star football club in Belgrade to channel the political energy of the
football fans and the hooligans. In any event, Arkan has a criminal record from several countries. His followers in the former Yugoslavia are known to have committed very violent crimes. Now, having made himself a fortune, Arkan has become a Serbian politician. Arkan's Tigers are normally dressed in black, but on occasion may carry red berets. A third unit, also named after its leader, is the Seseljovci. Vojislav Seselj is the self-proclaimed leader of the Cetniks in Serbia. As a politician, he runs the Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka, the SRS). Seselj is considered to have adopted a fanatical ultra-nationalist stance, thus he is also referred to as the Red Duke. Finally, as far as major paramilitary groups are concerned, there are the White Eagles (Beli Orlovi) under the command of Dragoslav Bokan. The White Eagles are the paramilitary formation of the extremist Serbian National Renewal Party (Srpska Narodna Obnova, the SNO) founded by Mirko Jovic. (For more information on these and other paramilitary groups, see Annex III.A, Special Forces.)

When, in July 1992, Captain Milovan Milutinovic, spokesperson of the Army SRBiH in the regional centre in Banja Luka, was asked about the multitude of uniforms and insignias in use, he was adamant that this did not change the fact that there was only one army. After 15 May 1992, he stated that there were no more irregulars or paramilitary forces. There had been such fighters previously, but all military forces were subsequently put under a unified command. He added that those who had resisted a unified command had been imprisoned.

It may be informative to pay attention to what Serbs later say about the relationship between the political leaders and the regular military forces on the one hand and the paramilitary units on the other. In an interview with Vreme, Colonel Milan Milivojevic, speaking about the army which he has been serving for 35 years, explained:

«All volunteers fought under the command of the former JNA. They were armed by the JNA and the Territorial Defence. Today, some of those volunteer units are being called Fascist due to certain political and party interests. They are being accused of genocide. Well, we all know who is responsible for that. Such volunteers were suited for the purposes of the former JNA authorities because they did their job for them. And they did it the best they could.» *20

A Serbian association of war veterans related its plight in an interview with Vreme:

«Our proposed statute comprises only the most human goals. The Association is a non-political organization which includes all combatants, regardless of their differences - JNA, Yugoslav Army, Territorial Defence, all kinds of volunteers. All volunteers have been armed and sent to the front lines by the JNA and the Serbian Ministry of the Interior; they served under the direct command of the JNA or the Yugoslav Army, the Serbian Republic of Krajina and the Serbian Republic, or under the command of the local commanders in those armies.» *21

The introduction to the same article reads:

«The participants of the recent Yugoslav wars - since 1990 until date - are suddenly expendable: neither Serbia for which they thought they were fighting, nor the army under whose flag and command they fought, want them any more. Serbia has not been at war, the army have not had a State, and it cannot support its active soldiers.» *22
In a general article about the army and the paramilitary published in Vreme, it is alleged:

«The police who has only recently helped bullies and criminals, protected and armed them, and provided them with undisturbed passage on the Drina and Sava rivers in both directions, now arrests them, and brings them to justice. In Srem, Nis, and other places, the political showdown is at full swing, made possible only due to the conditions of total anarchy.

Often such unlawfulness were concealed: the best example is the relationship of the official authorities of the Republic of Serbia towards grave breaches of international humanitarian law regarding armed conflicts conducted first in Croatia and then in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The data about that arrived from various sources. They were registered by the international community through its authorized bodies. Regular army units have been blamed, along with numerous paramilitary formations (established by various political parties) whose influence and power grew so much that they were equated with the official authorities, as simultaneously existing institutions of growing anarchy. SPS [Socialisticka Partija Srbije i.e. the Socialist Party of Serbia] and the Republic of Serbia ignored those events. Not by accident: in the circles of newly established VIPs who first accumulated enormous material wealth by breaching all norms of the international humanitarian law, showing in such a manner an amazing appetite for political influence and power, representatives of the official government in Serbia found the safest footholds to maintain their drastically shaken position. The crimes were covered up, denied, and at the same time instigated so that the noble cause of the Serbian national interests be realized: the ethnically pure regions for the future Greater Serbia.» *23

In September 1991, the United Nations had introduced an arms embargo against the whole of the SFRY. Although the United Nations recognized the State of BiH and accepted it as a member-State on 22 May 1992, the arms embargo was not lifted for this new and independent State. Even if the embargo continued to apply also for the Serbs, the Serbs were in control of most of the stockpiles of the JNA (which had just been augmented with an extra 14,000 tons of weaponry from the Middle East prior to the arms embargo being introduced).

**D. Victory for the SDS**

Misha Glenny wrote the following about the «peculiar political development» in Opstina Prijedor prior to Serbs taking power:

«For some unknown reason, the former federal Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, had decided to hold the founding conference of his Reformist Forces Party in Prijedor before the 1990 elections in BiH. The population of the Prijedor region was 44 per cent Muslim and 42 per cent Serb, while 8 per cent considered themselves Yugoslavs. Markovic's campaign in the Prijedor region split the Serb vote, as many in the town itself voted for the Reformist Forces. As a consequence, Izetbegovic's Party, the SDA, secured a relative majority which made Prijedor the only district in the Bosanska Krajina which was not under the control of Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party. This created a problem for the local SDS leaders as they found it impossible to co-opt Prijedor into their SAO (Serbian Autonomous District)
Bosanska Krajina, the pride of Serb militancy. During the war in western Slavonija in the summer and autumn of 1991, General Nikola Uzelac, commander of the Banja Luka corps, mobilized the local population in order to take part in the fighting in Croatia, to the north. Not unnaturally, the Muslims refused to respond to the mobilization and in Prijedor, the SDA-dominated government refused to co-operate with the issuing of the call-up papers.»

Later, when Simo Drljaca once was to explain to visitors the Serbian taking of power on 30 April 1992, he started with contemplating the previous political situation in Opstina Prijedor. As he said, 85 per cent of the Muslims in the district had voted for the SDA. However, because of «that robber Ante Marcovic» the Serbian votes were divided. Ante Marcovic's party received the votes of the intellectual Serbs and 90 per cent of the votes from Serbs living in mixed marriages (12 per cent of the population). Other Serbs also voted for the leftist party. The SDS got only 28 per cent of the votes, although the Serbian population counted for 42.5 per cent of the population. When Simo Drljaca was asked how the SDS then took power, he did not hesitate to state that it happened by force. The power change in Opstina Prijedor had been by the gun. Thenceforth, the Serbs had submitted to the SDS.

VI. Immediate consequences

A. Control of information and increased propaganda

Opstina Prijedor had two main local media: Radio Prijedor and the newspaper Kozarski Vjesnik. Both became, almost immediately after the Serbian takeover, mouthpieces of the new Serbian leaders, or rather the latter took control over these media. Strict censorship was one aspect of this; the dissemination of propaganda another. Smaller media entities followed suit if operated by Serbs; if their executives were non-Serbs, these media were silenced with the persecution of the non-Serbs.

After 30 April 1992, the Serbs working in Radio Prijedor were even dressed in camouflage uniforms. It made no difference that Radio Prijedor was financed mainly by advertisements. Serbian leaders who wanted to make statements over the radio or to have announcements read came with military people and guards to the studio to have their will.

All the time, during the first days after the Serbs took power, terrified listeners called the radio for advice and solace. At 9:00 p.m., probably on 2 May 1992, Becir Medunjan and Ilijaz Memić, both from Kozarac - the latter the local leader of the SDA, came and asked permission to broadcast a statement. The two, who were both Muslims, wanted to state that there was no reason for unrest in Kozarac; no Serb had or should have anything to fear and guards had even been posted outside the Orthodox church. The editor of Radio Prijedor agreed to let them broadcast their message. As they were half way into the studio, they were stopped by four or five Serbian military people with guns. Three identified Serb leaders whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, spoke on behalf of the Serbs and said that the Muslims from Kozarac had to seek permission from the police in Prijedor town before they could transmit their communication. It made no difference that the editor became upset and questioned the independence of the radio threatening to resign if it was not restored. The Muslims from Kozarac were prevented from broadcasting
their message of reconciliation - Kozarac was a predominantly (approximately 90 per cent) Muslim town.

On 3 May 1992, the entire editorial staff met and the Serbs insisted that the radio was independent and that everyone, that is the Serbs and the non-Serbs, should work together. The next day, however, an instruction came from the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor that the editor had to read a communication which was biased against the Muslims. Being the chief editor, he had the speaker read the communication. Thence the editor-in-chief asked for and accepted his resignation. The Serbs let him off «for annual leave».

The Serbs spread much fascist and Serbian nationalist propaganda at the time also through the two main media. As the radio was operating full time and the newspaper published only once a week, the radio became the key propaganda instrument for the new Serbian leaders. Previously banned Cetnik songs were again allowed and much played in radio programmes. Radio Prijedor was used also for political and private attacks on leading SDA members, such as Mirza Mujadžić, Becir Maduwjanin (it was stated that he was a Kosovo-Albanian which was not true), and Muhamed Čeharić, the now unseated mayor of Prijedor town. The propaganda was malevolent. The Serbs claimed that, in particular, Muslim extremists were many in the area and dangerous, preparing genocide against the Serbs.

The general situation deteriorated with the propaganda. There were occasions when Serbs were walking in the streets in Prijedor town shouting «All Muslims and Croats ought to be slaughtered», or «Your Alija [President Izetbegović] will lead you to extinction.» When the killings started later, males with the first name Alija were targeted - if for nothing else - because of their names.

From the outside, radio amateurs in Zagreb were among the first to pick up information that Prijedor was afflicted. As others learned it from them and tried to call relatives and friends in Opstina Prijedor, the latter would - if their telephone lines had not yet been disconnected - briefly state that everything was fine and hang up the telephone. Fear was immediately pervasive among non-Serbs. Soon most non-Serb telephone lines were disconnected.

B. Control of movement

An immediate consequence of the Serbian takeover was severed communications between Opstina Prijedor and the outside world. It became more difficult to travel even within the district. Bus services were closed down.

From when the Serbs took power, people could be asked to show their identification cards at any time. On 30 April 1992, identification papers were asked at almost every intersection in Prijedor town at least if the people in question were not known to the controllers as being Serbs. Later, identification was asked at checkpoints, and also at random. Non-Serbs easily had serious problems when they were identified as such - even if their identification cards were valid and carried at all times.
Almost all the mjesna zajednica (the administrative units into which an Opština is subdivided - one for each village and part of town) had its Serbian Krizni Stab which could issue travel permits, but in practice the travel permits had limited value and the roadblocks were actually effective. One example: A 20-year old young man, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, lived in Rakovčani. He had a Serbian girl-friend and with a travel permit went on his bicycle to see her in Prijedor town. On his way back, he was stopped near the suburb Tukovi by policemen in a car, one of them, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, asked for his identity card and travel permit. The young man had his papers in order, but regardless of that he was brought to Logor Keraterm (see Chapter VIII.B. infra). Some ten days later the young man was called out in Keraterm at night, beaten for hours, and died just after he was carried back into the hall where he was detained.

Starting probably on 2 May 1992, a nightly curfew was introduced in Prijedor town. Later a curfew was introduced also in Ljubija town. The curfew was in effect for non-Serbs as well as Serbs. Even medical doctors on duty had to get a special permission to move anywhere during the curfew hours.

After the attack on Prijedor town (see Chapter VII.C. infra), the inhabitants even needed a written permission in order to move from one part of the town to another.

C. Dismissal of the non-Serbian workforce

Within days - in most cases - of the Serbs taking power, most of the non-Serbs were dismissed from their jobs, be it as public officials or manual workers. In all key functions, such as in the local administration, the empty posts were taken over by Serbs. But it was no precondition for workers being discharged, that there were Serbs who could fill their places. Rather, even when it was a clear disadvantage also for the Serbs that a certain job was left vacant, the non-Serb was - save for a few exceptions - fired.

After the power change the courts put all their non-Serbian legal staff on a list (all were Muslims, two Croats had left the Opština earlier). Later everyone on this list was detained in a concentration camp.

At the time of the coup, the police received two sets of conflicting instructions. Sarajevo gave their normal instructions that were the same for all the police officials regardless of ethnic group. Banja Luka ordered the police to split up and Serbian and non-Serbian police to be treated differently. Just after the coup, the non-Serbian police were called for a meeting in the town hall chaired by Simo Drljaca. The latter informed everyone that henceforth they would have to abide by Serbian law and sign a declaration to that effect within a 15-day time limit. Furthermore, they would have to display Serbian emblems. Very few non-Serbian policemen signed the declaration of consent, and no one remained in the police more than the first 10 to 15 days. The non-Serbian policemen did not dare to appear at the police stations, and they did not receive the last salary from prior to the coup. Retired Serbian policemen and reservists from among the Serbs were called in for service. Simo Drljaca had a law degree, but earlier he had only held posts of a marginal character in the legal profession. Former non-Serbian policemen were soon among the people particularly
targeted for persecution. One former inmate, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, in Logor Omarska (see Chapter VIII.A, infra) claims that on one occasion, 20 non-Serbian policemen from Prijedor were executed by the Serbs in that concentration camp. *25

Only in a few cases is it known that the Serbs accepted the continued services of non-Serbs. A female doctor was permitted to continue her work, as was a scientist working on technical questions. The latter worked from a position of house arrest imposed by the Serbs, and he was provided with his work by the Serbs. A number, fewer than 30, workers from Autotransport Prijedor also kept working until they were allegedly executed in late July 1992 (see Chapter VIII.E, infra). Considering the latter instance and the extreme need for transport facilities which the Serbs soon were to have, it may be assumed that it was the needs of the Serbs that gave the remaining non-Serbian workers some respite concerning the fate awaiting them under the new regime.

D. Disarming of the non-Serbs and ultimatums

The Serbs continued as they had started before taking power, and enforced a unilateral demilitarization of Muslims and Croats and all other non-Serbs. The process of Serbs visiting non-Serbs who were licensed to hold weapons and demanding that they give their weapons up was intensified after 30 April 1992. It was now combined with a campaign where non-Serbian police and TOs were also instructed to hand over their weapons, and non-Serbian houses and villages were searched for arms. However, those who were registered for illegally having bought arms from Serbs - many of these Serbs were prominent under the new regime - were not approached at the time like those who were licensed to possess arms. Later, illegally held weapons were used against non-Serbs as a warrant to annihilate them.

Most important, the self-appointed Serbian administration in Prijedor started soon to give ultimatums to the non-Serbian population. Using the radio, the Serbs every day named a village, a town or a part of town where at a given time the Muslim and Croatian inhabitants and other non-Serbs had to hand over their weapons. Two distinguished Muslims, whose names are not disclosed for confidential or prosecutorial reasons, tried to convince the Muslims to give up their weapons. Most Muslims and Croats did hand over their weapons. The Serbs were none the less not satisfied and used this to brand them as extremists. It seemed as if the Serbs were constantly looking for something for which to blame the non-Serbs.

In named areas in the Ljubija region, for example, there were ultimatums issued that the weapons held by non-Serbs were to be presented to the Serbian administration between 22 and 30 May 1992. Shelling of non-Serbian habitations gave weight to the urge in the Serbian demands. Subsequent to the Serbian ultimatums, weapons were surrendered as follows:

a. on 23 May 1992: from Ljeskare, Croatian villagers; from Kalajevo, Croatian villagers; from Jugovci, Muslim villagers;
   b. on 24 May 1992: from Gornji Volar, Croatian villagers; from Šurkovac, Croatian villagers; from Donja Ljubija, Muslim residents;
c. on 24 and 25 May 1992: from Ljubija, Croatian residents; from Zune, Croatian villagers;
d. on 31 May 1992: from Brisevo, Croatian villagers;
e. on 1 June 1992: from Gornja Ravska, Croatian villagers; from Donja Ravska, Croatian villagers.

E. Provocations or pretexts

It happened, possibly one of the last days in April or on the first day of May, that a Serbian reserve policeman was killed in the centre of Prijedor town. Both Radio Prijedor and the newspaper Kozarski Vjesnik were implying that the Serbian policeman possibly was killed by a Muslim. People - among them the SDA chairman - called the radio afterwards claiming that Serbs had killed the Serbian policeman. The main belief was probably that the policeman had been killed in the wake of an argument with fellow Serbian policemen, when at night time they had been drinking at the Cafe Bijelo Dugme in the town. Another version has it that the Serbian policeman was shot dead by an unidentified man who ran away from the scene of the crime in the direction of some Muslim dwellings, on the basis of which it was concluded that the perpetrator was a Muslim. Others claim that the Serbian policeman was killed by two of his colleagues, whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons (one of them by then retired as a policeman), according to a plan to have Muslims blamed.

The Serbian policeman lived in a village some four kilometres north of Prijedor town in the direction of Bosanska Dubica. Probably on 2 May 1992, after the policeman had been killed, a bus heading south from Bosanska Dubica and towards Prijedor was stopped by a neighbour of the policeman. The neighbour asked the passengers to show their identity papers. Coming across a Muslim woman and her young daughter, he forced them both to leave the bus and shot them dead on the spot, for no other reason than that they were Muslims. Approximately half an hour later, a tractor loaded with hay came on the same road driven by the manager of the agricultural pharmacy in Prijedor town who was with one of the workers (their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). The neighbour once again asked for identity cards and established that the two were Muslims. He killed them by allegedly using a knife. Both victims lived in villages near Prijedor town.

The next day the elected but just ousted mayor of Prijedor, Muhamed Čeharić, wanted to speak over Radio Prijedor, and he invited everyone to join the funeral of the manager of the agricultural pharmacy as a demonstration. The editor-in-chief of the radio was very much criticized for allowing the former mayor to speak over the radio. No incidents occurred in connection with the funeral on 5 May 1992, but the cemetery was heavily guarded by Serbian military and police. The people participating in the funeral were reportedly scared.

Radio Prijedor later reported that the liquidation of the four Muslims was under investigation, which the non-Serbs considered a lie. It was also stated on the radio that Serbian police and army (after the Serbs took power they referred to their military just as Vojska, i.e. the Army, and not as the JNA or other specific military entities) tried to stop
people from Gornji Jelovac from assailing Gornja Puharska - the suburb Donja Puharska was where the alleged killer of the Serbian policeman was to have been running.

Serbian-controlled television stations sent, moreover, propaganda from other districts causing trepidation among simple minded Serbs. The Serbs were constantly referring to three or five killed Serbs and showing pictures of arsenals of weaponry allegedly confiscated from non-Serbs who had planned to use these arms against Serbs. Rumours among non-Serbs would have it that the Serbs collected some of their dead soldiers from Pakrac in Croatia and used them for propaganda purposes, throwing them carefully around in other places where that seemed to be of advantage. The Serbs were quite successful with their propaganda, and they constantly reiterated that the Croats and the Muslims were extremists.

VII. The major Serbian military operations

Before any of the major Serbian military operations started, an SDS official had been questioned in an interview broadcast by Radio Prijedor whether members of the Arkanovci and the Seseljovci were in town. He had answered in the affirmative.

The Serbs continued their arms race also in the days just after taking power. On 2 May 1992, people saw long columns of artillery being transported through Prijedor town in the direction of Sanski Most, i.e. to the south towards the Hambarine area.

A. The attack on Hambarine

Before Hambarine and later other villages on the left bank of the Sana River were attacked by the Serbs, the population in many of those villages had been augmented by an influx of Muslims and Croats who had fled from attacks - similar to those to come in Opština Prijedor - by the Serbs on their home villages to the west of Opština Prijedor. Many Muslims seeking shelter in Hambarine and nearby villages had fled from the destruction of Donji Agići and Budimlić Japra. The non-Serbian villages in Opština Bosanski Novi had been purged before the Serbs took power in Opština Prijedor. Over Radio Prijedor, the people in the Ljubija region had been called upon to receive and shelter the fleeing non-Serbs from Opština Bosanski Novi.

On 22 May 1992, at about 7:00 p.m., a black car - probably a VW Golf - came up to a checkpoint on the road to Ljubija held by non-Serbian TOs near a cluster of houses just outside the village of Hambarine. Except for the driver who was a Croat, there were four Serbs in the car - all reportedly members of the White Eagles (Beli Orlovi) paramilitary unit. The Serbs had allegedly forced the driver to bring them to the Hambarine area. The car was stopped at the checkpoint and the Serbs were asked to surrender their arms which would be returned to them on their way back. At that moment, one of the Serbs opened fire with his machine gun. The commander at the checkpoint was wounded. The other non-Serbs at the checkpoint returned fire and killed two of the Beli Orlovi and wounded the two others and the driver. The Serbs thence asked the non-Serbs to surrender themselves and the checkpoint. The wounded non-Serbian TO commander later died from his wounds. An identified Serb, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons,
interviewed one of the wounded Serbs on Radio Prijedor. The interviewee confirmed that the Serbs had fired the first shot. The wounded Serb used the interview as an opportunity to state that all Serbs should welcome and support the members of the Arkanovci and the Seseljovci.

A Muslim former policeman, whom the Serbs had dismissed after they took power in Opština Prijedor, lived in a house alongside the road from Prijedor to Hambarine, not far from the checkpoint. After the shooting incident, the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor delivered an ultimatum over Radio Prijedor in which they demanded that the former policeman be handed over to them (probably together with three identified persons whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, who had manned the checkpoint when the shooting took place) and that all weapons in Hambarine be surrendered to the Serbs. There was no information to indicate that the former policeman had been a party to the events at the checkpoint. Unless the ultimatum was met by noon the next day, the Serbs would attack Hambarine.

As the ultimatum was not met on time, the Serbs more or less immediately after the deadline was passed started a heavy bombardment of Hambarine with artillery fired from the aerodrome at Urije, across the valley where Prijedor town is located. People in Prijedor town could see that a number of houses in Hambarine caught fire. As the artillery fire ceased, the village was attacked by tanks and by infantry in full cooperation and coordination with paramilitary units. There was grenade and gun fire and more houses were set on fire, starting all along the road leading from the Serbian-inhabited quarters in the suburb of Tukovi (in Prijedor town) and up to Hambarine.

When the bombardment of Hambarine started, large numbers of villagers fled to other nearby Muslim or Croatian-dominated villages and sought shelter there, others took to the woods and remained under the open sky until they considered the immediate danger over. Those who had escaped to the Kurevo woods also came under artillery fire. Many of the runaways later came back to Hambarine of which Serbian soldiers had taken control. The mosque in Hambarine had by then been destroyed by the Serbs. Some of the returning civilians were at first pushed back again to the woods by the Serbian soldiers. Save for the houses having been burnt to the ground - allegedly some fifty only in the first day of the attack - other houses had been damaged. Rampant pillaging by Serbs took place and lasted for some two weeks.

Also on 22 May 1992, the so-called Serbian army entered the town of Ljubija (further to the south) and occupied its main square. All cultural, entertainment, and sports activities stopped in Ljubija. The people were terrified. The Serbs introduced a curfew from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., and it was prohibited for people to meet in groups on the streets and to use the main square for traffic. Soon after, the Serbs started to arrest people from Ljubija town and intern them in the concentration camps.

The number of dead and wounded after the attack on Hambarine is not yet known. Some estimate it at approximately 100.
After Hambarine was conquered the Serbs renamed it Petrovo Brdo (i.e. Peter's Mountain).

When the ousted mayor of Prijedor was arrested in his home in Prijedor town on 23 May 1992, the Serbs charged him with having arranged the «attack» on Serbian soldiers in Hambarine the previous day. \*26 There is no information to sustain such an accusation against the former mayor, who later apparently was killed by the Serbs.

**B. The attack on the Kozarac area**

Kozarac was a small town located approximately 12 kilometres east of Prijedor town, at the foot of the Kozara Mountain. Regardless of its size, Kozarac was an industrious town with small-scale industry, trade and service industry. Including villages and hamlets in the surroundings, the Kozarac area had almost 27,000 non-Serbian inhabitants. The area as such was relatively wealthy also because many people living there had been guest workers in Western Europe and had brought home their hard currency savings.

Having consolidated their power and position in Prijedor town, the new Serbian administration at one point in time urged all Muslims to leave Prijedor town for Kozarac which would become a kind of Muslim borough, ethnically pure. This idea never materialized. If it had, it would probably have achieved nothing but to add more victims to those actually afflicted in the Serbian military onslaught on the Kozarac area.

The Kozarac area had regular defence positions on the road Prijedor - Banja Luka at Trnopolje, and at Mrakovica (on the Kozara Mountain) near Kotovatz where there were eleven TOs and also police both in active service and reservists.

After the Serbs took power in Opština Prijedor, all Muslim police were ordered to join the Serbian police and to wear Serbian uniforms and Serbian insignias. Before the attack, the Serbs had moved in heavy artillery and posted it strategically on the mountains. The Serbs even had a rocket unit on the Kozara Mountain. Those who controlled the main weapons were Serbs from Serbia proper and Knin. The Prijedor Brigade had been fighting in the Pakrac area and was nicknamed «The Wolves». There were also other «Wolves» from an area east of Prijedor. The Serbian military had started to be posted in the area two or three years back - «for training purposes», it was said.

Following the Serbian takeover in Prijedor, a number of Serbian driven cars in the town had «The Wolves of Vukovar» written on them. In mid-May 1992, a number of Serbian trucks were observed in Kozarac. The head of a bull had been placed on the first truck. Attached to this truck was an inscription reading, «These are the Wolves of Vukovar» - the area of Vukovar in Croatia had by then been heavily ravaged. Locals interpreted this as intended to frighten them. As the weapons locally available were being collected by the Serbian army at the same time, the overall situation rendered the non-Serbian people with the feeling that they could do nothing. On occasion, Serbian aeroplanes were flying low over the roofs of private houses, scaring the dwellers and the local population at large even more.
The telephone lines were disconnected by the Serbs and so was the electricity supply. The area was surrounded by the Serbian army. No buses were in operation, and on 24 May 1992, the Serbs closed the main road traffic. Traffic between Prijedor and Banja Luka was then redirected via Tomasica and Omarska. On 24 May 1992, the air-raid alarm sounded.

Major Radmilo Zeljaja from the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor allegedly gave a delegation from the Kozarac civilian defence council an ultimatum either to sign a loyalty pledge to the Serbian self-appointed leaders (and hand over their weapons) or Kozarac would be attacked. The delegation asked for two days to consult with the population. The Serbian military attack followed.

Before the attack on the Kozarac area started on 24 May 1992, an announcement was made over Radio Prijedor that military forces with tanks were on their way from Banja Luka to Prijedor, and that if these were stopped, fire would be opened. Radio Prijedor insinuated that a barricade might exist near the village Jacupovići along the road - this, however, does not seem to have been the case. Simo Drljaca later claimed that there had been both barricades (in the plural) and mines on the road, and that the Serbian army went to the Kozarac area to clear the road and remove the barricades.

Colonel Vladimir Arsić is said to have been the superior in charge of the Serbian military operation in the Kozarac area. Commander for the Serbian military in the field was allegedly Major Radmilo Zeljaja. Over the communication system, he allegedly instructed destruction of all Muslim property such as houses and mosques. The commander of the Serbian military police is identified, but his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. Also, a Serbian police commander from Prijedor, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, was one of the leaders of the attack. Major Slobodan Kuruzović was allegedly involved as a military leader and especially as coordinator of the subsequent deportation of the population.

Initially, the Kozarac area was subjected to heavy bombardment by artillery, coming possibly from eleven different places (like Benkovac on the Kozara Mountain, Topica Brdo - another mountain, and nearby Serbian-dominated villages such as Babici and Gornji Orlovci), and from tanks and smaller firearms. On 25 May 1992, after 24 hours of shelling and after approximately 5,600 grenades had fallen on the area, Serbian tanks and Serbian infantry moved in all at once with an estimated 3,600 people. Prior to this, civilians had, inter alia, observed that one of the villages outside of Kozarac was completely on fire. Panic had spread. The local population did not organize any real resistance; it was considered futile anyway. The Serbian military men came into the area like ants from all sides, as described by one female non-Serbian survivor.

In came regular soldiers, paramilitaries, Serbian TOs, and armed local Serbs, all of whom acted in a coordinated manner in the operation, to the extent that people believed that all these Serbian armed entities were under one unified command. Some Serbian soldiers were wearing the five-pointed red star of the JNA on their caps and no other insignia. Other fighters carried various insignia of the «White Eagles of Knin», the like-sided cross with the four Cs above an eagle, or just an eagle on their camouflage uniforms. There were also armed Serbs from Banja Luka and Arkanovci.
Another paramilitary unit was the so-called «Gypsy Brigade» from Omarska. The leader of the group was Momčilo Radanović nicknamed «Cigo» (i.e. Gypsy). He was a taxi driver who fought in the war in Croatia. He is now said to be the Vice President of Opština Prijedor. During the attack by infantry and paramilitary units on the Kozarac area, the «Gypsy Brigade» apparently was one of the most cruel, committing massacres in the villages Alici, Softici, Br_ani, and Jakupovici. He and his group are also ill-reputed for other alleged heinous acts against non-Serbs, for example, in the concentration camps Omarska and Keraterm.

Infantry and paramilitary troops went searching for people in every building. In some areas, like in Kozarac town, the incoming soldiers first went from house to house to ask the men to come out and assemble in front of the mosque. There the Serbs told their gathered congregation that in half an hour all women and children would have to gather as well; if not, the Serbian military would go from house to house and burn and pillage the entire area. In other areas - villages and hamlets - the latter was the first strategy.

When the first Serbian soldiers entered Kozarac town, they brought with them lists of names of people who were called forward and killed. These people were the politicians, influential people, police officers, and reserve police officers. Other intellectuals and prominent people from the Kozarac area were incarcerated in Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm. Dušan Tadić, who was a local of Kozarac, was among those who allegedly had produced such death lists.

The police, approximately 35 people, from the Kozarac police station all gave themselves up after the shelling had stopped. They were reportedly executed en masse by gun fire in front of the primary school in Kozarac.

Information was sent over Radio Prijedor that everyone had to surrender voluntarily and with white flags. People followed the instruction and moved out, for example from Br_ani, in a very long column of women and children. The Serbs fired more grenades as the column moved ahead, killing some women. The column passed by a number of Serbian TOs, who also killed some women and children at the roadside. As another column from another village walked along, a Serbian man from Serbia arrived and spoke to one of the local Serbian leaders saying that «This way we want to show you our gratefulness for what you did for us in Croatia!» Civilians were, moreover, allegedly taken out of the columns at random and killed on the roadside. Mock executions were also performed.

Extremists put civilians - women and children - in front of them and wanted to leave the area, that is why the civilians suffered casualties as the Serbs «never really killed women and children», as Simo Drljača explained afterwards.

Non-Serbs, who were enrolled in the TO but unarmed and without uniforms, were arrested if recognized and taken to police stations or military barracks for interrogation before they were incarcerated in concentration camps.

In contradistinction to what happened after the first attack on Hambarine (see Chapter VII.A, supra), the entire non-Serbian population from the Kozarac area was herded out in
the course of and after the Serbian military attack. Men were detained in Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm, while children, women and the elderly were first taken to Logor Trnopolje and then deported out of Opstina Prijedor. Due to the large numbers involved, some of the children, women and elderly men were at first temporarily housed in Prijedor town, and villages just outside of the attacked area. They were, however, soon gathered by the Serbs for deportation. People who at first had tried to seek shelter on the Kozara Mountain were sought out there or surrendered either to be killed or to follow in the footsteps of the rest of the civilian population to the concentration camps. Grenade bombardment had also been aimed at fleeing civilians. En route to the main concentration camps, some of the captives were detained over night in the Rade Kondic school in the Serbian-dominated village Radvjice.

A number of young Muslim women were reportedly sexually abused after being shepherded to Serbian military positions - such as the barracks on Benkovac, on the top of Mrakovica, in Hotel Mrakovica, in Bijele Vode on Mrakovica, and in Tito’s Villa. The latter location was allegedly frequented especially by military superiors.

According to surviving witnesses, Serbian military subjected significant numbers of local non-Serbs to the most outrageous torture and extermination under extreme pain when clearing the Kozarac area of its non-Serbian population.

Just one example of summary executions: on 27 May 1992, eight elderly people, whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, were shepherded into a cellar and massacred.

When asked later about how many civilians had died in the military operation in the Kozarac area, Serbian leaders related that it probably was many, but that they had no records.

Some claim that a total of 5,000 people were killed in the Kozarac area. One informant was taken back to Kozarac from one of the concentration camps in the area together with 39 other men to collect dead bodies. He himself counted 610 dead people, he stated.

The Serbian military attack on the area south of the Kozara Mountain afflicted, inter alia, the following Muslim and Croatian habitations: Alići, Br_ani, Dera, Forići - Donji and Gornji, Hrnici, Jakupovic, Kamicani, Kevljani, Kenjari, Kozarac, Kozarusa, Mahmuljini, Mujanovic, Rajkovic, Rustici, Salesi, Softici, and Suhi Brod.

After the population had been ousted from the Kozarac area, all buildings were pillaged and everything else of value, such as vehicles and heavy equipment, were stolen by Serbs. A large number of homes, which had not been destroyed by artillery shells or set ablaze in the military attack, were blown up by the Serbs - one at the time from inside - destroying especially the inside and the roof.

Captain Milovan Milutinovic, spokesperson of the Army SRBiH in Banja Luka, later explained to visitors that:
In Kozarac, there was a really big group of extremists. They were refusing any kind of negotiations about organizing community life. They resisted all attempts to find a peaceful solution or to disarm. So we answered energetically. Power does not pray to God. The majority of people were outsiders, from Kosovo, Sandzak and foreign mercenaries. There were some black people too. The majority were financed by the Muslim organization in Zagreb, through financial and material means.

Simo Drljaca ascertained that the reason why Kozarac subsequently did not look like it had been hit by war, but rather by systematic destruction, was that every house had a bunker and thus was destroyed (separately). He claimed that before this was done all Serbian houses had been burned, but provided no information to sustain that claim.

Later another school of thought seems to have developed and the Serbian administration both in Opština Prijedor and Opština Banja Luka started to inform visiting journalists that the Muslim population of Kozarac had left the town voluntarily - for economic reasons to better themselves elsewhere in Europe. At that time, Kozarac was deserted, except for a few Serb policemen and soldiers who had occupied the municipal building.

When a prisoner later was transported by Serbs through Kozarac, he was told by his Serbian guards that this was no more Kozarac, but «Radmilovo» after the commander Major Radmilo Zeljaja. Allegedly, the name «Radmilovo» was for some time written on a sign on the roadside replacing the sign announcing Kozarac. It is also reported that the area was referred to as «Radmirovac» after the conquest.

C. The attack on Prijedor town

One day after the people in Hambarine had been given an ultimatum (see Chapter VII.A. supra), an ultimatum was also issued to the non-Serbs in Prijedor town that every policeman and TO member in possession of weapons had to hand these over to the Serbs in the military barracks at Urije. Afraid that non-Serbian quarters could be bombarded like Hambarine had been, the weapons were handed over. This transfer of weapons was filmed by Television Banja Luka.

On about 20 May 1992, an identified Muslim, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, attacked a drunken Serbian soldier in the latter's car and stole his arms. «The Muslim» was about 40-years old, he was a drug- addict, and having a criminal record, he had spent some 20 years in prisons. He was arrested for the attack-cum-theft and brought to Banja Luka, but turned up again, surprisingly enough, in Prijedor only two days later.

Since about 10 May 1992, there had been a group of non-Serbs hiding on the Kurevo Mountain on the left bank of the Sana River. The group gathered more members by the day. The group had organized itself and was without linkage to any party or any military unit. Although the leader (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) was a Croat, he had been fighting together with the Serbs and against the Croats in the war in Croatia. Some non-Serbs believe that «the Muslim» during his brief detention in
Banja Luka had agreed to collaborate with the Serbs. In any event, «the Muslim» approached the leader in the forest and convinced the latter that they ought to stage an attack on Prijedor town. «The Muslim» claimed that there were many well-armed Muslims, especially in Stari Grad (the Old Town) and the suburb Puharska who wanted an insurrection, but that they needed support from outside - the claim was ill-founded.

In the early morning of 30 May 1992, before 4:30 a.m., the «troops» of the leader and «the Muslim», probably not more than 150 men, attacked Prijedor town. These attackers were reportedly badly armed, having only guns and perhaps ten hand grenades. Twenty of the attackers had no weapons at all, but joined in the hope that they might be able to obtain arms during the attack.

One Serbian version, as related by Simo Drljaca, is that the attack on Prijedor town was organized by the Muslim political party, the SDA, under the leadership of Mirza Mujadžić, Hilmia Hopovac and Hasan Tulundžić. The attackers numbered 2,000 non-Serbs. They killed 11 Serbian policemen. There was fighting all around before the attackers withdrew to the mountains, where Drljaca claimed that the Serbs were looking for them even months later. This account is not corroborated by any other available information.

As almost all Serbs deserted Stari Grad the night before the attack started on 30 May 1992, it seems likely that they had been alerted. This does not correspond with the proposition that the attack was a Muslim and Croatian attack on Serbs.

Special police units from Niš (in Serbia proper), which at the time were stationed in Banja Luka, Marticevci from Knin (in Croatia), and a unit with some 50 tanks and canons from Banja Luka participated on the Serbian side in the fighting. The mentioned groups came in addition to approximately 5,000 military men stationed in Prijedor after the destruction of the Kozarac area. Numerous Serbs from Prijedor town, moreover, participated in the fighting.

The «troops» of the leader and «the Muslim» apparently divided themselves into four smaller groups for their attack on the centre of Prijedor town from across the Sana River. All groups seem to have made their way through Stari Grad (the old part of Prijedor town) which is located on an island surrounded by the Sana River and a canal, two groups seeking to enter the town via the one bridge to the west and the two other groups fighting their way across one of the two eastern bridges each. The building used by the Serbian reserve officers is located just across one of the latter bridges, and nearby is also Hotel Prijedor. There was fighting on the eastern bridges and near the mentioned buildings and at the police headquarters which some from the leader's group entered.

As the attacking group received no support from people in Prijedor town, it was soon defeated by the Serbs. By 9:00 a.m. the same morning, the Serbs had regained total control. Some of the attackers were killed, some 40 were captured alive and brought to the concentration camps, the rest probably managed to flee across the river and back in the direction of the Kurevo Mountain. «The Muslim» seriously injured a Serbian military leader (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) who subsequently died from his injuries. A Serbian military unit later was named after him. «The Muslim»
himself was killed after wounding the Serbian military leader. The leader of the non-Serb mountain group was captured alive and brought to Logor Omarska, where it is said that he later was killed.

People living in Prijedor town may have believed that any rebellion on their part would only have resulted in the town having suffered the same total devastation as Vukovar in Croatia previously had.

According to a different version, the attackers did not come from across the river but emerged from a butchery. It is believed that this is misinformation spread by the Serbs, as they killed particularly many civilian non-Serbs living in the quarter around the slaughterhouse.

In the early morning the same day, Radio Prijedor announced that «Green Berets», meaning Muslims, and Croatian «HOS troops» (Hrvatske Odrambene Snage or the Croatian Defence Force, which is the military wing of the Croatian Party of Rights) had attacked the town. The town population was called upon to behave loyally to the Serbs - to stay at home and listen to the radio - the Serbian army would very soon have solved the problem. The «announcement to the citizens» read over the radio also stated that the attack affected Stari Grad, the centre of the town and the quarters of Skela, Gomjenica, Puharska and Raskovac, for which reason the population there was endangered and would be evacuated by the Serbs. These people were to leave their houses to be brought to safe territory by Serbian buses.

As related by a non-Serbian woman who lived in Stari Grad, the Banja Luka Corps attacked Stari Grad with tanks starting at about 10:00 or 11:00 a.m., shelling the Muslim houses and the mosque. At 1:00 p.m., Cetniks from Prijedor came to gather all the people in the area saying that they were to protect them from the «Green Berets» meaning the Muslim forces. The gathered people, who were all civilians, were transported to Logor Trnopolje (see Chapter VIII.C. infra). Arriving in this concentration camp on 30 May 1992, all the new arrivals were registered. Most of the women and children were released after some three days if they had relatives or others with whom they could stay elsewhere in Prijedor town - namely in the suburb Puharska. The civilians were not provided with food these first days in Logor Trnopolje. The men remained detained when the women and children were freed.

When the attack by the non-Serb mountain group was still on, the Serbs had started artillery bombardment of some quarters in Prijedor - Stari Grad, the suburb Skela and the vicinity of Muhammed Suljanovic Street. The bombardment of Stari Grad continued throughout the day and the next two days. After the fighting with the intruding non-Serbs had stopped as the latter had been defeated, the Serbs attacked one quarter after the other in Prijedor town and systematically forced out most of the non-Serbian inhabitants. On 31 May 1992, it was especially the parts of town known as Puharska and Cejreci/Raskovac which were targeted.

A non-Serbian man recounts:
On 30 May 1992 at 04.30 hours, it was raining and one could hear machine gun fire from Stari Grad and from up along the river in an easterly direction. It lasted for about an hour and a half. At about 07.00 hours he heard two tanks passing to the street of the JNA (which was a prominent street) from an area near the Sana River. He heard shots from rifles and tanks. The sirens had signalled that people were to seek shelter at about 06.00 hours. Radio Prijedor announced that an attack on Prijedor was imminent. There was a mortar attack on Stari Grad and the New Hotel, possibly from the direction of the airport at Urije. Infantry fire ceased to be heard, but mortar fire lasted until about 13.00 hours. Someone who lived on the ninth floor nearby Radio Prijedor said that tanks and soldiers attacked the radio building. Radio Prijedor was reporting that Ustasas and 'Green Berets' (i.e. Muslims) were the attackers, and the Serbs were called upon to take up arms to fight these enemies of the Serbian people. At 08.00 hours Radio Prijedor announced that the Army and the Serbian police were in full control but moving on to wipe out all the snipers in the town. He saw many soldiers on a main street nearby his house. Radio Prijedor also instructed all Croats and Muslims to hang a white piece of cloth outside their dwellings, and not to leave their homes.

At approximately 13.00 hours detonations were getting closer to his home. People - men, women and children - some barefoot, mainly Muslims, came running from the neighbouring street. Then he escorted his wife and children over to a Serbian neighbour walking through his garden. His mother and two brothers lived on the ground floor. One minute later Serbian soldiers (JNA) came into the street. He watched this from the Serbian neighbour's house. Six or seven soldiers entered his garden and fired some shots. His brothers and mother came out of the house. His brothers were beaten with rifle butts, they were commanded to kneel down and hold their hands up behind their necks, the same fate befell also two other Muslims and one Croat plus three more men. All the men who had fled into the street where he lived, were also ordered to take up the same kneeling position, women and children were lined up in a row. A military car arrived. Four identified Serbs [whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons] came out of their houses and joined the Serbian fighting forces. In passing the kneeling non-Serbian males the Serbs kicked them so that they fell over. Later the 'captives' were ordered to stand up and move towards the radio building, one among them was an identified man almost 90-years old [whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons]. In the Ilije Bursaca Street an identified man [whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons] was shot dead in his garden when the Serbs asked him where his children were and he answered that one of them was married in Zagreb. From the area of Radio Prijedor the subdued men were loaded on buses and taken to Logor Omarska. Approximately ten people who had been killed by the Serbs were left outside of the radio station, among them were seven identified men [whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons]. Women and children were transported from the area of the radio station to Logor Trnopolje.

On the other side of the Sana River, in the suburb Tukovi where all three ethnic groups lived together, people woke up to see armed men in the intersection where the roads take off to Ljubija and Sanski Most. Since World War II, the Serbs have counted for the majority of the population in Tukovi (i.e. they have at least been the largest of the ethnic groups). The armed men were Serbs. All were in uniforms, some in the uniform of the army, others in
camouflage uniforms, some having the Red Star emblem some the Cetnik insignia - some were known locally, others were new faces. The people living in Tukovi were surrounded by the Serbian military and they could not leave the area or even their houses. People learned, moreover, from Radio Prijedor the order for the non-Serbs to hang out a white flag. When the non-Serbs had done what they had been instructed to do, their houses were ransacked - people knew who lived where anyhow.

All over the town, Serbian military claimed that they were looking for weapons among the non-Serbs. They looted many houses at the same time. They went on like this for about one week. During this time, they hit some people. In general, they attacked people both physically and psychologically. Some of the pre-World War II Serbian inhabitants in Tukovi assisted non-Serbs in the area so that these people were spared from the «ethnic cleansing» - it was an exception that an area was spared like this.

At the intersection of Partizanska Street and JNA Street, there was a bakery. All Croatian and Muslim men living in that area were gathered outside the bakery. Women and children were shepherded into a house vis-a-vis and were not allowed to look at the area where the men were. This was at about 8:00 a.m. At about 10:00 a.m., the women and children were transported to Logor Trnopolje, as they left there were allegedly some 30-35 dead non-Serbian men laying in a heap outside of the bakery.

On the outskirts of the city, at Pecani near the stadium, there was reportedly another heap with some 20 dead non-Serbian men.

In all the targeted areas, the same happened - everyone had to get out of their houses and men and women were separated. The adult males were brought to concentration camps to be detained there. The women, children, and elderly men were transported to Logor Trnopolje - some to be deported out of Opstina Prijedor more or less immediately, others to be temporarily released after some days. In Prijedor town, Stari Grad and adjacent areas were «ethnically cleansed» first, that is already on 30 May 1992. Other parts of the town were «cleansed» in raids or in connection with ransacking the following days. As Serbs spotted non-Serbs, they could report on them to have them arrested.

The fate befalling non-Serbs when apprehended was often violent. Just one example: one survivor from the area relates that an identified Serb commander of a so-called intervention unit (see Chapter XII.A. infra) (his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), in June 1992, had come together with three or four other Serbian soldiers to arrest four brothers in their home in the suburb Tukovi. When their mother started to weep because she did not want her sons to be arrested, the Serb commander of the so-called intervention unit shot dead both the mother and her four sons (the names of the five victims are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons).

On 20 July 1992, a commission was established in Prijedor town by the executive committee of the Opstina. Allegedly, it was the task of the commission to provide expert opinions concerning the restoration or the demolition of buildings in different quarters of the town. The buildings in question were especially to be found in Stari Grad, and the streets most heavily damaged during the attack on Prijedor town. Ostensibly, the
commission was to revive a town planning project dating back to 1987, according to which a number of buildings had to be demolished. The experts were to advise on whether renovation of a building was still possible, or whether it was inevitable that the building be razed. The real purpose of the commission seems to have been to give a justification to the public why entire quarters of the town - Stari Grad in particular - were to be flattened after these quarters had been captured following their Muslim and Croatian inhabitants having been killed, deported or expelled. One indication of this being the purpose was the fact that the whole of Stari Grad (save for three houses used for military purposes) was levelled when the commission was still working on its recommendations concerning the houses there. The expert commission by then had completed its work concerning about 100 buildings, recommending that 20-30 buildings be renovated. The latter buildings were, however, demolished as well. Some 20 new buildings in Stari Grad - which had been built in a traditional Muslim style - were also torn down. If a building belonging to a Serb was flattened, the owner was granted compensation. No compensation was offered to Muslims or Croats.

Attractive housing facilities, which had belonged to purged non-Serbs and which were not demolished, were taken over by Serbs.

D. The attack on villages on the left bank of the Sana River

Starting on 20 July 1992, a larger area of predominantly non-Serbian villages on the left bank of the Sana River (the larger Hambarine/Ljubija area) was attacked in a similar manner as the Kozarac area (see Chapter VII.B. supra). Here, however, it was predominantly Serbian infantry - paramilitary groups included - who performed the destruction. Artillery was not used to the same extent as in the Kozarac area. At the time of the attack, the areas had a population of close to 20,000 non-Serbian people, including people who had come for shelter after their villages to the west of Opština Prijedor had been assailed.

On 19 July 1992, the Serbs rounded up non-Serbs in Ljubija filling four buses. The passengers in one bus were adult males, some of whom were brought to the police station in Prijedor town and the others to Logor Keraterm. The three other buses held children, women, and elderly men. These buses passed Logor Trnopolje and continued straight to the Travnik area deporting the passengers (see Chapter X.C. infra).

In the beginning of July 1992, after the inhabitants in the neighbouring villages of Biscani and Rizvanovici had handed over their weapons, but before the village was attacked, a number of Serbian soldiers from the JNA came to Rizvanovici and plundered the area. The soldiers, inter alia, demanded that the villagers hand over calves and lambs. On 19 July at about 3:00 p.m., a quarrel erupted between some Serbian soldiers and/or policemen. There was a truck parked in Rizvanovici which belonged to someone in Hambarine (see Chapter VII.A. supra). The Serbs asked the local administration to get the key to the truck. Thence, the Serbs started to argue about who was to have the loot. One Serb was shot dead, it is said, by another Serb in the argument. The dead was an identified Serb from the district, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. The other Serbs brought the dead over to the checkpoint at Biscani and accused the «Green Berets», i.e. Muslim fundamentalists, of having killed the Serb. The Serbs then abducted ten old men
from Rizvanovići as hostages to a camp in Ljubija. The villagers were given an ultimatum to name the non-Serbian perpetrator who the Serbs claimed had killed the Serb, and to hand over their arms. Neither alternative was possible as there was no such perpetrator and no more arms to be relinquished.

Subsequently, the area was bombarded with grenades from the surrounding heights. The villages there are situated in a kind of depression and were bombarded from positions at Karan, Spalanciste, Volar or Topica Brdo. On 20 July 1992, at about 6:00 a.m. the bombardment stopped. On the radio, it was announced that none in the area were to leave their houses as imminent searches were to be expected.

At about the same time, the army - one personnel carrier and several lorries - came to the intersection next to the gas station in Tukovi. An identified army commander, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, read out some kind of a command to the soldiers and they split up - some going to Sredice and Biscani, others to Hambarine. Another group of soldiers went to Hegić. Other groups of Serbian military were apparently coming in from other directions simultaneously.

When the Serbian forces arrived at Sredice, all the villagers were ordered to leave their houses. Women and men were separated. Children and elderly men were incorporated in the women's group. Men were gathered in the intersections of the roads in the area, where most of the men killed were reportedly executed. Women, children, and elderly men from 10-12 houses were herded into one house. In the wake of the Serbian military assault, buses came to bring the men who had not been killed to Logor Keraterm and Logor Omarska. Hall No. 3 in Keraterm had been emptied to receive them (see Chapter VIII.B. infra). The women and children were kept overnight in the houses where they first had been gathered before they were taken to the new athletic field in Tukovi.

A small village further to the west, Hadžici, was not attacked that same day and some men from the village were gathered by the Serbs to collect dead bodies. Allegedly, they picked up about 30 dead people in Hegić, and from the intersection between Biscani and Rizvanovići some 40 dead. They were ordered not to move far away from the roads. In Kadirici, they found 12 dead bodies partly covered by soil. In Durtovic, there was a larger group of dead people but their number is unknown. They used three or four days to collect dead people. Altogether, including the above-mentioned corpses, it was eight truck-loads of dead people. The women and children were brought to the stadium on 21 and 22 July 1992. In passing, they could see many of the corpses.

Every non-Serbian village and hamlet on the western bank of the Sana River was now visited and house by house destroyed by the Serbs, including regular army personnel, paramilitary fighters, police, and armed local Serbs. Almost all non-Serbian males were beaten before being killed or thrown into buses. One bus with male prisoners, for whom no room could be found in Logor Keraterm or Logor Omarska, was parked in an open field. Some 20 Serbian soldiers reportedly surrounded the bus and the prisoners were ordered to get out and leave the place. As they were leaving, almost all of them were shot dead (see Chapter VIII.E. infra). Some people could observe some of this from nearby houses; for others, the firing was within earshot, and some of these listeners later went to see what had
happened. There were some holes in the sandy ground in the area, but the executed prisoners were left behind in the open.

In July 1992, some 40 prisoners from Biscani were killed in Logor Omarska, according to other camp inmates. It was gruesome. The prisoners from Biscani cried out in agony as they were pulled out of the bus and thrown head first against a brick wall. Their heads were allegedly smashed into the wall for each of them to «dig» out a five centimetres deep hole, the Serbian perpetrators announced.

After the attack on the Hambarine area in July 1992, women and children were detained at the stadium near Tukovi before being deported. Others were held captive - often for several days - in the athletic field in Ljubija before internment in camps and deportation.

Very hard hit in this major Serbian military attack on villages on the left bank of the Sana River were, among others, the villages Biscani, Carakovo, Rizvanovici, Sredice, and Zekovi. A total of more than 1,500 people were allegedly killed on 20 July 1992 alone. The mass killings in Carakovo first started on 23 July.

In Sredice and Rizvanovici, for example, the Serbian infantry, paramilitary soldiers, and other Serbs with them reportedly went from house to house mutilating, killing, and deporting the inhabitants and other civilians having sought shelter there (refugees from Opstina Bosanski Novi and fugitives from the previous attack on Hambarine, see Chapter VII.A. supra). Within a few days, no living beings were left in the villages, but in numerous places there were piles of dead men - often fathers and sons together. Many of the dead bodies are said to have been terribly mutilated, 15 dead persons had been chained together, many smaller piles contained approximately 10 dead bodies each. Smaller piles were found even on the doorsteps of private homes, larger ones were in more central locations. In front of one particular house, in a sand pit, there was a relatively larger pile. From here, the Serbs had intended to take numerous captive non-Serbs by bus for detention. But, as the bus was totally overcrowded, it is claimed that the Serbs forced almost half of the passengers to leave the bus and executed them on the spot.

Carakovo was encircled on 23 July 1992 at about 3:00 a.m. by Serbs coming in from all directions, not only from the main road along the Sana River. The majority of the Serbs were wearing the uniform of the Serbian army. Some were dressed in the light-blue uniform of the reserve police. Some of those in the army uniform in addition wore red ribbons and red berets. It was believed that the latter belonged to the Marticevci - among them were Serbs from neighbouring villages. Some soldiers were wearing white ribbons on their shoulders - they may have been White Eagles. All around were the sounds of bombs and grenades exploding and machine gun fire. Some of the Serbs gave commands such as «Burn down!» and «Kill!». It was like a hunt, as one survivor recounts, in which also the nearby forest was searched for non-Serbs. Hundreds of people were killed - shot, burnt alive, beaten or tortured to death in other ways.

The Serbs were also looking for some civilians such as the leader of the Muslim political party, the SDA, in Prijedor (see Chapters VI.A. and VII.C. supra), and the party's secretary (see Chapter VII.C. supra). In Caracovo, there was a very large family with a name similar to
that of the SDA leader. The Serbs mixed up this name with the family name of the SDA leader and for this reason allegedly killed every member of that family which they could find. Two elderly non-Serbs from the area registered 268 people whom they knew by name, killed in Carakovo on 23 and 24 July 1992. On their list are 31 identified persons with the surname of the family mistaken for that of the SDA leader (their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). Reportedly, a total of approximately 100 members of this family were exterminated during the attack. There is also a hamlet named Hopovci in the area, where people had the same family name as the SDA secretary. The elderly men have 19 identified persons with this name on their list (their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). The SDA secretary is not on the list. On the list there are, however, other large family groups included, such as 29 people sharing a common family name. Altogether there are only 30 surnames on the list, save for an identified murdered imam (whose first name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) whose surname was unknown to the two elderly men.

In the settlement Donja Mahala, some 50 women were gathered and allegedly raped.

There is information to indicate that altogether more than 760 people were killed in the onslaught on Carakovo. According to the 1981 census, Carakovo then had 2,263 inhabitants. A number of non-Serbs who had managed to run away when their villages in the area were attacked the previous days may have been caught in Carakovo.

It is claimed that young women from, inter alia, the villages Gornja Ravska, Gornji Volar, Stara Rijeka and Surkovac together with young women from other districts were detained and sexually abused by Serbian military in Korcanica Motel. It is claimed that they were abused to «give birth to better and more beautiful Serbs». Among the high ranking Serbian military named as rapists and/or organizers of these sexual orgies are two identified members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

Other registered killings committed allegedly by Serbs of named non-Serbs in their place of residence and non-Serbian residents from the same areas killed in (a few missing from) Logor Keraterm and Logor Omarska are, to give but a few examples, from villages not mentioned specifically above:


d. Gornja Ravska: two persons killed July 1992; two persons killed on 7-8 September (or November) 1992 (one being a Catholic parish priest); in Logor Omarska - two persons killed in June/July 1992;

e. Gornji Volar: four persons killed on 12-13 September 1992; one person killed on 31 December 1992; two other persons killed in 1992; two persons killed on 22-23 April 1993; in Logor Omarska - one person missing (probably killed) since 21 August 1992;

f. Ljeskare: one person killed on 16 June 1992; one other person killed in 1992;

 g. Raljas: two persons killed in July 1992; in Logor Omarska - one person killed on 5 August 1992, one other person killed in June-August 1992;

h. Stara Rijeka: 12 persons killed on 24 July 1992; one other person killed in July 1992; two persons killed in August 1992; one other person killed in 1992; one person killed on 8 March 1993; in Logor Omarska - one person killed in June-August 1992; in Logor Krings (a concentration camp established on the premises of what had previously been a cement block factory in the city of Sanski Most, Opstina Sanski Most) - two persons killed in June-August 1992;

 i. Surkovac: in Logor Omarska - one person killed on 15 July 1992;


Names of victims are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

There are also allegations of, inter alia, the following executions:

In Redak (strip mines, part of the Ljubija iron ore mines, but south of Ljubija) on approximately 1 August 1992, more than 200 Muslim civilians were killed. The Muslim civilians had been arrested in the village of Miska Glava where they had sought refuge from the Serbian attacks on the villages Biscani, Rizvanovići, Hambarine, and Carakovo.

In Lisina (a part of the Kurevo forest, approximately two kilometres south-east of Ljubija), between 20 and 25 July 1992, between 70 and 100 Muslim civilians were killed.

Near the hamlet of Volaric (in the village of Surkovac, approximately two kilometres north of Ljubija) nine civilian Gypsies were killed.

At the Prijedor-Donji Volar and Jugovci-Cikote crossroad, called Trzna (approximately eight kilometres north-east of Ljubija) at the end of July 1992, between 100 and 120 Muslim civilians from the village of Jugovci were killed.

In the area of Prijedorsko Polje, next to the left bank of the Sana River (close to the villages of Biscani and Rizvanovic) at a place known as Bajeri (gravel pits, approximately 8 kilometres north-east of Ljubija) in the period from May to August 1992, more than 100 non-Serbian civilians from the Prijedor area were killed.

Like the attack on the Kozarac area (see Chapter VII.B. supra), the Serbian attack on the villages on the left bank of the Sana River was aimed at the total subjugation of the non-Serbs. They were no longer (like in the first attack on Hambarine, see Chapter VII.A. supra)
given a possibility de facto to seek shelter in nearby villages (which in any event would have been difficult at this time when all non-Serbian villages and hamlets in the area were targeted).

When this larger Hambarine/Ljubija area was targeted, the pressure on both detention facilities and means of deportation reached a peak, as it had two months earlier, in late May 1992, when first the Kozarac area and then, in part, Prijedor town had been «ethnically cleansed». Thus there were also improvised detention facilities made in the Ljubija iron ore mine. In the central mining area, it is claimed that the main separator was used temporarily to incarcerate prisoners. Also other areas which could relatively easily be guarded may have been used - possibly also some of the open pits. Logor Ciglane is mentioned in this context; it may have held at least up to 1,000 prisoners at the time. Limited numbers of captives from the southernmost parts of the Ljubija area were moved south for detention in Opština Sanski Most (from where a number of the Serbian armed forces participating in the attack had come).

After the non-Serbs had been ousted from the area, their property was pillaged and many buildings were destroyed.

**E. General characteristics**

The main target of all the Serbian military attacks has been the non-Serbian peoples in Opština Prijedor and not installations and positions of strategic importance.

Over Radio Prijedor, the Serbs also demanded that the Muslims and Croats living in areas with mixed ethnic populations of Serbs and non-Serbs should mark their housing by hanging out a white flag, and identify themselves by wearing white armbands when they moved outdoors as a sign of surrender. This applied for some time.

In early June 1992, all non-Serbs in Prijedor were ordered to wear white armbands when they went outdoors. During World War II, in comparison the Nazi regime in Belgrade legislated that all Jews were to wear yellow armbands.

The Serb taking over the position as editor-in-chief of Radio Prijedor was Zoran Baroš. In Prijedor town, women, children, and elderly men were detained for deportation in the sports hall at the high school after the attack on the Kozarac area. Zoran Baroš was removed from his position as editor-in-chief of Radio Prijedor after he had permitted Muslims to use the radio to trace missing family members after the Serbian attacks had started and the first non-Serbs had been taken into detention at the high school.

Notably all involvement by paramilitary and irregular units were fully synchronized with the efforts of the regular Serbian armed forces, and can have been nothing but well-coordinated, the regular army being in charge. One reason for this conclusion is that all the major Serbian military operations started with heavy artillery barrages or the use of tanks as operated by the regular army, and were immediately followed by the onslaught of paramilitary and irregular units working in tandem with regular army infantry. There is, moreover, not one single report to the effect that there was ever a paramilitary or irregular
unit working to obstruct or even slightly hinder the objectives of the regular army. The same reportedly has been the case when individual Serbs from the neighbourhood or elsewhere have participated in the attacks.

There were, of course, a number of non-Serbs who managed to run into hiding on the mountains, in the forests, and even in adjacent villages when their homes were attacked. However, given the overall situation in and isolation of Opstina Prijedor, that was in the vast majority of cases only a temporary escape from the oppression. The forests and mountains were searched meticulously by the Serbian military and all their different Serbian collaborators - often with the understanding that any living being caught was to be killed. Non-Serbs in hiding tempered a difficult time in the forests and on the mountains - although it was summer and reasonable temperatures, on the average, for outdoor life - people were not accustomed to foraging for food. Some of the people in the forests and on the mountains tried more or less immediately to return to their home areas as the military attacks seemed to be over. Others preferred the relative security of the uninhabited areas until the scavenging for food became rather unbearable or medical problems called for assistance. When leaving the mountains and forests the non-Serbs tried to return to inhabited or former inhabited areas, sometimes with the hope of blending into a not too unfriendly environment, sometimes knowing that they would have to surrender immediately. In hamlets, villages, and towns, there were, every once in a while, round-ups of non-Serbs, or non-Serbian individuals being reported on by supporters of the new Serbian-dominated system.

It is extremely difficult to have any precise idea of the number of non-Serbs who perished in the Serbian military attacks and later when detained by the Serbs. There are, however, general characteristics of the overall situation that give some indications. After the military attacks, the Serbs had a consistent practice of singling out the surviving non-Serbian males from 16 to 60-years old (sometimes even younger boys and men up to the age of 65) and incarcerating them in the two concentration camps - Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm. Significant numbers (the exact figure is unknown) of these men were killed after they had been gathered and before the rest boarded buses. Others were killed literally en route to a concentration camp. Save for very limited numbers of men who were able to flee Opstina Prijedor, for example, by bribing their way out - the vast majority of the non-Serbian male population suffered the above-mentioned fate.

Today, a total of some 9,000 non-Serbs remain in Opstina Prijedor (see Chapter XIII.G, infra). One fourth of the population is in the age group 0 to 15-years old in most Western countries. In developing countries, the ratio is up to one to three of the total. According to the 1991 census, the total population in Opstina Prijedor was 112,470 - the Serbs counted for 47,745 and the non-Serbs were 64,725. Considering that approximately half of the latter group (some 32,000 people) probably were males, a breakdown in age groups will give a rough idea about how many men between 16 and 60 years there were in the first place, even without including those who had fled into the area after Opstina Bosanski Novi was purged. It is recalled that the surrounding districts - Opstina Bosanski Novi, Opstina Bosanska Dubica, and Opstina Banja Luka - had Serbian majority populations already prior to the difficulties started in Opstina Prijedor. Opstina Sanski Most saw the non-Serbs «ethnically cleansed» at about the same time as it happened in the district of Prijedor.
There was, in other words, no safe haven nearby to which the non-Serbs in Opstina Prijedor could have recourse. Comparing the total group of non-Serbian men in the age groups taken to the concentration camps Omarska and Keraterm, and the number of male prisoners released from there (see Chapter XII. infra), a high fatality rate is indicated and the overall picture of males in these age groups exterminated is at best bleak.

Questioned by a foreign visitor about how many people had been killed in the Serbian military operations in the region, Mico Kovacevic from the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor reportedly replied that:

«It is in the thousands. If you want this [exactly] you have to make it up yourself.»

F. The disposal of the dead

In the village Sivci (south of Kozarac), at least 45 non-Serbian people, possibly as many as 120, were killed by uniformed Serbian soldiers wearing caps with the Cetnik insignia. The dead were buried at the village cemetery, four or five in each grave. A cemetery in the nearby village of Hrnici was probably also used. Some corpses were interred in the meadows as people came across them. After the Serbian military attacks, it seems that a number of the dead were buried by survivors almost wherever it was feasible under the circumstances: at graveyards, in gardens, along roads, in fields and meadows, in the woods and on the mountains.

On 5 November 1992, it is claimed that in the immediate vicinity of Ljeskare village, in a area known as Dubocaj, at the foot of the Ljubijica Mountain, Serbs were burning the remains of people killed between 20 and 25 July 1992 in the part of the Kurevo forest located east of Ljubija. Serbian police sealed off the area of Dubocaj at the time, among them was one identified police officer from Ljubija whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. The odour was carried by the wind and could be smelled kilometres away.

In the Borik forest north of Carakovo, a survivor claims that he, his father and his uncle buried 370 people in small graves with five to 10 dead people in each. When the Serbs launched their military attack on the villages on the left bank of the Sana River, many villagers from neighbouring villages sought shelter in both Carakovo and the Borik forest. When the Serbian soldiers attacked Carakovo, it is claimed that they killed a minimum of 760 and probably an even higher number of non-Serbs. The Serbian forces also searched the forest for fugitives, allegedly killing all human beings they came across.

Serbian soldiers have reportedly said that after the destruction of the villages on the left bank of the Sana River, non-Serbian survivors were transported by buses and trucks to locations which belonged to the iron ore mine, where they were executed by shooting, and thence buried with the use of construction machinery from the mine. Non-Serbs, first shepherded into mine pits, may have been among those thus exterminated and interred. According to the Serbian soldiers, some kind of powdery substance was put on top of the bodies to accelerate the decomposition process.

Some dead bodies may have been discarded in abandoned mine shafts.
Some days after the attack on the villages on the left bank of the Sana River started, there was an announcement on Radio Prijedor that people in Prijedor town should stay away from the area behind the Sose Mazar Street for a certain time. People did, however, observe five (there may have been more) trucks with dead bodies coming across the Sana River (from its left bank) and turning down the Partizanska Street towards the mine in Tomasica. Blood stained the passage route for days. The dead bodies were supposedly disposed of or destroyed in Tomasica.

From 1 to 12 July 1993, Serbian police blocked the Svoznica Road which connects Ljubija to villages to the south (such as Stara Rijeka) and which in part passes through the Ljubija iron ore strip mines. In this period, underground explosions (making houses quake kilometres away) and the motors of heavy mining equipment could be heard around the clock. As the road was reopened to traffic, passers by noticed that areas where mass graves were known to have been located, were dug up and filled in with fresh soil and gravel. It is claimed that the Serbs had removed the remains of people who had been buried here during the months of July and August 1992, and taken the remains in the direction of Prijedor possibly to the Tomasica iron ore mine where there are machines, inter alia, for grinding iron ore.

As illustrated by the above examples, the dead non-Serbs may have been disposed of in many different areas - varying from the odd locations almost anywhere to the regular graveyards to large-scale burials on the estates of Rudnika Ljubija (see Chapter II.D. supra; see also Annex X, Mass Graves).

VIII. The concentration camps

After the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992, they opened three concentration camps in Opstina Prijedor. No concentration camps had existed in Opstina Prijedor at the time of the Serbian takeover, or for that matter, in the region since World War II. Two of the concentration camps were de facto death camps - Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm. The third - Logor Trnopolje - had another purpose as it functioned as a staging area for massive deportations of primarily women, children, and elderly men (see Chapter X.A. infra). Whereas the death camps were under the authority of the Serbian military and the Serbian police, Logor Trnopolje had more of a civilian image, notably with the local Serbian Red Cross having a pivotal function.

Throughout this analysis the word logor, which in translation means just camp, is used. The reason is that the word «camp» in the English language is associated with everything and anything from leisure to rigour. Using the term «logor» is intended to link these institutions to their inhumane characteristics, as described below.

Special mention ought to be made of the fact that the United Nations Commission of Experts, as represented by Chairman M. Cherif Bassiouni, prepared a separate report on camps and detention facilities with analysis of, inter alia, Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje (see Annex VIII, Prison Camps).
**A. Logor Omarska**

A Serbian guard in Logor Omarska told (before 29 June 1992) a friend outside the camp that:

«Interned here are reportedly Prijedor elite from before the Serbian take-over of government control: The President of the Council (Mayor), Members of the Executive Council, The President of the Court, two judges, doctors, presidents and directors of firms, owners of private factories and businesses.»

The informant asked the Serbian guard, his friend, if the Serbs were going to kill the people.

«Oh no, we will not waste our bullets on them. They have no roof, there is sun and rain, cold nights, beatings twice a day, we give them no food and water. They will starve like animals.»

Numerous leading Muslim and Croatian citizens had notably been immediately targeted for extermination when still in their homes, towns or villages.

Among the prominent citizens of Prijedor who had survived the initial phase of the devastation and were detained in Omarska, are long lists of identified persons whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. Among them were (to mention but some): the mayor; politicians from the SDA and the HDZ in Prijedor; an imam; judges and lawyers; employees from the military and civilian sectors; a veterinarian, a physiotherapist, a dentist, and a number of medical doctors; an engineer and some economists; headmasters and teachers from schools at different levels; journalists and an editor of Radio Prijedor and of Kozarski Vjesnik; an author and an actor; directors and members of the Rudnika Ljubija management board; directors and managers of Bosnamontaza, Kozaraturist, Celpak, and the biscuit factory Mira Cikota; the director and the secretary of the Prijedor Red Cross, the president of Merhamet (the Muslim charity organization) in Prijedor; restaurant owners, business men and entrepreneurs; leaders of sports clubs and football players.

In Logor Omarska (and in part for reasons of space in Logor Keraterm), the Serbs detained almost the entire non-Serbian elite - including political and administrative leaders, religious leaders, academics and intellectuals, business leaders, and others. In addition to the judges and lawyers, all other segments of the non-Serbian law-enforcement personnel, policemen in particular, were incarcerated. Media people, artists and sports men - all the groups of people who in their different fields led and influenced the non-Serbian populace, were incarcerated. The leaders of the voluntary agencies - such as the local Red Cross and Merhamet - endured the same fate.

Thirty-seven women were among the captured brought to Logor Omarska. There were 36 non-Serbian women in leading positions and/or politically active. One of the first women arriving at the camp recounts that:

«After she was first arrested and interrogated she was moved on to a prison cell in Prijedor where she was together with one other woman [whose name is not disclosed for
confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons]. The latter was a teacher and politically active, she was later most probably killed in Logor Omarska. The next day the two women together with three men were taken in a car (from which they could not look out) via Tomasica to Omarska, where they arrived at approximately 17.00 hours. In Logor Omarska they were commanded to stand up along a wall, facing the wall, with their hands up with three fingers lifted (in the originally Serbian religious way to signify the Holy Trinity) and thoroughly bodily searched, then the chief of the guards arrived. He started to swear as there were two women, and said he had no room for women. He asked what he should do with them. The women were subsequently taken to a prison in Omarska village. The women were detained in a small cell with no air and no electricity, the only thing they were provided with was a bucket. They remained in this cell over night. Thence they were taken back to Logor Omarska. In Logor Omarska a Croatian woman arrived, she worked in the postal service. This woman threatened with hunger strike and thus was temporarily released, but was returned again to the camp later.»

One Serbian woman, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, was arrested reportedly because her late husband was Croatian. She was, however, released from the camp.

Simo Drljac, chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, later told a foreign visitor to Prijedor that Logor Omarska opened on 27 May 1992 when 700 prisoners were detained there. At this time, Logor Keraterm was already operational, and there is information to indicate that a number of individual prisoners or smaller groups of prisoners may have arrived at the camp from at least 25 May 1992. Several survivors report that the camp leadership was not fully on top of the situation the very first days when there were prisoners in the camp. There may even have been some initial confusion among the Serbs concerning, for example, how to treat female detainees and concerning who was who (one early detainee may, as described infra, have just walked out of the camp and back into freedom, passing as a Serb).

It is very difficult to estimate the exact number of prisoners who were detained in Logor Omarska, both in total and at any given time. The number varied over time as new prisoners were moved in, especially in the wake of the major Serbian military operations, but more or less continuously due to individual arrests and smaller round-ups. On 15 June 1992, there were reportedly 2,736 plates used by camp inmates, each detainee having utilized one plate. In late July 1992, before the emptying of the camp into other camps started, there may have been approximately 3,000 camp inmates. The estimated total number of inmates to have been in the camp also varies considerably. Some estimate that there may have been a total of 5,000 prisoners, others believe that it may have been closer to 7,000. Under these circumstances, it is even more difficult to make any approximation concerning prisoners directly or indirectly killed in the camp - according to Serbian leaders there were only two prisoners in the camp who died from natural causes.

It is, however, possible to establish with a relatively high degree of certainty the total number of males in the relevant age groups in Opština Prijedor (see Chapter VII.E, supra). The fate of this group was, save for the limited numbers still remaining in the district (see Chapter XIII.G, infra), death outside of camps or detention in Logor Omarska or Logor
Keraterm - a very limited number may have been taken into other camps primarily, at least initially, in the district of Sanski Most. The exact number of people included in each group, thus, is less relevant to appreciate the true character of the catastrophe which the Serbs brought about for the non-Serbs in Opština Prijedor.

Serbian leaders have made some statements relevant to the questions of numbers. Simo Drljaca, chief of the Serbian secret police and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opština Prijedor, was asked about the numbers of prisoners, their crimes, and fate by journalist Roy Gutman who reports from that encounter that:

«Drljaca, . . . , said 3,334 people were arrested on suspicion of resisting or plotting against the new Serb authorities and were taken to Omarska. Drljaca insisted that no one had been killed at Omarska and that only two prisoners died between May 25 and mid-August, both of 'natural causes'. Another 49 'disappeared', including the former lord mayor of Prijedor . . . and were presumed dead, Drljaca said.»

In the official version, detainees were interrogated for four days and shipped out. Drljaca said 800 detainees who were alleged to have 'organized the whole thing,' among them rich Muslims who financed the Muslim SDA political party, were taken to Manjaca, which was operated by the Bosnian Serb army as a prisoner-of-war camp, to await criminal trial. Taken with them were 600 people who reputedly commanded units of the Muslim and Croat resistance. The remaining 1,900 were found innocent and taken immediately to Trnopolje, which officials said was a transit camp, Drljaca said.»

Zeljko Meakic, the chief of security in Logor Omarska, reportedly told a journalist from the New York tabloid Newsday that:

«There was a power cut at 11:47 P.M. on July 26, and it lasted until 4:30 A.M. the next morning. [Cehajić] disappeared among seven who left at that time.»

According to an interview with Simo Drljaca:

«In the collection centres 'Omarska', 'Keraterm' and 'Trnopolje' more than 6,000 informative talks were held. Of this number 1,503 Muslims and Croats were sent to the camp 'Manjaca', on the basis of solid documentation on active participation in the fighting against the Army of Republika Srpska, and also participation in genocide against the Serbian people.»

Interrogation - or informative talks - were conducted in Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm, but not in Logor Trnopolje. The number of prisoners in Keraterm may have been about half of the number in Omarska.

The number of people, who were killed or who died in Logor Omarska, has yet to be established by outsiders. Confronted with the statement, «People say that 1,200 to 2,000 people were killed at Omarska», Mico Kovacevic (member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opština Prijedor and deputy mayor in Prijedor in the Serbian regime) reportedly replied that:

«It's your choice. The police chief has definitive information. All the rest is Hitchcock.»
Logor Omarska was hastily opened in the administrative centre of the Omarska iron ore mine - one of the three main extensions of Rudnika Ljubija - located to the south-east of the Kozarac area. The Omarska mine is situated just south of the railway from Prijedor town to Banja Luka. Omarska village, which was and remains predominantly Serbian populated, is positioned next to the railroad on the northern side of it. The mine is primarily an open pit mine, and there are numerous open pits in the vicinity of where the camp was established.

There was almost no reconstruction of the mining company's facilities before they were converted into a concentration camp. There were none the less rumours in the surrounding area before the concentration camp was opened that something special would be arranged at the place. The premises were not used by the mining company after the main change of usage - there are not known to be any mining related activities there, even at present.

The compound had four buildings which all definitely were used as part of the concentration camp. These buildings were the canteen building, the larger building, the White House, and the Red House. The canteen building had a canteen and a kitchen on the ground floor, where there also were toilets, showers and a wardrobe for the miners. There was also a small garage. On the first floor in the canteen building, there were one main office and several smaller ones, or altogether eight rooms used for interrogation of camp inmates. The larger building was in part a huge garage for dumpers, etc. On the ground floor, in addition to the garage, there was one relatively large room. The first floor - which covered only parts of the ground floor - had several rooms (one, ill-famed, was known as No. 26) and an electrical workshop. The White House was a tiny construction totally out of proportion to the horrors reportedly taking place there. It had four rooms all allegedly constantly used for torture and killings. One of these rooms was known as «the room of death». The Red House, which was small as well, also had an ignoble function - this reportedly was where prisoners were taken for more or less immediate execution. For the latter reason, all reports about this building are from prisoners who have not been inside it themselves. There are limited numbers of survivors of the White House.

There are also reports to indicate that prisoners have been detained in a separator belonging to the mining company - this may, however, have been in another extension of Rudnika Ljubija, namely in Ljubija.

Around the canteen building and over to (and on three sides of) the larger building, the ground had a cement layer on top. This cement area was known as the «Pista». Outside of that, the ground was grass-covered.

Concerning the general conditions in the camp, a marked difference existed between the main period when the camp was open and after it, for all practical purposes, was closed on 6 August 1992. Thenceforth, the camp was more of a showcase for foreign journalists and the ICRC to visit. By then, most of the prisoners had been moved from the camp, the camp had been cleaned up and to some extent renovated (bullet holes had been covered and walls painted, etc.), beds had been brought into the camp, and more food and better hygiene were provided for the detainees. More importantly, the extreme violence and in-camp killings prevailed no more (see Chapter XII.A. infra). This chapter is focused on the main period when the concentration camp was open.
Logor Omarska was not surrounded by barbed wire or otherwise directly fenced. The camp was however, in the iron grip of three groups of guards - each comprised of 30 men. There was one group of guards in the camp itself, then one group of soldiers some 50 meters outside and another group some 100 metres away from the camp. The last group would reportedly shoot anything that moved. It is said that the two first groups primarily were to prevent prisoners from trying to leave the camp, whereas the third group was to protect the camp from attacks from outside. Former prisoners state that there were only two detainees who ever managed to flee from the camp. Both of them were later captured and returned to the camp, where one of them was allegedly immediately killed. The fate of the other appears to be unknown.

In addition, there is the non-Serb who claims that he was arrested and brought to the camp at the time of its opening. As the camp was not yet well-organized, and the people involved on the Serbian side were not yet fully familiar with one another, he pretended to be a Serb and walked out of the main entrance. He was not searched for as a fugitive, but was eventually persecuted as a non-Serb.

The Serbian leaders (as quoted supra) claim that 49 «disappeared» from the camp, seven of whom they say fled during a power outage during the night of 27 July 1992. Simo Drljaca later told a foreign visitor that, «In legal terminology we use that term [disappeared]. Maybe some who disappeared died in disappearing.»

Starting, at the latest, on 27 May 1992, the conditions in Logor Omarska were more than crowded. One former detainee arriving at the camp on that day, recounts that he was squeezed into the room adjacent to the huge garage together with an estimated 400 other prisoners (the group was to prepare lists with the names of those present, with 30 names on each list). He states that the prisoners were packed so close together that their situation resembled that of sardines in a tin. After the doors to the storeroom had been closed, the prisoners had to remain there and in that position for four days, with neither food nor water or any toilet facilities. Everyone had to stand in an upright position all along as there was no space for anyone to lie down. Others estimate that this room may have contained up to 500 detainees at the time. The huge garage may have taken up to 1,000 men at the time. There were also several hundred men cramped in on the first floor of the same building. In addition, hundreds were ordered to stay on the cement floor outdoors - there are said to have been some 700 in early June 1992.

In the canteen building, there was only the garage which held any sizable number of prisoners. It is with reference to this garage that a former prisoner is reported to have informed that he, on 30 May 1992, was «stuffed with 130 others [prisoners] into a one-car garage». Others claim there were times when there were as many as 160 prisoners squeezed into this garage. In the canteen building, the women had their quarters on the first floor in the offices where prisoners were interrogated in the daytime. Concerning the number of prisoners kept at any one time in the White House, this may have varied considerably. There may have been up to some 70 people in one room at the same time, but often far less - for example, only 20 people in each room or even less. As prisoners were killed/died in the White House, their place was not necessarily immediately filled with new prisoners - although there reportedly were always some prisoners in each room. The
detainees taken to the White House had reportedly normally been detained elsewhere in the camp at first, but this was not always the case.

Not only was the camp crowded, but the detainees were not to move around freely in the camp either. Whether detained indoors or in the open area outside, they were only to move when specifically permitted to do so - regularly only to receive food and to go to the toilets/the open fields. Under these circumstances, which were aggravated by several other factors as well, sanitation more or less immediately became a problem for the prisoners.

There was far too little water provided for the detainees to drink, and personal hygiene thus naturally came second in the competition for water in the camp. This was mid-summer when the days often were hot. Also, indoors it was hot due to the generally cramped conditions there. The prisoners' clothing was never properly washed, and it became more and more dirtied and ragged by the day. Since most prisoners had only one pair of summer clothes on them when coming to the camp, the clothing also had to serve as bedding such as pillows and blankets. There were no beds or bedding provided for the prisoners in the camp, with the exception that the women were provided with some kind of mattresses, two women sleeping on each. One female prisoner relates that she made good use of two sets of underwear that she stuffed into her pocket before she had to leave her house during one of the Serbian military attacks. No clothing was provided for the detainees. Soon pieces of cloth were also needed to tie around wounds and other inflicted injuries.

Rainy weather would bring temporary relief concerning water, but there was not much chance of collecting the rainwater, and the rain had other sanitary disadvantages. In the emaciated condition of the prisoners, being soaking wet was far from ideal. The mud that followed the rain also made life in detention more difficult.

Twice before the camp for all practical purposes was closed on 6 August 1992, male prisoners had a «shower». In groups of 50, the guards had them disrobe and aimed fire hoses at 10 of them at a time. The high pressure of the water on the prisoners' weakened bodies was painful and not a relief, particularly so as the guards reportedly amused themselves with aiming at the prisoners' wounds and genitals.

There were no sanitary provisions for the prisoners in the camp; some rooms had plastic barrels at times. Reportedly, the Serbian guards frequently beat the prisoners on their way to meals as well as on their way to the toilet - a reason why there were occasions when the prisoners preferred rather to urinate or defecate in their trousers or shoes.

The women in the camp had much better general conditions for personal hygiene, engaged as they were also in cleaning both in the kitchen and the offices (the rooms used for interrogation), etc. But, the relative cleanliness of the female prisoners was possibly more for the advantage of the Serbs abusing them than to themselves under the circumstances.

As there were no sanitary provisions for the prisoners, the women had to manage as best they could during menstruation. The women improvised sanitary napkins from newspapers. They also stole toilet paper from the toilets of the Serbian inspectors (which
they had to clean) if the inspectors had forgotten any paper there. At a late time in the history of the camp, the women received one kilo of cotton to share between them.

As the prisoners' hygiene deteriorated, so did the hygiene in the detention locations. This soon became a vicious circle exacerbated as prisoners were maltreated and wounds and illnesses entered the scene. In the White House, it is said, blood, hair, teeth and small pieces of human flesh and bones made the rooms look like a primitive slaughterhouse. Bullet holes and damage to the construction reportedly also affected the prisoners' mental soundness.

Hair and beards grew long. Soon lice were a problem. Diarrhoea and dysentery quickly became unwelcome frequent, and then later permanent, visitors. Under these circumstances, even minor wounds could represent serious - sometimes lethal - problems because they were easily infected and there were no proper remedies for disinfection available. Like the lice found their breeding ground in open wounds, so did reportedly worms. A variety of illnesses found suitable general conditions to break out, but this does not seem to have plagued the camp inmates to the extent that one could have feared, or which could have become the case, if the camp had been open for a longer period of time.

The combination of unsanitary and depressing conditions, fatigue due also to malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies, physical and mental stress, and maltreatment rapidly weakened the prison population.

The Serbs had, as already mentioned, detained a number of medical doctors in Logor Omarska (names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). All of these doctors were prisoners themselves, and their high social status due to their profession seems a main reason for their detention. Whether they died in the detention or survived varied, as did the length of time before they were unable to assist anyone.

It can be expected that all of them tried to assist their fellow inmates to the extent possible. One doctor, for example, was an ear, nose and throat specialist who to the extent possible provided all kinds of medical assistance in the camp until he was taken out of it in early August 1992 (for exchange supposedly, but he was probably executed possibly on the next day, see Chapter XII.B. infra). His medical and other assistance to fellow inmates is remembered with much affection and appreciation.

The medical doctors were called upon also to assist Serbian guards and officials in the camp, primarily when they were in need of first aid and concerning minor ailments. Though this was assistance to their actual tormentors, it probably benefitted the prisoners, both because medical doctors could live on and as there were no repercussions for disobedience.

The medical doctors had no medical equipment to assist their fellow camp inmates. Albeit inventive skills were stretched to a maximum, there is just so much that can be achieved with wooden pieces, bits of cardboard, and pieces of cloth.

There are reports that one small room on the camp premises was used as a sick ward - for some time at least - where prisoners could be kept for some days. But there was neither
medical assistance nor food to be received there. Camp guards came by at times and allegedly mistreated the people in the room for no special reason.

When the prisoners first arrived at Logor Omarska, most of them, it is said, did not receive food or water the first four days or so. Later, they were permitted to come out from the buildings and rooms where they normally stayed to obtain daily food rations.

The routine in Logor Omarska allegedly was that when the prisoners were to receive food in the canteen (on the ground floor in the canteen building), they had to run through an L-shaped corridor. The camp guards frequently tossed wax on the floor to make it slippery. There were metallic wardrobe cabinets along the corridor and prisoners fell and hit the cabinets and were beaten by the guards. There were four Serbs in particular who allegedly beat the prisoners. The names of the alleged perpetrators are known but not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

To receive their daily food rations, the prisoners normally arrived in groups of 30. They received a piece of bread and a ladle of some soup-like fluid. The groups had to eat their food within two to three minutes. Each piece of bread weighed approximately 800 grams, one piece was normally divided between eight people, sometimes between four. The last prisoners sometimes received no bread at all. The female prisoners (who were charged with distributing the food) sometimes tried to give prisoners in special need a little extra, mainly from their own rations.

Some prisoners were so afraid of being beaten that they disregarded some of their daily rations. The daily food rations were handed out between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Thus, it was often more that 24 hours between times when each person received his rations. Once, a prisoner received some crumbs of bread in a newspaper. He remembers how he tore up the newspaper to get hold of every single of the crumbs.

One of the women relates that she had some sugar which she mixed with water for prisoners who fell unconscious. After serving the prisoners food, she had to prepare coffee for the guards, and that was the occasion on which she could steal some sugar. She also stole some coffee to be able to provide it for prisoners with dysentery. During one period, the women were permitted to go outside to the area where the kitchen garbage was thrown away. Here these prisoners harvested some plants that would help prisoners suffering from diarrhoea.

Diarrhoea, as mentioned, was one problem for prisoners, and so was its counterpart, constipation. Several prisoners reportedly did not defecate for more than a month, some for up to two months - a highly painful experience. Regardless of physical ailments, all the prisoners soon lost considerable weight. During one and a half months, one prisoner says he lost 25 kilograms of weight. Other prisoners lost as much as 39 to 45 or even 50 kilograms during their stay in Logor Omarska.

When the prisoners arrived at the camp, they were normally searched. Either then or later Serbian guards demanded to have the prisoners' money, watches, and shoes - the latter only when they were in a good condition. All of a sudden, a guard would demand DEM
50 or 100 from a group of prisoners. If the guard did not receive what he had asked for, guards would often take out one of the prisoners and mistreat him. The guards, moreover, made money from selling cigarettes - not food or water - to the prisoners.

For the prisoners, camp life was at best an endless period of waiting - waiting for the present to pass, never sure if there was going to be any future, or more concrete, a new day tomorrow. A constant worry for self and not the least for those next of kin. Many fathers and sons, brothers and other close relatives were interned together, but could do next to nothing to assist one another. Similar pains related to friendships.

The prisoners spent their waiting periods standing, sitting or laying down when there was space enough for that. The prisoners laying on the cement floor outside often had to lay face down in the daytime so that they would not be able to observe in full what was happening around them.

The male detainees were not given any ordinary work to do, but were called upon to carry maltreated and dead fellow inmates in and out. It was more often than not that the prisoners themselves had to lift corpses up on trucks that would remove the dead, and on occasions when the number of dead was reportedly relatively high, the live workers out of the camps as well. The prisoners who had to follow such transports have allegedly not been heard of again.

After some two months in the camp, the youngest of the adolescents and the men over 65-years old were transferred in two buses to Logor Trnopolje. This was not long before Logor Omarska was to be practically closed on 6 August 1992 (see Chapter XII.A. infra). There possibly may have been a few people released from the camp. The Serbian leaders later interviewed about the camp have, however, made no mention of any prisoners released, and camp inmates say that they are not aware that any non-Serbian prisoners were ever released. It is only known that one of the female prisoners was out of the camp for a while before she was brought back in again. It is possible that some of the prisoners who disappeared from the camp were not executed as feared, but actually were helped or bribed into safety somewhere. There were, moreover, a few so-called exchanges of prisoners arranged, but there is concern that the term «exchange» may have been but an euphemism for execution (see Chapter XII.B. infra). The vast majority of detainees thus stayed in the camp until it was closed, if by then they were not yet dead.

Concentration camp inmates were called for interrogation in the offices on the first floor of the canteen building. Interrogations were normally conducted from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The interrogators are generally referred to with the more civilized title of «inspectors». The inspectors arrived at the camp in the morning in a small bus together with clerks assisting with typing. Thence, camp guards went around in the camp and collected the unfortunate ones to be interrogated. Camp guards participated in interrogation sessions as well. Sometimes the guards seemed to have started the interrogation sessions elsewhere in the camp before they brought the prisoners to the inspectors. All the time, it is claimed, beating screaming and moaning could be heard from the interrogation offices. Survivors relate that they were badly maltreated and tortured when interrogated. Beatings with a variety of implements were probably most common, but there are long lists of other
methods used as well. The number of prisoners who died during interrogation is not known to anyone other than the Serbs in charge; the number is allegedly not very small. Time and again other prisoners claim that they observed dead bodies taken out from interrogation and left on the ground outside for others to see. Fellow prisoners also noted that a number of prisoners taken for interrogation never returned to their detention room and were later not seen elsewhere either.

During interrogation, some were asked about political activities, a majority perhaps about their access to weapons. In general, the inspectors seemed to have asked all kinds of questions - sometimes they questioned the prisoners of things that seemed of no relevance to their case whatsoever. If a prisoner denied any charges made against him or her, the person allegedly was likely to be or continued to be maltreated. Many a time prisoners reportedly agreed to anything held against them just to avoid or reduce the mistreatment, but then the guards and interrogators would find just another excuse to proceed with the mistreatment it seems. In a number of reported cases, there appears to be limited, if any, correlation between what the prisoners explained when interrogated and the records made from the interrogation sessions. One detainee, for example, was questioned about participation in the Serbian plebiscite and the referendum held in BiH, and about political activity in general. This person was convicted on the basis of the interrogation session, but for armed revolt, stealing weapons, and for planning genocide against the Serbs - which were issues not at all addressed during the interrogation. It was a death sentence. There were not many prisoners officially sentenced to death. Of those who were sentenced, some were executed immediately, others were just to remain in the camp until death one day caught up with them. The person just mentioned was in the second category and survived.

Allegedly, the inspectors had long lists prepared ahead of time according to which the prisoners were called for interrogation - it was not done at random or at the whim of some individual Serbs. The precise character of the lists used is not yet known to outsiders, meaning non-Serbs. Since they were lists with thousands of names, they were not prepared readily although camp facilities to some extent seemed improvised in practical terms. One possibility could have been that the lists were taken straight from the 1991 census. This possibility, however, does not seem to correspond with the actual lists which prisoners themselves claim to have seen on occasion.

All the women reportedly experienced bad interrogation sessions.

In general, when prisoners were called for interrogation, other prisoners tried to provide them with some clothing which was not all in tatters so that they would have a little protection for the skin. It is stated that it even happened that prisoners - before potential interrogation sessions - smeared themselves with blood from fellow prisoners maltreated already, with the hope that it could give them an easier time. Blood stained clothing served a similar purpose.

Mistreatment and torture were not confined to interrogation sessions. Extreme abuses were reportedly carried out by camp guards at any time, but especially at night. Sometimes the guards seemed to select their victims at random. Sometimes they probably had personal
grudges to settle with someone. Sometimes they seemed to act in a kind of follow-up after the day's interrogations, coming back for victims from then.

At night, the guards were often more or less drunk. Sometimes they were joined by unruly elements from outside the camp, but that could happen in the daytime as well. Dusan Tadic is one example. Also, the Red Berets from Banja Luka (see Chapter V.C. supra) came to assist their Serbian comrades in the camp. Normally, the guards lit a bonfire at night and played loud music to overpower screams and moaning from prisoners.

When prisoners were called out at night - it could, for example, be five to 10 people from the large garage plus some from other rooms - they reportedly more often than not did not come back to their rooms ever.

Every night the prisoners were seized with fear that this could be their night - the night when they would be subjected to maltreatment and possibly, or rather probably, death. The guards allegedly organized sheer orgies in brute force and destruction. Some prisoners were victimized next to or in the bonfire, others in the White House, and some were walked towards the Red House. Some experienced two of these options. It seems that the same prisoners were not taken both to the White House and the Red House.

One former prisoner relates:

«Arriving to Logor Omarska they were ordered up against the wall facing it and with their hands up - they were beaten. All the eight of them were taken to the White House, the second room to the right. The room was approximately 25 square metres and there were some 60 to 70 barely alive prisoners there. It was mainly young people who had surrendered themselves on the Kozara Mountain. Himself he was allowed to settle down next to a person [whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons], who later was killed in the camp. Of all the other people who were there, it was only one deaf and dumb man and himself who were not killed in the camp. There was one window in the room, and guards outside it. The door was half wood and half glass. Maybe 30 minutes later, it was dead silent in the room, a guard came in screaming that the one who was intended to flee had to come outside. He was ordered outside, where a bonfire was lit. All the guards were drunk. They asked him where he was hiding his weapon. He did not know how Logor Omarska was operated. He said that he had no weapon. They asked him for his name. He was then allowed to return inside. The guards outside the window were poking around like pigs, swearing at him, calling him names. They told him to come to the window and to lean his head out - he could see very little, it was dark. He saw only a knife gleaming in the dark. They asked him if he wanted to buy cigarettes, he answered in the affirmative and was given two packets. He shared one packet and was ordered to shut the window. The next day he saw a horrible - unimaginable and overwhelming - sight outside, they were all his fellow men who had been tormented. [Five men were named by the witness, who stated that two of them were killed in Omarska].»

Starting from the very beginning of the camp, female prisoners were allegedly raped by the Serbian camp guards, Serbian camp officials, and other Serbs. Rapes were reportedly often combined with beatings and other abuses. Often rapes were committed by several
perpetrators one after the other. Sometimes the rapist had an audience, sometimes it was merely fellow perpetrators waiting to take turns. Like the rest of the prison population the women were not as such protected against either ill-treatment or torture.

Two of the youngest women spent most of the time in the White House where they were raped and tortured. Almost all the women were badly tortured when in the camp. Most women were subjected to sexual assault - they were humiliated by being promised privileges and threatened that if they did not obey, they would not survive.

The guards reportedly tried to force one prisoner (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) to rape his fellow prisoner (whose name is also not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), a young woman. He did not want to. He had angina pectoris. The guards stripped both. The male prisoner begged and screamed, «I cannot, I cannot, she could have been my daughter». The guards beat him, his heart could probably not take it. In any event, he was carried outside where it was raining heavily. The next morning other prisoners saw the male prisoner's dead body laying outside of the White House.

Men were also reportedly sexually abused in the camp. Prisoners were, inter alia, forced to have homosexual intercourse with one another, close relatives - like fathers and sons - among them. Worst of all were numbers of reported castrations carried out by a variety of primitive means. On one occasion, Dusan Tadic allegedly forced one prisoner to bite off the testicles of other prisoners who all died subsequently. In most cases, the guards are said to have performed the castrations themselves. Probably all the victims of castrations died due to severe losses of blood. On one occasion, the guards aimed a fire hose on the victim's wound afterwards. (For more information regarding rape and sexual assault, see Annex IX, Rape and Sexual Assault.)

According to the Gregorian calendar, Saint Peter's Day is on 29 June, but according to the Julian calendar, which is followed by the Serbian Orthodox church, all religious feasts are celebrated 13 days later. Christmas, just to mention one other example, is celebrated on 6 January. On 12 July 1992, Petrovdan (Saint Peter's Day), the Serbian guards reportedly took care to beat every single prisoner on their way to receive the daily food rations. There were 30 prisoners eating at a time. The guards beat them both on their way in and on their way out. The guards reportedly also celebrated this religious feast with other more severe acts of violence, killing more prisoners than they did on an average day and night.

Due to the violence in the camp, all the inmates felt a strong urge to blend into the background and be as invisible as possible. It was a matter of life or death never to do anything that possibly could provoke a Serb - but it was unpredictable what could inflame someone. Whatever a prisoner did, it could be wrong. In general, it was not advisable for a prisoner to look a Serb camp official in the eye. The subservient prisoner's position was head bent low and eyes looking to the ground, with the hands at the back. One prisoner eating a piece of bread from his meal was addressed by a guard and offered the latter to have some. The prisoner used a Turkish word used in Bosnia, saying «Bujrum!» - meaning «Please have some!» The guard was infuriated and allegedly killed the prisoner (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). Those who successfully avoided
drawing attention experienced relief. But at the same time, they also had an irrational feeling of guilt of having some personal responsibility for those prisoners who under these circumstances remained visible and thus were targeted by the Serbs.

When new prisoners arrived at Logor Omarska, they were normally received with beatings from the very moment they disembarked from the vehicles in which they arrived. Some newcomers died, as they immediately had their heads smashed into a brick wall. Killed upon arrival - they were murdered, but not actually detained in Logor Omarska. How these captured non-Serbs were recorded in the camp files is unknown.

Survivors suggest that of five deaths, four were due to torture and one resulted from shooting.

In general, the suffering of each individual prisoner became a burden for all the prisoners. There was so little they could do to assist one another under the circumstances. There were obviously some small practical things that one could do to be of some help. But, when it really counted in matters of life and death and personal integrity and dignity, they were all powerless victims. It did none the less make a difference that they shared in the horrors and that they to some extent could console one another. It was probably also important for those dying and being abused that there were witnesses to their suffering or at least to the general situation.

The terror of never knowing when something would happen and what that would be not only incapacitated the prisoners, but it also affected their mental health. The latter was also the effect of the overall suffering in the camp. It did not ease this situation that the dead prisoners normally were thrown out on the grass where the other prisoners would see them. Some prisoners estimate that on an average there may have been 10 to 15 bodies displayed on the grass each morning, when the first prisoners went to receive their daily food rations. But there were also other dead bodies observed in other places at other times. Some prisoners died from their wounds or other causes in the rooms where they were detained. Constantly being exposed to the death and suffering of fellow prisoners made it impossible for anyone over any period of time to forget in what setting he or she was.

There are reports to indicate that a few dead prisoners were soaked with gasoline and set on fire next to the garbage container in the camp. But most of the time, the dead bodies were removed from the camp in a small yellow pickup truck. Five Serbs, who were in charge of the actual removal of the dead bodies, are known by name. However, their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

Given the length of time Logor Omarska was used, the numbers of prisoners detained in the open, and the allegations that dead bodies were exhibited there almost every morning, it will be surprising if there are no satellite photographs of the camp facilities when still in use, which may shed some light on the issues addressed in this chapter.

Simo Drljaca, chief of police, when asked by a visitor (in 1992) if Omarska did come under the civilian government of Prijedor, replied that Logor Omarska «was run together with the [Serbian] army and the [Serbian] police». Being told that an army spokesperson
had said the camp was run under the local police, Drljaca just said «Maybe». Questioned
again under whose authority the camp was run, he responded that, «Military was doing the
investigation: they had 40 inspectors».

Concerning the Serbs who were directly operating Logor Omarska, their names are all
known to the United Nations Commission of Experts and the ICTFY. That is, the names of the
camp leadership and the different shifts of guards inside the camp, the inspectors, and the
clerks are available. In addition, the names of individuals who visited the camp and allegedly
committed serious crimes there, such as Dusan Tadic, have been registered. Here it suffices
to mention but some of the central people involved.

The names of the camp leadership and the commanders of shifts of guards are known,
but not disclosed here for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. One of the identified
camp leaders was suspended on 27 June 1992, because he attempted to help his Muslim
brothers-in-law and some other Muslims and Croats.

Four of the members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor are known to have
visited Logor Omarska. Their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial
reasons.

Also, one identified journalist, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or
prosecutorial reasons, reportedly did visit the camp. Whether he was a member of the
Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor is not quite clear.

Two members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor have themselves allegedly on
occasions performed brutal interrogations and torture in Logor Omarska. Their names are
not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

Some high-ranking Serbian officers from Banja Luka once visited Logor Omarska, arriving
by a large transport helicoptre. In leaving, they brought with them from the mine and ore
processing plant a huge quantity of rubber conveyer belts. (It is known that this kind of
rubber belts are used in the wars in the former Yugoslavia to protect tanks.)

As concerns the local Serbian leadership - military as well as civilian - there is nothing to
indicate that Logor Omarska was ever considered a secret. Conversely, all available
information indicates that the existence of the concentration camp as such was common
knowledge when it still was used as a camp. Ed Vulliamy reported that:

«[T]he local Red Cross had indeed visited Omarska, and given it a clean bill of health. Dr.
Dusko Ivic said later: 'Oh yes, I have certainly visited Omarska, and my professional
assessment of the health of the people there is very good, apart from some diarrhoea.'»

Before 6 August 1992, when the camp was virtually closed, no humanitarian
organization (neither the ICRC nor anyone else) had visited Logor Omarska. In actual fact, it
was the focus of the international media on the camp that prompted the camp closure (see
Chapter XII.A. infra). Both when journalists were eventually permitted limited Serbian
guided tours in the camp and the ICRC visited, the five women still detained in the camp
were always hidden. Sometimes in such cases, the women were squeezed into the back seat
of a Mercedes and driven to Omarska village, where they were guarded. After 6 August 1992, the ICRC thus registered only the male prisoners remaining in Logor Omarska, not the women as they were hidden. From this time on, the ICRC visited the camp once or twice a week. Now, the male detainees received food twice a day.

When the camp for most practical purposes had been closed and cleaned with only a limited number of prisoners left to be paraded for international media and aid agencies, journalist Ed Vulliamy described those deemed in good enough condition to be paraded for him as follows:

«Nothing could have prepared us for what we see when we come through the back gates of what was the Omarska iron mine and ore processing works, and are ushered into the canteen area. Across a yard, a group of prisoners who have just emerged from a door in the side of a large rust-coloured metal shed are adjusting their eyes to the sunlight and being ordered into a straight line by the barked commands of a uniformed armed guard. Then, as part of some rigid, well-worn camp drill, they run in single file across the courtyard and into the canteen. Above them in an observation post is the watchful eye, hidden behind reflective sunglasses, of a beefy guard who follows their weary canter with the barrel of his heavy machine gun.

There are thirty of them running; their heads newly shaven, their clothes baggy over their skeletal bodies. Some are barely able to move. In the canteen, there are no more barked orders, the men know the drill all right. They line up in obedient and submissive silence and collect their ration: a meager, watery portion of beans augmented with bread crumbs, and stale roll, which they collect as they file along the metal railings. The men are at various stages of human decay and affliction; the bones of their elbows and wrists protrude like pieces of jagged stone from the pencil-thin stalks to which their arms have been reduced. Their skin is putrefied, the complexions of their faces have been corroded. These humans are alive but decomposed, debased, degraded, and utterly subservient, and yet they fix their huge, hollow eyes on us with looks like the blades of knives. There is nothing quite like the sight of the prisoner desperate to talk and to convey some terrible truth that is so near yet so far, but who dares not. Their stares burn, they speak only with their terrified silence, and eyes inflamed with the articulation of stark, undiluted, desolate fear-without-hope. They sit down at sparse metal tables, and wolf down their meal. It is very obviously the only one of the day; if they ate even twice as much, they would not be so gaunt and withered. The meal takes precisely one minute; the guards signal that time is up, and the men make up another queue by the exit.» *32

Furthermore, according to Ed Vulliamy:

«In between more waffle about the jihad and genocide against Serbs, we learn that Omarska is an 'investigation centre' for men suspected of being members of the Government Army. The men are rounded up, then 'screened' to determine whether they are 'fighters' or 'civilians'. Those found guilty of 'preparing the rebellion' go into 'Category A', explains Mrs. Balban [who translated for the Serb regime in Logor Omarska when Vulliamy visited the camp]. There is no information on their next destination. Those found to have been territorial defence soldiers (but not 'preparing the rebellion') go into 'Category B' and
are sent to Manjaca, and the rest go to another camp, Trnopolje, down the road. [A fourth category was hostages, meaning people for exchange, see Chapter XII.B. infra.] *33

In short, all information available about Logor Omarska seems to indicate that it was more than anything else a death camp. The detainees were not there to work or serve a specific purpose. There is no information to sustain a claim that the detainees were in transit to somewhere else. As far as the prisoners were concerned, the interrogations led nowhere out of the camp, and the camp conditions were such that very few, if any, prisoners would have survived long-term detention.

B. Logor Keraterm

In most respects, Logor Keraterm resembled Logor Omarska. The two camps had much the same status and organization. In a sense, it is probably correct to consider Keraterm almost like a smaller, but basically not better, extension of Omarska.

Also, Logor Keraterm received non-Serbian male adults. To this camp came leaders from the villages and those further down on the social ladder. It seems, however, to some extent, to have been a question of space where a specific group of prisoners were to be detained. At least on one occasion, it is known that a bus with captive non-Serbs was driven between the camps in order to unload the prisoners in any one of the detention facilities. As there was considered to be no room available in any of these camps, all but two of the prisoners were reportedly executed (see Chapters VII.D. supra and VIII.E. infra). Logor Trnopolje was, it seems, not viewed as an alternative for these prisoners. Trnopolje had, as will be related in the next chapter, a different character from that of Keraterm and Omarska.

Also when describing Keraterm, one could start with a list of prisoners incarcerated, but in an analysis like this that seems unnecessary. The point is already made that the entire non-Serbian leadership who survived the military attacks was brought for detention in Omarska or alternatively, in Keraterm. In the following, the focus will be on the respects in which Logor Keraterm differed considerably from Logor Omarska.

No women were apparently detained in Logor Keraterm for any length of time or killed there. After the Serbian military attack on the Kozarac area (see Chapter VII.B. supra), a mixed group of captured civilians were reportedly taken through Keraterm. Subsequently, a number of males and at least one, though possibly a few, women were taken to Omarska. Some other women and elderly men passed the camp probably on their way to Trnopolje. Later there were reportedly transfers to Omarska once or twice a week. Between 10 and 20 women may have passed through the camp with a more or less immediate onward transfer.

The exact number of detainees in Logor Keraterm varied over time. The average was reportedly between 1,000 and 1,050 captives. But on occasion, the number of prisoners may have been considerably higher, up to 1,500 men.

Keraterm was built as a ceramic tile factory in 1987. The industrial production reportedly first started in 1990. The factory premises are located in the Cirkin Polje district
of Prijedor town, next to the main road Prijedor - Banja Luka, and not far from the railway linking the same towns.

There is one main building at the industrial plant - the factory building - in which the prisoners were detained. The factory building is possibly a combination of two structures. The entire complex was not far from rectangular, rather long and narrow, with one part (a little less than half the length of the building), narrower than the rest. At the back of the building was the production area of the ceramic factory. The narrower part of the entire structure was two stories tall. On the first floor, there were two halls (No. 1 and No. 2) where prisoners were detained. At the short wall of the factory structure, there was an entrance to the production area and to interrogation rooms on the second floor. Where the overall structure widens out and connects with the second part, or the rest of the building complex, there is a storage room which apparently was not normally used to detain prisoners. In the previous in-between storage room or next to it, there was a room with toilet facilities. Next to this again were Hall No. 3 and Hall No. 4 which both were used to detain prisoners. At the far end of the structure, adjacent to Hall No. 4, there was a room to which prisoners, at least on occasion, were taken to be beaten or otherwise tortured.

The camp was surrounded by a wire fence (approximately two and a half metres high), and had one guard house at the entrance to the camp and another one next to a cargo scale for trucks - also close to the camp entrance. All the main doors to the detention halls faced the camp entrance.

There are allegations that the military police of the Army SRBiH had a base on the first floor in the area where the interrogation rooms were. There was no first floor above the toilet, Hall No. 3, Hall No. 4 and the adjoining chamber of maltreatment.

Across the main street, there was a separate office building for the Kozaraputevi, a separate road repair entity. Reportedly, there were two military units occupying this office building, one is referred to as merely a military unit, the other one as a communication unit which also had at its disposal three vehicles - TAM 150 - with sizable antennas. In the period when Keraterm was used as a concentration camp, the Kozaraputevi office was, however, used as a facility related to the camp and used also by Serbian camp officials for different purposes. Some prisoners, who were never detained in Logor Keraterm, were taken there for interrogation.

Like in Omarska, the prisoners in Logor Keraterm were squeezed into detention in a sardines-in-a-tin-like fashion. In Hall No. 1 and Hall No. 4, there may have been an average of up to 200 prisoners detained in each at any time. Hall No. 3 may normally have had a population of 200 to 250 detainees. Hall No. 2, however, being the biggest one - possibly 120 square metres - may have given room for between 500 and 700 inmates.

The cramped conditions in Keraterm and a similar lack of sanitary provisions and hygiene as in Logor Omarska gave the same ensuing problems of hygiene as in that camp (see Chapter VIII.A. supra). The toilet room had four urinals which the prisoners could use if and when the guards agreed. As maltreatment was part of the camp routine in Keraterm also, the picture of everything from blood stained walls to lethally injured prisoners with
infected wounds were part of the overall camp scenery. It is not known if there were any medical doctors who stayed for any length of time in Keraterm, but at least one medical doctor passed through the camp on his way to Omarska. There is no information to suggest that ill or wounded prisoners in the camp were ever provided with any medical aid by the Serbs, and there is no information about any sick-ward. Conversely, reports suggest that some seriously ill or severely wounded prisoners were deposited together with dead camp inmates (see Chapter VIII.F. infra).

The food provided to the detainees in Keraterm was similar to that provided for the Logor Omarska inmates. Generally speaking, the prisoners would be provided with their daily food rations from the time they arrived at the camp. Two cooks came every day to the camp to arrange for the prisoners' daily food rations. The food is said normally to have consisted of a piece of bread and a spoonful of boiled cabbage or beans. The cooks took up their position next to the toilet facilities. The prisoners had normally less than 30 seconds to finish their daily rations, some say. Others think that it was arranged so that 10 prisoners had a total of two minutes to get hold of their daily rations. As many as one third of the prisoners would face the risk that there would be no more food available for them in one particular day. Sometimes the detainees were instructed to crawl to receive their rations. Sometimes the guards reportedly amused themselves by shooting above the heads of those coming up for their meals or eating. The prisoners were reportedly beaten on the way to their meals.

Inside the camp, the dead prisoners would normally be collected in a refuse dump or in a garbage container. Sometimes an identified psychiatrist, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, reportedly came to the camp and issued death certificates for such prisoners. When there were transports of corpses out of the camp, fellow prisoners would, it is said, normally be the ones to pile them on transport vehicles. These prisoners were, in most cases, allegedly ordered to follow the transports out of the camp. Later, it is said, these prisoners were not heard from again. About one month after the Serbian military attack on the Kozarac area, a number of detainees were taken out to collect and bury dead bodies in that area. At least one of them survived later to tell about the undertaking.

As mentioned, some prisoners just entered Keraterm to be transferred to Logor Omarska or to Logor Trnopolje (women and elderly males). Allegedly, a few prisoners were released from Logor Keraterm up to 5 June 1992 - after interrogation - but there are said to be no known cases of releases after this time. The rest of the inmates either succumbed in the concentration camp or were transferred out of the camp as it was closed in early August 1992 (see Chapter XII.A, infra). There is no information to suggest that anyone successfully fled the camp - possibly there may have been some such cases from among those taken out of the camp with such working obligations as described above - to inter corpses from the camp and people killed during Serbian military-cum-«ethnic cleansing» campaigns.

Reportedly, Serbian military police, civilian police, ordinary military and paramilitary fighters almost every day came with new groups of non-Serbian captives to the camp. The prisoners were ordered out of the vehicles just inside the camp entrance, normally next to the scale. Here they were lined up and were asked for identity papers and valuables. More
often than not, a guard would approach the prisoner or prisoners first in line and ask them what they were doing in the camp. Without waiting for an answer, the guard would beat the one or those questioned, or have them beat one another, all according to the whim of the guards. As the prisoners were pushed and hurled into one of the detention halls, most of them were beaten.

Sometimes the maltreatment upon arrival was even worse. On 14 June 1992, it is claimed that two bus-loads of captives from the hamlet Sivci (in the Kozarac area) were brought into Logor Keraterm. These prisoners were ordered to leave the buses ten at a time and lay down on the ground where allegedly guards (the name of their identified shift commander is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) beat the newcomers with rifle butts, before the same prisoners were ordered up against the wall where another group of alleged perpetrators (from outside the camp) came to cut the prisoners' armpits and pierce their arms and legs with bayonets. Afterwards these prisoners were taken into Hall No. 3 and a majority was probably later moved on to Logor Omarska.

At night time, the guards - not on one of the commander's shift, it is stated, but under the two other shift commanders, and allegedly with the approval of the camp commander - called prisoners out from the detention halls and beat and otherwise tortured them. (The names of the four identified commanders are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.) The guards would, for example, call out every prisoner with a certain surname. Participating in these orgies were reportedly people from outside the camp - locals like an identified taxi driver whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons (the taxi driver is said to have been a frequent and particularly brutal participant), soldiers back from the front for some days, and a gang of villains dressed entirely in black (long black leather coats, large wide-rimmed black hats, black boots, etc.) and with shaved heads. The men in the latter group were about 30-years old; they reportedly also came to Logor Omarska and carried out torture and killings. Sometimes camp guards and/or people from outside the camp came into detention halls and fired shots above the heads of the prisoners. As the walls were of metal some bullets allegedly ricocheted and wounded prisoners. One day in mid-July 1992, to give but one example of the brutality, an unknown Serb came to the camp and pointed out some five or six prisoners from the village Gornji Orlovi, who thence were severely tortured. One from the latter group of prisoners - his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons - reportedly died during this torture.

Reportedly, there was almost no day with less than two or three prisoners killed in Logor Keraterm.

One Serb is known to have been detained in the camp - allegedly for having participated in the referendum in BiH (see Chapter III.F. supra) and having voted in favour of a unified and sovereign BiH. His name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. He came from the village Ljeskare (in the Ljubija area).

One former inmate in Keraterm relates the following about the by far largest alleged massacre taking place in the camp:
«On 20 July 1992, Hall No. 3 was emptied for prisoners. These detainees were dispersed into 
the three other detention halls. Later in the day, new bus-loads of captives arrived to the 
camp. At this time detainees in Logor Keratem could observe that it was burning in the 
Hambarine area [see Chapter VII.D. supra]. The newcomers were detained in Hall No. 3. 
Starting at the same time the prisoners in the three other halls were ordered to urinate in 
plastic barrels only.

In Hall No. 3 the doors were firmly closed and there was no fresh air for the prisoners 
squeezed in there. No food and no water was provided for the newly arrived detainees as 
long as they stayed in Hall No. 3. A door from the toilet area to the hall was firmly blocked 
by Serbian camp officials. Thenceforth the barrels with urine were emptied next to this 
blocked door to flow into Hall No. 3.

In the night of 24 July 1992, one camp commander's shift [in the following referred to as 
shift A] came to the camp possibly at about 19.00 hours, later also another commander's 
shift of camp guards [in the following referred to as shift B] appeared. [The names of the 
two identified commanders are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.] 
Earlier in the day some 15 people in military uniforms had come to the camp. There were 
four machine gun posts outside the front of the factory building, now the weapons were all 
aimed at Hall No. 3. In the evening the guards on shift B took out in front of the factory 
building some ten prisoners, had them kneel in a circle with their hands behind their heads. 
The guards than ran around the circle screaming as they beat the prisoners severely. One of 
the people thus maltreated was subsequently thrown next to Hall No. 2 by the guards, and 
died there some 15 minutes later. Others may have encountered similar consequences.
At about mid-night it could be heard that windows high up on the front wall to Hall No. 3 
were broken. Someone cried out, 'Do not shoot unless the commander of shift A instructs 
that.' (Shift A was on duty that night.) Then someone else cried out, 'They [the detainees] 
are fleeing.' Then heavy machine gun fire started. The commander of shift A yelled that 
the shooting should stop. His instruction was ignored, and someone mocked him saying that, 'A 
Serbian mother has given birth to an Ustasa son.' At first, prisoners like himself detained 
outside Hall No. 3 thought that the long-lasting shooting was merely to terrorize the 
prisoners. At dawn he was told by fellow prisoners that it seemed that the prisoners in Hall 
No. 3 had been killed. A little later he himself saw a huge pile of dead bodies outside of Hall 
No. 3. At about 05.00 hours a large lorry - FAD 1620, 24 tons - driven by an identified man 
[whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons] arrived to the 
camp. Some prisoners probably from Hall No. 1 and Hall No. 4 (he was detained in Hall No. 2 
himself) and a few who appeared to be survivors from Hall No. 3, were ordered to heap the 
dead bodies on the lorry. First they had to take out dead prisoners from Hall No. 3, 
thereafter to remove the pile of corpses laying outside this hall. One prisoner participating 
in loading the dead - and with the corpses also wounded prisoners - on the lorry, afterwards 
told him that he had counted 98 dead and 62 or 63 wounded prisoners. Others claimed the 
total of dead was 150, and that the wounded numbered between 30 and 40. Later in the 
day, two fire trucks came and hosed down Hall No. 3 and the area outside it to remove all 
the blood there.

The night of the mass-killing and the next day the main road (from Prijedor to Banja Luka) 
passing the camp was closed for traffic.»
All available information supports by and large this account. As for the fate of the corpses from the massacre and wounded prisoners removed from the camp with the dead, see Chapters VII.F, supra and VIII.F, infra.

On the morning of 26 July 1992, it is reported that a total of 21 dead prisoners were placed in front of the factory building. Before being removed, the corpses were photographed laying face up.

At daytime, prisoners were taken for interrogation, like in Omarska. The prisoners were interrogated in the camp itself in the interrogation rooms on the first floor. Also in Logor Keraterm, the interrogators were inspectors coming into the camp for this specific purpose - again like in Omarska. The inspectors were assisted by camp guards in mistreating their victims. Among the inspectors were policemen in active service, retired policemen, and lawyers.

It is said that approximately one half of the camp guards were in police uniforms, and the other half in military outfits.

The camp location next to the main road Prijedor - Banja Luka, made even the dead prisoners visible, at least on occasion, to bypassers. Normally, the dead would be laying outside of the factory building in the morning, before they were removed to the refuse dump/garbage container or out of the camp.

Concerning the Serbs who were directly operating Logor Keraterm, their names are all known to the United Nations Commission of Experts and the ICTFY. That is, the names of the camp leadership and the different shifts of guards inside the camp and the inspectors are available. In addition, the names of individuals who visited the camp and allegedly committed serious crimes there, have been registered. Here it suffices to mention but some of the central people involved.

The names of the camp leadership and the commanders of shifts of guards are known but not disclosed here for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. Reportedly, there was a change of camp commander and general chief of security from 28 or 29 July 1992.

Former inmates in the camp allege that some named members of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor visited Logor Keraterm. The names of the «visitors» are not disclosed here for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

Logor Keraterm has for several reasons been given less attention than Logor Omarska. The latter was the camp where the very elite of the non-Serbian community - the upper echelons in all fields - were primarily incarcerated. Logor Omarska was furthermore more than double the size of Logor Keraterm, and Logor Omarska became the main focus of the media - both television and newspapers. Several books - chronicles in part - about Logor Omarska have also been published.

None the less, Logor Keraterm has the same character as Logor Omarska in terms of being a death camp. For the individual prisoners, the traumas of having been detained in
Logor Keraterm and Logor Omarska respectively may have been much the same. Both concentration camps presented the inmates with utterly gruesome experiences.

C. Logor Trnopolje

Prior to Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm being closed, essentially only children, women, and elderly men were taken to Trnopolje. The adult and not too old men (normally those between 16 and 60 or 65-years old) were taken to Omarska and Keraterm camps. It was, in other words, the non-Serbian people in the categories later deported (see Chapter X.A., X.B. and X.C. infra) who were detained in Logor Trnopolje. Some non-Serbs rounded up for deportations were reportedly brought to the camp even from the Sanski Most and Kljuc districts.

The total number of camp inmates reportedly varied on an average from between 4,000 to 7,000 people. In the wake of the major Serbian military attack on the non-Serbian villages on the left bank of the Sana River (see Chapter VII.D. supra), there may have been altogether some 7,000 detainees in Logor Trnopolje. This period - together with the one just after the military campaigns in late May and early June (see Chapters VII.A., VII.B. and VII.C. supra) - may have been the single most crowded time in the camp's history.

Some people stayed in the camp for a very limited period of time, such as for a few days (some reportedly even stayed for one night only), others remained there for months as they were not deported. Some arrived at least twice to the camp - first rounded up and detained, then released for lack of space, and then rearrested.

Non-Serbs were, after the Serbian military attack on Prijedor town (see Chapter VII.C. supra), first gathered in different locations inside and just outside of Prijedor town and then taken to Trnopolje. A number of women and children from houses in Prijedor town, which had not been destroyed, were at least temporarily released after some three or four days. In late June 1992, non-Serbs who had sought refuge in the Puharska suburb of Prijedor town together with long-term inhabitants from this suburb (which had a predominantly Muslim population) were rounded up and brought to Trnopolje.

There are reports of non-Serbs having approached the local Serbian Red Cross in Prijedor to ask for the whereabouts of relatives who had «disappeared», were detained or deported, and who then were forcibly taken by Serbian Red Cross personnel into one of their buses and transported to Logor Trnopolje to be incarcerated without any reason given.

The camp was located very near the first station, Stanica Kozarac, on the railway from Prijedor to Banja Luka. The area is said to have been predominantly Muslim. The local school had, however, been occupied by Serbs who made it a stronghold before they converted it into a concentration camp.

The camp was opened in a area of and adjacent to a primary school. The entire area used has the shape of an irregular triangle. There were three main building complexes in the camp compound: the school with its sports hall, a cinema hall with some smaller rooms next to it, and a storage building. A number of tents were put up in the camp yard as well.
Some of the detainees were instructed as to where in the camp they were to stay. Others were simply told to find themselves a place where they could sleep.

The camp was surrounded by barbed wire, and a number of camp guards watched the detainees. The inmates had limited possibilities to move or to find anything to eat. A permission could be obtained to leave the camp for some hours - but that gave no inalienable rights for those going out neither vis-a-vis those guards who had given them permission to go out nor those guards who happened to be around when they came back. These detainees were left at the mercy, behest, or whim of the guards. At best, those going out had no problems when outside or upon return to the camp, in other cases they were lucky if they could pay in cash or kind to return. Outgoing prisoners often had family members in the camp so that they were likely to return - if for nothing else than for the safety of their relatives. Outside the camp, they were outlaws, and de facto they had normally nowhere to run. It was bad in the camp and so it was outside as well (see Chapter IX.C infra).

Furthermore, as the camp was a staging area for deportations, those going out of the camp ran the risk that they would be separated from family members in case they were not all in the camp when detainees were deported. The separation of relatives together in the camp could, however, happen at any time during the deportations. The deportees were to move at the behest of their Serbian captors. Bribes could bring about some flexibility, it is said, but not necessarily.

It was summer and early autumn, meaning harvest time. Some prisoners - especially farmers from nearby areas - were ordered by the camp guards to leave the camp to harvest especially vegetables in their own or other local fields. These workers had, however, no protection outside the camp either. One even claims that the majority of the detainees from Trnopolje killed in August 1992 were people on this kind of work assignment, whom the camp guards killed outside the camp. The one man who makes this allegation reports that he himself was commanded together with others to bury eight people killed in vegetable fields.

Basically, there was far too little space for all the camp inmates in Logor Trnopolje, but the detainees were not cramped in like in Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm. The sanitation in the camp was far, far better than in the two other camps. There were better toilet facilities and more water available for the detainees who also had more private belongings such as the odd cooking pots, buckets, some additional clothes, etc. Still the sanitation and hygiene as such was bad in the camp. But due to the deportations, the turnover rate of the majority of the prisoners was high and eased the sanitary situation. There were no proper provisions for camp inmates in terms of food and water, clothing, bedding, or medical care.

Sometimes the prisoners received no food for the first three days in the camp. For the short-term detainees, there could even be no food made available at all. Thus, many were rather exhausted before being deported - during deportations there would again often be no food at all made available for days (see Chapters X.B. and X.C. infra). There was at least one medical doctor detained in the camp for some period of time. The doctor provided
fellow detainees with assistance to the extent possible, but did not have proper medical equipment on hand.

The detainees were, in general, not working in the camp. Five boys 13 or 14-years old were once ordered to load or remove some timber. When the job was done, they were reportedly all shot dead by an identified camp guard, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

The detainees in Trnopolje were more or less systematically deprived of their valuables and frequently also of their identification papers and other documents on hand. There are numerous reports of embezzlement and pilfering by camp guards and other camp officials. In addition to the actions of camp officials, there are reports suggesting that a number of Serbian soldiers back from the war for the weekend or a few days functioned as camp guards to enrich themselves and take out aggression in terms of committing rapes and otherwise seriously abusing detainees. These occasional guards are even said to have killed or participated in killing camp inmates.

There were no formalized interrogation sessions in Logor Trnopolje. There were in other words no inspectors arriving to question the camp inmates. The incoming captives only had their names and whereabouts recorded.

Killings were not rare in the camp, nor was the infliction of torture. Harassment in general is claimed to have been the rule and not the exception. Rapes were reportedly the most common of the serious crimes to which camp inmates were subjected. The nights were when most of the injustice was performed. The nightly terror of possibly being called out for rape or other abuses was reportedly a severe mental constraint even for short-term detainees in the camp. Many detainees reportedly never returned after venturing with or without explicit permission outside of the camp. Other former detainees report that there were times when they were ordered to bury non-Serbs, who had been killed, in fields and meadows near the camp.

The allegation is that on one occasion some camp inmates had their hands and feet chained and were forced to lay down on the ground in the camp enclosure. Then, tractors were driven over their legs. Those who did not perish from their injuries relatively quickly, were later shot dead. Guards had taken up positions to prevent fellow prisoners from assisting those in agony. Reportedly, mainly wealthy people were shackled and killed. It is said that in the camp this kind of execution took place at least on four different occasions.

The first period was allegedly the worst in Trnopolje, with the highest numbers of inmates killed, raped, and otherwise mistreated and tortured.

At night, the detainees could hear the noises of drunk soldiers and other visitors to the camp, and the screaming of fellow inmates abused or taken out of the camp. It was expected that inmates taken out of the camp would be abused. A number of those taken out at night allegedly never returned to the camp and have not been heard from again. For this reason, fellow inmates believe that they were killed after departure from the camp, possibly after being abused or raped.
On 6 June 1992, to give just one example of what is reported, Serbian tank drivers came into the camp and seized some 30-40 young female camp inmates. Arriving between 10:00 p.m. and midnight, the soldiers - one identified name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons - were more or less drunk. They forced the girls and women out with them. When the female prisoners were returned to the camp, they had been raped and mistreated, and their clothing was in tatters.

The people killed in the camp were usually removed soon after by some camp inmates who were ordered by the Serbs to take them away and bury them. These workers would normally come back to the camp.

Concerning the Serbs who were directly operating Logor Trnopolje, their names are known to the United Nations Commission of Experts and the ICTFY. That is, the names of the camp leadership and the guards inside the camp are known. In addition, the names of individuals who visited the camp and allegedly committed serious crimes there were registered, but are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. There are also long lists with names of Serbian soldiers who served as occasional guards in the camp, or who arrived in the camp to take out detainees to abuse them.

The name of the camp director in Logor Trnopolje, who was also a member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

The local Serbian Red Cross was abused by the Serbs then running it, to play a central role in the management of and the abuses related to Logor Trnopolje - in clear violation of the Red Cross mandate as such.

A staff member of the Red Cross in Prijedor, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, worked at the secretariat in Trnopolje where he was responsible for food supplies coming to the camp. Allegedly keeping food away from the internees, he caused terror and hunger, which was one of the reasons why prisoners in the camp succumbed.

Also, Logor Trnopolje changed much - meaning that the general situation in the camp was considerably ameliorated - after Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm were closed (see Chapter XII.A. infra). Most important was that the violence against camp inmates decreased, especially killings. All of the food provided by the ICRC did not reach detainees, but nutrition-wise the conditions are said to have improved.

None the less, it was when trying to describe the conditions in Logor Trnopolje at this later time (after it had become an «open reception centre», see Chapter XII.A. infra) that United Nations Human Rights envoy Mazowiecki said that «words fail me». One other representative of the international community relates (after a visit to the camp in the same period) that the road in front of the camp was strewn with empty cartridges when international observers first were admitted to the camp. According to camp inmates, random shooting by Serbs into the camp was just one of the various methods used to terrorize the detainees.
In late August 1992, most detainees from Prijedor town who had a house to return to, had been released from Trnopolje. People from the Kozarac area (and other destroyed areas) were registered by the ICRC. Former detainees from the camp (among them people transferred to Trnopolje as Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm were closed) then returned to the camp to be registered by the ICRC as well. Registration was considered the «passport» needed to flee the Serbian persecution. Many released prisoners had not dared to leave their houses upon return to Prijedor town, as they reportedly were afraid of being killed. Later, there were non-Serbs paying camp guards to enter the camp to seek a safe transport out of Opština Prijedor. This the Serbs used to illustrate what an agreeable place Trnopolje was.

Albeit Logor Trnopolje was not a death camp like Logor Omarska or Logor Keraterm, the label «concentration camp» is none the less justified for Logor Trnopolje due to the regime prevailing in the camp.

### D. Other places of detention

Several other places of detention were used at the same time as the above-mentioned camps. These detention facilities were mainly used for two purposes, one was initial interrogations and the other staging areas for deportations. A number of people were held in these areas for a relatively short period of time prior to being taken to one of the above-mentioned concentration camps.

Some of the male inhabitants of Prijedor town were, after being forced out of their homes there in late May and early June 1992, detained temporarily in a school in Svodna (a village outside Opština Prijedor, located along the road to Bosanski Novi). Another camp was established in a school building in the small village of Cela, about six kilometres south of Prijedor town.

Women, small children (sometimes only those below 12 years of age, sometimes also adolescents up to the age of 15), and elderly men (those from 60 or 65 years old and older) were gathered for deportation in stadiums (such as in the suburb Tukovi in Prijedor town, and in the town of Ljubija) or in sports halls at different schools. For a night or so, they might initially have been detained even in private houses in attacked areas.

After the attack on the Kozarac area (see Chapter VII.B, supra), the high school in Prijedor town - its courtyard and sports hall - was used to detain several thousand children, women, and elderly men. Initially, for the first hours that is, people from outside - such as relatives and friends - could enter the high school to speak with people, bring them some food, and even release the internees.

Men and other prisoners of special interest were occasionally detained at police stations and in military barracks or in other more or less randomly selected areas of convenience. Normally, such detention facilities were used for the individual prisoner for relatively short periods ranging from some hours to a few days. From these detention facilities, the prisoners were either released after having been given the message that they were no more wanted in the Srpske Opštine Prijedor, or transferred to one of the above-mentioned
camps. Some were killed when in detention - like non-Serbs could be killed anywhere: in their homes or gardens, on the streets, in the woods, on the mountains or in the hills, or actually wherever they were captured or merely attacked.

A number of women may have been short-term detainees in places, such as military barracks, where they allegedly were abused (see Chapters VII.B. and VII.D. supra).

As for the civilian non-Serbs rounded up in the attack on the villages on the left bank of the Sana River, many - especially from the southernmost areas - were taken to detention centres in Opstina Sanski Most, inter alia, to Logor Krings. For some, at present unknown, period of time, there was also a detention facility in the Ljubija area referred to as Logor Ciglane. Whether the latter is identical with the detention facility used in a central area of the iron ore mine - possibly the separator - is not clear either. Allegations are, however, that there may have been as many as 1,000 people detained in the place at the same time. The detainees were reportedly a mixture of both sexes and different age groups - a breakdown of which is not available for the time being.

**E. General characteristics**

On 23 May 1992, Serbian spokesmen officially announced the establishment of the first detention centre near Prijedor in northern BiH.

Soon after the Serbs took power, in late May 1992, Muslim and Croatian leaders in Prijedor started to «disappear», only later it became known that they had been taken to Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm. Political leaders, officials from the courts and the administration (inclusive the police), academics and other intellectuals, religious leaders, leaders from enterprises and businesses - the backbone of the Muslim and Croatian communities that is - were no more tolerated at liberty, or rather they were taken away apparently with the intent of their removal being permanent. Left behind without guidance and the strength of leadership were the much bewildered ordinary Muslim and Croatian people. This way Logor Omarska and in a similar way, but not to the same extent, Logor Keraterm became instruments of the overall destructive policy. Forcibly transferring children from one group to another group (not to say killing the same children) may be intended to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group - i.e. depriving the actual group of its future. Taking away the leaders of such a group deprives it of its present vitality, its ability to determine its political status and pursue its economic, social and cultural goals. Taking away the leaders means disarming the group intellectually and spiritually - it is a tactical, but lethal move facilitating further destruction of the group by rendering it open to almost any kind of abuse and destruction. Moreover, revival of a group requires leaders.

Among those detained in the camps were former non-Serbian policemen and other law and order people such as judges and jurists in general. Moreover, former military personnel, such as people enrolled in the TO, were particularly targeted. This left the non-Serbs also without any legal or armed protection.
As the camps of Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje were opened, only a few cases from there were opened for investigation although the criminal sector of the legal system was functioning in its own exclusive Serbian way.

In running the concentration camps, the Serbian police and the Serbian military cooperated. As in the military campaign against the non-Serbian habitations, the police and the military took advantage of the assistance of quasi-military elements and locally gathered manpower (for example, from the villages nearby Logor Omarska) also in the concentration camps. A number of the camp guards may have been recruited into the police or the military from the reserve, others were possibly new recruits. Whether to have assistance in exterminating detainees, or to give an outlet for general aggression and to legitimize aggression against non-Serbs, or a combination of these purposes, the Serbian leaders furthermore opened up the camps to the most brutal people around - belonging to paramilitary forces or just anybody. Especially in Logor Trnopolje, but also in the other camps, Serbian soldiers on leave from their ordinary service seem to have gratified both their greed and whatever sadistic inclinations they had.

Almost all the people in offices after the power change reportedly had knowledge of the death camps. These camps were spoken of in the SDS party, in broadcasts from Radio Prijedor and Television Banja Luka. The media mentioned names of some of the detainees and charged that the mentioned people were accused of having undermined society and of having prepared genocide against the Serbs.

According to an interview of Simo Drljaca (chief of the Serbian secret police and member of the Krizni Štab Srpske Opštine Prijedor):

Drljaca: «In the collection centres 'Omarska', 'Keraterm' and 'Trnopolje' more than 6,000 informative talks were held. Of this number 1,503 Muslims and Croats were sent to the camp 'Manjaca', on the basis of solid documentation on active participation in the fighting against the Army of Republika Srpska, and also participation in genocide against the Serbian people. Instead of letting them get their deserved punishment, the powerful men of the world expressing disdain forced us to release them all from Manjaca.» *34

The concentration camp premises were sometimes so packed with people that no more inmates could be crammed in. At least on one occasion, this allegedly resulted in an entire bus-load of newly captured non-Serbs being executed en masse. The bus, which was packed with captives from villages on the left bank of the Sana River, first tried to leave passengers at Logor Keraterm, then in Logor Omarska, and finally at Keraterm again - but in none of these places was there any room for the prisoners. Then, the bus was driven back across the Sana River. The bus passed the athletic field in Tukovi and continued towards the Rizvanovići area stopping at the gravel pit in «Suhi Prijedor» in front of a private house. All the captives but two were shot dead (see Chapter VII.D. supra). Another bus with fewer passengers - 27 all together - was on its way to the same gravel pit, but the bus-load of non-Serb workers primarily from Autotransport Prijedor were killed. It is believed that the dead bodies may have been left in the area to be washed away by a later inundation by the Sana River.
F. The disposal of the dead

The dead bodies from the massacre in Hall No. 3 in Keraterm (see Chapter VIII.B, supra) on 24 July 1992 were possibly later driven to the Kozarac area. At least it is reported that a truck with many dead bodies, from which blood was dripping on the road, was observed on the road from Kozarac towards Mrakovica (possibly some three kilometres from Mrakovica). The non-Serb who observed and reported this belonged to a group of concentration camp inmates who had been taken out of the camp to bury dead bodies in the Kozarac area. This man, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, also states that Serbian soldiers claimed that the dead were the «soldiers of Alija Izetbegovic». One of the Serbian soldiers reportedly stated that the truck had come from Logor Keraterm and that it contained approximately 200 dead bodies. The truck was green with a yellow car cover over the truck body. At the time, there were allegedly also many other dead bodies in the Kozarac area. Non-Serbs took part in digging graves along the road, the bodies were covered with a thin layer of soil between every layer of bodies.

The dead camp inmates from Logor Keraterm were usually removed by truck. There is said to be a mass grave near the location called «Bajr», the former brickyard, in the immediate vicinity of Logor Keraterm. A non-Serb reports that according to camp guards, seriously wounded prisoners from the camp were also buried there without anyone having bothered to kill them first. The mass grave may be covered by construction material from Stari Grad which by then had been completely destroyed.

Prisoners from Logor Omarska were sometimes said to be exchanged at Gradiska, but may have been executed in the village of Gradina (nearby Omarska) instead. The bodies of the latter groups may have been disposed of in that same area.

There are numerous reports of individual graves and graves for small groups of prisoners outside both Omarska and Trnopolje concentration camps - not the least in nearby fields and meadows. Logor Keraterm was in the urban area where that kind of dumping of the dead may both have been less feasible and also less desirable from a Serbian point of view. Logor Omarska had more of an isolated location. Logor Trnopolje was in a predominantly Muslim area. Both these latter camps had open land in their vicinity. Sometimes the graves were dug by camp inmates, sometimes small excavators were used. Some dead bodies may have been discarded in abandoned mine shafts, both in the Omarska and the Ljubija areas. Even larger numbers of dead bodies may have been dumped in open pits, especially in the Tomasica and Ljubija area, but possibly also in the environs of Omarska. Rudnika Ljubija is primarily an open pit mine with huge excavated areas. The dead bodies may have been covered with some kind of acid solution previously used by and available from the mining company - for the bodies to decompose more quickly and to reduce the stench. There are no reports of the use of chloride lime. Each pit used was reportedly filled with soil. Rumours will have it that bodies from Logor Omarska on occasion were thrown into two lakes not very far from the camp, where a certain specie of fresh water fish was feeding on the corpses; these allegations remain unconfirmed.

Information also suggests that pre-existing burial grounds, such as the Orthodox cemetery in Omarska, were used to inter dead camp inmates. The same is said to have been
the case for a relatively new graveyard on a height in or near Prijedor town. (For more information regarding disposal of the dead, see Annex X, Mass Graves.)

IX. The general situation for the non-Serbian population

The following report was made by a rapporteur mission from the CSCE. On 31 August 1992, the mission met with Dr. Milomir Stakic, the SDS mayor of Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor, and visited the «Open Reception Centre at Trnopolje». The mission reports:

Dr. Stakic:
«In the first free elections since the Second World War the Muslim party won the election and were in power for one and a half years, and they took the opportunity it gave them to arm the most extreme parts of the Muslim population.
This preparation had reached a culminating point at the end of April, beginning of May, when these armed groups put up barricades, and when they started shameful murders of the army of Bosanska Krajina and the police.
As a result the army and police cleared the barricades when they left Prijedor on the road to Banja Luka. And as soon as they left the city the army and police were attacked and three police and soldiers were killed.
In spite of our invitation to their representatives, religious leaders and well known citizens they did not come to talk to us.
And why have I mentioned the religious leaders? When we went to search the homes of the religious leaders we found US made shotguns which in the US are forbidden for hunting.
There were fighting and destruction, especially Karasec [Kozarac], a suburb to Prijedor, and several people were captured. We have called them to free the women and children and let them go. They put the women and the children in the front lines and followed with their weapons. The police and army accepted these women and children and put them in buses and took them to safe havens.
In the course of the next few days army and police captured several thousand people and put them in Trnopolje to protect them from the fighting with the extremists.
That is how it was started as a collective centre.
With the help of the ICRC we have transported some of the inmates to but there are still some left and we have evacuated those who want to leave this part of the country.
But we have also Muslims and Croatians in the camp who want to remain, around 10,000. They have normal identification papers for our police. They are not accused of anything and most of them are living in their homes but some are in the camp. A minority wants to go to Croatia and a majority wants to go to Western Europe.
We have had more than ten contacts with UNHCR where they have offices and tomorrow there is a delegation of UNHCR coming here and will discuss the future of those who want to go to Europe. Most of them have families in Western Europe and wish to leave this part of the country for fear of war.
We have certainly heard about Omarska where the people were caught with weapons, where 45 investigators interrogated the prison people and as a result 1,300 were transferred to the camp at Manjaca and others either freed or
transferred to the open camp here exclusively because their homes have been destroyed so they have to go somewhere.

With the help of local Red Cross and local economy and thanks to international help from ICRC we are trying to give them the minimum food and medicine. Those who are more ill go to the hospital here.

I welcome the arrivals of delegations who have come before you an you and hope there will be more help from outside. And we appeal to you to help us evacuate those who wish to go to these foreign countries to ensure safe passage to their destinations.

We are very grateful to you that you have sent the other mission to the Croatian side because we have Serbs who have been there for a year. And we would like to make it possible with help of you, UNPROFOR and ICRC to get them back.»

COMMENT:

Dr. Stakić was asked what specific help he wanted, with food and medicine.

Dr. Stakić:

«Medicines first, food second.»

COMMENT:

Dr. Stakić was asked what he thought about the long term future.

[Dr. Stakić:]

«I would like to say that we agree with the results of the London Conference. We see in these documents that have been accepted in London the possibility of ending the war . . . That makes us all suffer, and because I am the mayor of all citizens of Prijedor.

Neither Croats nor Muslims left this territory nor do we have the intention of kicking them out. There are some who hold appointments in the town and some are in the forces.

But the future is not clear because there is no electricity and the war is on. The communal government which just met had on the agenda food and heating for the winter, and Mr. Kovacic is president for the regional government [Dr. Mico Kovacevic, President of the Executive Board of the Assembly in Prijedor].»

Mr. Kovacic:

«Usually we have the problem of feeding and healing all the population. If we do not have electricity, fuel and food, not only will we continue fighting but we will all become cannibals. We are trying to solve our problems as we can but trying to solve them for all the nationalities.

The situation with electricity is complicated because some parts have the generating power and others have the distribution. We are on 10% of power and industry is on 20% of normal production. I am appealing to propose that the energy blockade should stop.

The main problem is that the Muslims wage their war with electricity. The result is that no one has electricity and the CSCE can do something about it. It is much more important to have electricity than butter.

There are theories about food corridors. No fool will shoot at food aid. Another thing is to ask the Croats and Muslims to deblock Banja Luka airport because the airport works but we cannot use the airspace.»
He was asked if the airport was used by the military.

[Dr. Kovacevic:] «This airport is a civilian airport, however in wartime it is used for military flights. The only explanation we have for not opening it is that it is on the territory of Bosanska Krajina, Serbian territory. Very many commercial businesses we had cannot be run because of this.»

Dr. Stakic: «There is equal treatment for all, some Muslim areas have not been touched by war. We support your ideas about negotiations and our representative Mr. Karadzic is ready to negotiate.»

Mr. ? Member of the Regional Government: «You said that you could not imagine these three peoples not living together, was that in Bosnia and Hercegovina or Yugoslavia?»

[Dr. Kovacevic:] «Bosnia and Hercegovina.»

Mr. ? Member of the Regional Government: «In that case there is a lack of information. Bosnia and Hercegovina is the same as Yugoslavia. Europe accepted Slovenia, but does not look at 1.5 million Serbs in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Europe has recognized Bosnia and Hercegovina at the request of its president, who only represents 43% of the population. Europe should know that dealings with Bosnia and Hercegovina, that part of Bosnia and Hercegovina is only a small part and what happened in Yugoslavia happens here. The Serbs very probably accepted the cohabitation of three communities if it had not been for the declaration. The Islamic declaration made on the formation of an Islamic state in 1986 and which was incorporated into the political programme. And the demographers have made projections that in less than 22 years the Muslims will be a majority of over 50%. And the Serbs, who are the oldest people, have no wish to find themselves in the situation of a minority.»

[Dr. Kovacevic:] Although the Muslims already had a majority in the elections.

Mr. Kovacic: «We have a problem with the exchange of prisoners. We appeal to you that in talks with Mr. Izetbegovic you raise problems of exchange because the Muslim side will not accept exchange of prisoners.»

Dr. Stakic: «When we proposed the exchange of prisoners of war we were told that these people were not Muslims and to get Serbs back they ask flour and guns, following the law of Jihad.»

[Dr. Kovacevic:] At this point we were shown what was claimed to be Muslim currency. We were unable to take a photocopy because there was no electricity, however I asked for one.
The point was made that prisoners of war exchanges were important, and they were asked if people who were exchanged would be allowed back to their original villages.

Mr. ? Member of the Regional Government:
«We have released a certain number of prisoners from the camp who were from here and who still are around but in proposing an exchange we take a risk because we know as soon as they go back they will be mobilized and fight against us. We have already had experience of this.»

Dr. Stakić:
«Kozarac is still not a safe place because the extremists still come back and shoot and yesterday we had two casualties and they were killed and set on fire. These groups have withdrawn to the Kozara Mountain and they come into town and do things and although we have soldiers and patrols they cannot solve it. Experts in this sort of thing have come and they say it could last 6 to 12 months. Hitler had 10,000 troops and in four years he did not get rid of the fighters there. When we insist on not calling it [Trnopolje] a camp it is because the Serbs from here know very well what a concentration camp is, particularly on the other side.»

Mr. ? Member of the Regional Government:
«Insisting on the idea of an exchange of prisoners of war because quite a few of them when released try to go to other countries. There would be less people leaving Bosnia and Hercegovina if there was an orderly exchange of prisoners of war.»

General impressions:
The version of the events that led to the opening of Trnopolje that we were given by the Mayor was in stark contrast to that given by the people we spoke to in the camp.

Conclusions:
The authorities insist that they are acting in the best interest of all the people in their area, and that they have no desire to get rid of the Muslim population, however this just does not match what they are actually doing. Against this background it is very hard to draw conclusions based on what is said.
The conclusions to be drawn from what we have seen is that the Muslim population is not wanted, and is being systematically kicked out by whatever method is available.

According to an interview of Simo Drljaca (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor):

Vujakovic:
«What conditions should be met and what would have to happen for the Opština police to do its job as it should be?»

Drljaca:
«What would have to be done in order that the SJB [the Public Security Service, see Chapter V.A. supra] should work as it should? As long as there is a war, one should know who is a soldier and who is not. The common phrase that we are all soldiers is
very dangerous, and it happens that a uniform is worn by sick people, criminals and others, and the same goes for the police. Besides the SJB also other state institutions have to function: the Inspection, the Prosecutor's office and the Primary court. It is very difficult to explain to the citizens that the majority of murderers in Prijedor have been taken and examined, but that they now defend themselves in liberty.»

Vujakovic:
«At one occasion you stated to Radio Prijedor that you should be replaced because due to peace in the house you had not told all that you know. What is it that you have not told?»

Drljaca:
«I know that many Serbs had their Muslim or Croatian [personal enemy] and that many succeed, through different channels, to get notorious Ustasas out from Omarska, later to boast of having killed them. And now these people send messages from abroad. I know that many have, legally or illegally, transferred their firms to Germany, and now they beat their breasts claiming to be great Serbs. I know that no war in history has passed without robbery (also this one), that the myth about the Serbs has been destroyed. I know that some of my policemen transported for money Muslims and Croats to the border, and the only thing I did was to kick them out of the police. I know that we did not succeed efficiently to prevent robbery of property (as was the case in every town in Republika Srpska), because this is common practice. I know and have evidence of all stolen goods. When the war is over, if the authorities demand it, we will take it back. I know that we need not take it now, for if we take it and give it back, these other people will just disperse it and take it away. I know that a bloody war is right in front of us and that is why I still only know this.»

Vujakovic:
«Will you now, as a vice minister and with your good knowledge of local affairs, 'open your cards' and go to the end in revealing the illegal things that you have evidence about?»

Drljaca:
«The moment we have built a society with civil rights, we will reveal much (at present) unknown things. It will be enough for our state to proclaim all kinds of war profiteering illegal, and that the state instruments (police, prosecutor, court) will be well paid for their job.» *35

During the two months of the Serbian military campaign - from late May to late July 1992 - all the main clusters of non-Serbian habitations were visited (see Chapter VII, supra). Targeted in the military operation were the non-Serbs as such - their persons and their bonds to the district. The military crusade was the single most dramatic component of the «ethnic cleansing» process after the Serbs took power. But, the «ethnic cleansing» was not finished with the major military operations. On the contrary, there were also other modi operandi aimed at achieving the «ethnic cleansing» - these were methods applied both in tandem with and after the military operations, involving in part new Serbian cohorts. To understand the rigour of the new Serbian order, as perceived by the non-Serbs, it is necessary to recognize the interrelation between the different means of the «ethnic cleansing» and the interaction between the Serbs involved on the different levels and in the different operations.
A. Evictions

Given the way the Serbs focused on weapons prior to taking power and immediately after that, many non-Serbs believed that after their homes and habitations had been ransacked for arms the situation would be normalized. Thenceforth, they would be permitted to move around freely again, and their homes would be respected, they thought. Little did they foresee the Pandora's box of disasters which the «ethnic cleansing» would actually become.

To remove the non-Serbs from the district, the Serbs targeted both the non-Serbs themselves and all that made them feel at home in the area. The general social accord that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his or her privacy, family and home was no longer applied by Serbs vis-à-vis non-Serbs.

Homes of non-Serbs were searched, pillaged and/or more or less destroyed. It seemed as if the non-Serbs could be evicted at the behest of almost any Serb. Initially, the perpetrators were military or paramilitary personnel and/or police or people seen to cooperate directly with them. Later, attacks on non-Serbs seemed to become a free-for-all - for the common purpose of «ethnic cleansing».

The evictions had several implications. The practical consequences were immediate as the evicted persons thereby became homeless. For a majority, this meant that they had to seek shelter with people they knew as there were not many other alternatives. Unless the evicted were deported at the same time, they could not just leave the district for somewhere else later. Sooner or later, most of the evicted people were probably simultaneously deported. In the meantime, many of them found temporary shelter with relatives or friends.

To be evicted did not have only practical implications related to basic material needs, it also had other tangible and emotional consequences. For most people who find certain aspects of the society at large difficult to relate to, street violence being one example, their homes are where these persons may retreat. When both one's person and home is targeted, the threat to person may be perceived as ubiquitous and even more so when one is also prevented from leaving the area temporarily or even permanently on one's own initiative.

Evictions, sometimes repeated evictions for the same people, became a harsh and influential messenger between the Serbs and the non-Serbs conveying the central idea that the non-Serbs were no longer to consider themselves at home in the district. For many people, the physical existence of a home per se, next to family relations and social networks, ties them strongly to the geographical location of the home.

For many, the actual eviction did not merely result in them having to seek alternative housing, but they were actually at the same time evicted from their immediate community, such was the case when the Kozarac area, the non-Serbian villages on the left bank of the Sana River, and entire suburbs of Prijedor town were purged. These evicted people were
simultaneously exiled from their social networks and social settings as such, even their outer cultural frame of reference was disrupted.

**B. Persecution of individuals**

Already prior to the military attacks on the different non-Serbian habitations, prominent members of the non-Serbian groups were seized and «disappeared» into detention. Soon the existence of the newly opened concentration camps, Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm, became common knowledge, but most people still knew little more about the camps. Also during the military attacks, specific individuals of high social rank or otherwise regarded as leaders were singled out for execution or, at least at first, incarceration in the concentration camps. Other non-Serbs in high positions were arrested later, in their homes or wherever they were caught sight of, to have the same destination not to say destiny as the other non-Serbian leaders.

A renowned Muslim recounts:

«In early June 1992, he was walking on a street in Prijedor town as a private car stopped and three or four military men jumped out and took him with them in the car to the military barracks near the airport. There he was left in the car for about ten minutes before he was taken to Keraterm. In Keraterm - or actually in an office just across the street from the camp, an office used in relation to road repairs - he was kept an eye on by a guard as he was waiting. A Muslim colleague of his was also brought in. A Serbian inspector together with a judge, and another man questioned them. [The three Serbs are identified, but their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.] The Serbs then let the Muslims go without having mistreated them.

In the building where he lived there were 74 flats in addition to his, the residents were from all the three different ethnic groups. At this time all Serbian males were in uniform and carrying weapons. A watch routine was arranged so that the residents had to take turn to sit in front of the building and note down who was coming and who was going.

On 24 June 1992, he was on duty in front of the building, a Mercedes with his neighbour [an identified Serb political leader whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons] stopped in front of him, and he was taken to the police station in Cele. There he was detained with seven other men [whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons] - one of the seven, a cafe owner from Prijedor town, was later killed in Logor Omarska. At 22.40 hours that same evening they were beaten with batons, and the people maltreating them were swearing at them calling them Ustasa devils. Thence they were transported to Logor Omarska, stopping several times on the way.»

As long as Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm were still open, one or more buses of new captives arrived to these camps almost daily, also on days when there were no major military operations.
Family members of the «disappeared» or arrested leaders were vulnerable without their heads of family around, and as the «stigma» given to the head of the family by the Serbs also reflected on the rest of the family. Moreover, many were desperately unwilling to leave the district whatever other difficulties they faced, as they were afraid to give up whatever chance which could possibly arise to safeguard the well-being or at least the life of the head of the family.

Later, when Logor Omarska and Logor Keraterm had been closed, some former detainees, who eventually were released, were searched by, inter alia, the intervention unit of an identified commander, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, and killed (see Chapter XII.A, infra).

C. The non-Serbs as de facto outlaws

The core of the «ethnic cleansing» policy was a general climate in which all non-Serbs as such, not merely individuals in their personal capacity, were targeted. Everyone who was not a Serb was as such ostracized, and could at any time be subjected to persecution. Never knowing when severe difficulties would arise and their character was in itself an ordeal for many non-Serbs.

After the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992, the non-Serbs lost their general legal protection. The existing court system with judges and lawyers stopped functioning. Tentatively the court system was rebuilt with Serbs, but obviously only with people who were prepared to compromise, to say the least, and tolerate a reign of no justice for more than half of the population of Opština Prijedor - the non-Serbs. The entire police structure was immediately replaced by a pre-organized fully Serbian police organization. Non-Serbs could be harassed or subjected to just any kind of persecution for the sole reason that they were not Serbs. The situation was aggravated already when the first disappearances and arrests of leading non-Serbs started, and became extreme when the main Serbian military operations commenced.

As prominent non-Serbian citizens were targeted first and the majority of them were men, the lawlessness for those left at liberty, more or less temporarily, plagued the more unprotected segments of the non-Serbian society in particular: the young, the old, and not the least women of all ages. There was no longer any respect for non-Serbian property rights, and worse, there was not even any respect for the personal integrity and dignity of the non-Serbs, not even for their lives. Not only military or police, but other civil servants and any private individual or group of such - be it neighbours or former competitors of any kind - could do as they pleased knowing that they would de facto have impunity. For thefts, harassment, threats, sexual and other abuses, even killings, there was no prospect of any punishment for the perpetrators. Rapes under these circumstances were probably as frequent as the nights, but happened also often in broad daylight. Bodily and mental harm to the immediate victims and their next of kin became elements of the «ethnic cleansing» policy. The more or less overt message was always the same: There was to be no decent living and no room at all for non-Serbs in the district.
On occasion, the persecution even took the shape of small-scale military attacks on non-Serbian homes and massacres of many, if not all, their inhabitants.

D. A climate conducive to the departure of non-Serbs

After the major Serbian military operations in late May and early June 1992, non-Serbs started to depart or rather flee Opstina Prijedor on «their own initiative». For some it was the consequence of having had to seek temporary shelter elsewhere as their habitations and homes were attacked. Other groups had been targets of other kinds of persecutions. Some only left after they (or one or more family members) were released from a concentration camp. As the mene tekel was crystal clear, some left as a preventive measure.

Those leaving on «their own initiative» normally departed by road, buying tickets on Serbian-provided buses and trucks out. This transport was frequently not any safer than the transport for those deported by road (see Chapter X.C. infra). Often there was simply no distinction made between non-Serbs leaving Opstina Prijedor of their own volition and the deportees. One member of the Krizni Štab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, who was engaged in the local Red Cross (his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), allegedly had people pay DEM 50 per person to be transported in Red Cross vehicles towards Travnik.

The Serbian leaders even organized an Office for Population Resettlement and Property Exchange where people who had not yet been deported and who «wanted» to leave were to register their property as available for a Serbian family, before they joined a convoy out. The non-Serbs wanting to leave also had to sign forms entitled «requests of voluntary emigration for economic reasons». According to an interview of Simo Drljača, there were more than 20,000 visas, guarantees and requests for voluntary emigration for economic reasons signed (see Chapter X.D. infra). *36

«Exit-visas» for non-Serbs were a stock-in-trade at the time. Relatives of prisoners who had been incarcerated in Logor Keraterm or Logor Omarska sometimes tried to approach the police station in Prijedor town. Instead of gaining information concerning the whereabouts of their family members, they were in some cases told that it could possibly be an alternative to opt for buying an «exit-visa» for the family at large.

People who got, or rather paid to get, their «exit-visas» had simultaneously their names deleted from the census. Thenceforth, they were literally and practically non-existent as citizens. For more details about the situation for the non-Serbs who obtained «exit visas», see Chapter X.D. infra.

X. Deportations

A key to understanding the nature of the conflict in Opstina Prijedor is to recognize that the non-Serbian population was not fleeing from a war in the district. Their departure was not a side effect of an armed conflict. Conversely, their removal was exactly what the Serbs used military might to achieve. The aim of the entire operation was the «ethnic cleansing» of Opstina Prijedor, i.e. to remove the non-Serbs so that the population which would
continue to live on in the district would be almost exclusively Serbian. One consequence of this is that the classification «deportees» is more correct than «refugees» for the vast number of non-Serbs who de facto left Opština Prijedor. «Deportees» here meaning people with a particularly distinct need for protection in addition to what is characteristic for refugees at large.

The events in Opština Prijedor are unfortunately no aberration in this respect. The «ethnic cleansing» is the core of the Serbian military operations in BiH. It may even be argued, as some observers do, that the events in Sarajevo - where there is a more traditional theatre of war with all its horrors - are staged, in part at least, to take away international attention from the eradication of entire ethnic groups in areas where there has not even been any real war, only tremendous abuse of military power - such as in Opština Prijedor. Similarly, to some extent, the destruction of cultural heritage in the Croatian city of Dubrovnik diverted international attention. With an aura of history and fame both Sarajevo and Dubrovnik kindle media attention easily. At the same time, both cities were flourishing multi-cultural centres, and as such a thorn in the flesh of those aspiring after mono-ethnic power bases.

A. From Logor Trnopolje and other detention areas

Most of the deportations from Opština Prijedor were staged from Logor Trnopolje, from which they started the last week of May 1992 - the very first period when non-Serbian children, women, and elderly men were rounded up in the district. Later, more improvised detention facilities, such as the stadium in the suburb Tukovi in Prijedor town, also became staging areas for deportations. Some non-Serbs were even loaded on buses and trucks for deportation straight from their home areas in the wake of the military assaults on these areas (see Chapters VII.B., VII.C. and VII.D. supra).

B. Deportations by rail

Large groups of deportees were sent off on trains to Muslim and Croatian held areas in central BiH. The destination for the trains was primarily Zenica. At least one group of deportees was let off the train in Doboj, from where the deportees were ushered ahead on foot in the direction of Tuzla.

Frequently, the deportees were cramped into cattle wagons having at best only barred windows high up on the walls of the wagons. The passengers were not provided with water or food, and they had no access to toilets. They sometimes had to endure such constraints for periods from two to five days before reaching Zenica. There was little fresh air during the transports. It was mid-summer and generally very hot in the daytime. Even when trains stopped for some time, the deportees were deprived of any opportunity to leave the trains. Some babies, small children, elderly, and sick people did not survive the railway transport. Even to remove the dead bodies from the cattle wagons or to have them removed was not permitted.

When the Serbian police chief of Banja Luka, Stojan Zupljanin, was later asked by a visitor about the cattle car transports, he explained that there had merely been a certain
number of citizens who had expressed a wish to move to central BiH. For these people, the Public Security Centre in Banja Luka (see Chapter V.B. supra) and the Public Security Service in Prijedor (see Chapter V.A. supra) arranged the mentioned «safe transportation for them». Not to allow the passengers food, water, access to toilets, etc., was «just a means of security». The trains (cattle wagons among them) were all that could be provided under conditions of war - the railway authorities had asked everywhere for better facilities. Stojan Zupljanin concluded by stating that none of the passengers had said that they would not go if they were not provided with passenger wagons - «Anything is better than to walk.»

A Muslim political leader in Banja Luka apparently saw it differently. Calling on 9 July 1992, he said:

«Please try to come here. There is a lot of killing. They are shipping Muslim people through Banja Luka in cattle cars. Last night there were 25 train wagons for cattle crowded with women, old people and children. They were so frightened. You could see their hands through the openings. We were not allowed to come close. Can you imagine that? It’s like Jews being sent to Auschwitz. In the name of humanity, please come.» *37

C. Deportations by road

Large-scale deportations on buses and trucks took place from the very beginning. A few were taken the shorter and relatively safer way to Bosanska Gradiška on the Croatian border. The majority by far were deported on buses and trucks down through the desolate and mountainous area of the Vlasic Mountain towards Travnik in central BiH. The last leg of this trip the deportees had to finish on foot. Their first destination on the road to Travnik was Turbe, the first larger populated area on the other side of the front line - outside Serbian control that is. From the place where the deportees were dumped from the trucks and buses, they had to walk almost 30 kilometres across the front line to reach Turbe. United Nations military personnel, having passed through the same area later, recount that especially the last part of the journey - in the area where the deportees had to start walking - the United Nations military men had an eerie feeling. Along the narrow road high up on the mountainside, personal papers, such as passports, were strewn on the roadside as were children’s clothing and women’s underwear. The United Nations military personnel interpreted this to mean that the deportees had been deprived of whatever little bundles of private belongings they still possessed.

Some deportees allegedly were singled out and killed on the roadside. Their dead bodies were thrown off the road and down along the mountainside. Moreover, Serbian soldiers were shooting in the air above the deportees as they started walking, and parts of the terrain, which the deportees had to walk through, were mined.

It is with reference to such deportations from northern BiH at large that the ICRC in its position paper of August 1992 regarding The Establishment of Protected Zones for Endangered Civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina wrote that:

«Forced and unprotected massive transfers of the population to central Bosnia-Herzegovina are totally unacceptable and cannot go on. Too many civilians, while forced to cross the
front lines on foot, have already been killed either in the crossfire of combatants, as there is no cease-fire, or deliberately by snipers.»

Sometimes the trucks used for deportations were closed army trucks having many of the disadvantages as the cattle cars on the railway. Some deportees reportedly did not have the physical strength to sustain life under such conditions. Also the latter reached their final destination on the roadside - normally in the area where the survivors had to start walking.

Deportations by buses and trucks were under the supervision of the intervention units as used by the Serbian military (see Chapter V.C, supra). The soldiers from the intervention units were reportedly no more benevolent or lenient towards the deportees than they were in carrying out other of their functions. Concerning the mass-killings on the Vlasic Mountain, see Chapter XII.D, infra.

Ordinary and paramilitary soldiers participated in arranging the deportations. Reportedly, it happened several times that a soldier grabbed a non-Serbian child and forced a pistol into the child’s mouth or held a knife against its throat. Simultaneously a plastic bag was thrown into the truck with deportees and an amount of money was demanded lest the child be executed. No child is said to have been killed under such circumstances; but the menace was a means of terror and extortion. Reported are also a variety of other crimes allegedly committed by these soldiers.

D. Property rights and re-entry to Opstina Prijedor

From the very inception of the Srpske Opstine Prijedor, looting of non-Serbian property was a problem. In a sense, it commenced already when the Serbs started impounding weapons legally held by non-Serbs. This was not a confiscation, i.e. it was not authorized by the lawfully elected authorities and it did not augment the State coffers. Pillaging on a large scale followed in the wake of the military attacks on non-Serbian homes. As the people were forced to flee their homes and real estate, everything left behind was considered bounty by the attackers and other Serbs. As those forced to leave their homes rarely brought with them more than they could carry with them or rather on them, there were complete homes and hitherto productive and fully functioning communities to be plundered.

An article in Kozarski Vjesnik relates a statement made by Bogdan Delić (the new chief of the Serbian police in Prijedor) at a meeting in the district assembly:

«Delić said that 'approximately 50,000 residents of other nationalities had lived in this district, and their assets were unofficially estimated at several billions DEM. Some of the assets were destroyed during military operations, but at large they were preserved - although only for a short period of time. By various machinations, the whims of individual members of the local police, army and civilian authorities, and the governing political party - the largest part of the . . . »preserved assets« disappeared. . . . While carrying out their tasks at their stations and in the field, military and civilian police and citizens confiscated large quantities of goods, motor vehicles [e.g. the Kozarac area alone had some 4,700 private cars], cab units, trucks, agricultural vehicles, and various technical equipment and other devices, and handed them over to the units that the above-mentioned governmental bodies
established for this particular purpose (Keraterm, TZS, Velepromet, and other storehouses). It may be stated with certainty that those storehouses have been emptied in a short time, and that the greater part of the resources have either been transferred to Serbia through private agents, or have been expropriated by private individuals.' *38

Furthermore, a large-scale transfer of machinery, industrial equipment, cars, etc. soon started from Opstina Prijedor as such. Reportedly, even most of the machinery of significant value from Rudnika Ljubija were removed for use in Serbia so that the mining company now is non-operational. Similarly, the main equipment from other factories and plants in the Opstina was allegedly relocated out of the area. The consequence of this is that Prijedor has been left with hardly any on-going industrial production as the cornerstone production units of the local economy have been made non-operational. This means a lack of income-generating possibilities for the Opština as such. Although the main workforce in the depleted industries may have been non-Serbian, this draining of material resources will have longer term consequences also for the Serbian population. An article in Kozarski Vjesnik addresses how «war profiteers sacked Prijedor . . . on the model of the Sicilian mafia». *39 The article cites a leader from the Serbian Democratic Union - the National Front, inter alia, saying that:

«tens of electric motors, assembly lines and other valuable objects have disappeared from the workshops of the Ljubija mine and other Prijedor enterprises. . . . We must ask ourselves how these enterprises are to continue their work once the situation settles down. 6,000 heads of cattle have been stolen and transferred to Sremska Mitrovica and Sid [both in Serbia proper].

. . . large quantities of sawn lumber from the Kozarac saw-mill have been taken across the Republic's borders under mysterious circumstances, while the Kozara forest has been mercilessly destroyed. Somebody will have to answer for the disappearance of certain gang mills and other equipment from the local saw-mills.» *40

The Serbs have unilaterally taken over all communal property in Opština Prijedor whether it still remains in the district or has been brought out of it to other areas. The communal property belonged, as always, to the community at large - a community in which the Serbs had made up approximately 42.5 per cent of the total population before the upheavals. Non-Serbs as well as Serbs had built up the communal property and contributed to it together.

The Serbian authorities have been issuing so-called «exit-visas». These visas were provided only after the adult non-Serbian person who «wanted» to leave Opština Prijedor, had filled in a form to the effect that the person renounced all personal property rights and transferred them to the Serbs. The person was never to return to the area. By signing this document, the person would become «stateless» (or rather with no rights to remain in this or other Serbian-controlled areas). After having signed, the person normally had 14 days to leave the area. Sometimes, there was no way of getting out of the area within that time limit, but the non-Serb was none the less bound by his or her pledges. Bribes were needed at every level and, moreover, an entry-visa to be admitted into Croatia. Even though
extensions to stay were granted temporarily, individuals were hunted when their time expired. Whether «exit-visas» are still available is unclear (see Chapter XIII.G, infra).

In this context, it is noted that the «Agreement on the Release and Transfer of Prisoners» of 1 October 1992 contains, inter alia, the following provision:

«Article 11 Validity of documents
(1) Any document, including a document renouncing or transferring property rights, assets or claims, signed by a prisoner who is to be released or transferred has no legal validity and does not in any way affect that prisoner’s rights or obligations. (2) Paragraph (1) is also applicable to documents signed by civilians to be transferred to an area other than their area of former residence.»

The Agreement was initiated by the ICRC and accepted among others by Mr. D. Kalinic, «Representative of Mr. Radovan Karadžić, President of the Serbian Democratic Party», Mr. M. Popadic, «Liaison Officer of the Serbian Democratic Party», and Mr. A. Kurjak, «Representative of the Party of Democratic Action».

In April 1993, Simo Drljača claimed that the Serbs had issued a total of more than 20,000 «exit-visas» for non-Serbs from Opština Prijedor. In the interview printed in Kozarski Vjesnik, Simo Drljača stated that:

«What enormous task was undertaken in the administrative-legal service [by the Public Security Service, the SJB, see Chapter V.A. supra] is seen from the fact that departure was orderly registered for more than 20,000 citizens of Muslim and Croatian nationality, due to emigration [or removal]. When German TV came in order to prove that we force Muslims and Croats to leave, we presented them with more than 20,000 visas, guarantees and requests for voluntary emigration for economic reasons.» *41

The visa material may provide highly interesting information about the people leaving - names, family relationships, sex, age, residence in Opština Prijedor, time of departure, etc. This information ought to be compared with the updated census of the population in the district or even the telephone directory as existing prior to the disruption. Together these sources may contribute an informative overview of the demographic changes in Opština Prijedor following the Serbian takeover in April 1992 - also concerning non-Serbs not registered for «emigration».

XI. Destruction of culture

There is no real distinction in biological terms among the three main «ethnic» groups - the Serbs, the Croats and the Muslims - in Opština Prijedor and in BiH at large. Differences among the groups are primarily related to culture and religion. This is probably one reason why the various expressions of culture - religion included - became an explicit target for the Serbian military campaign.

The cultural heritage and the expressions of a flourishing culture give people a strong sense of attachment also to a specific geographical area. By erasing the cultural frame, the Serbs further estranged the non-Serbs from the district.
A. Material destruction of cultural property

In Prijedor town, the following five mosques - and all objects and buildings belonging to them such as mausoleums and religious schools, etc. - were destroyed:

a. the mosque in the centre of the town in Marsala Tita Street;
b. the mosque in Stari Grad;
c. the mosque in Muharema Suljanovica Street, the suburb of Zagrad;
d. the mosque in the suburb of Donja Puharska; and
e. the mosque in the suburb of Gornja Puharska.

It is said that in the Kozarac area all 16 mosques have been destroyed.

It is actually claimed that not a single mosque, or other Muslim religious building in the whole of Opština Prijedor has been spared and remains intact. Most religious constructions are not only damaged, but reduced to rubble. The sacral edifices were allegedly not desecrated, damaged and destroyed for any military purpose nor as a side-effect of the military operations as such. Conversely, most of the destruction was due to later separate operations of dynamiting. At least on one occasion, some non-Serbs and Serbs concerned alerted the local Serbian police that a mosque in Prijedor seemed to be in the process of being dynamited. The police reportedly refused to take any action and even stated that the police were not opposed to the destruction in progress.

Also, other buildings and habitations considered as typically Muslim have been demolished. The Old Town in Prijedor town, Stari Grad, was one such area with strong Muslim architectural influence. After the Serbian forces purged the area, Stari Grad was levelled almost completely, including a number of new houses which had been erected according to Muslim traditions (see Chapter VII.C. supra).

The Catholic churches and religious buildings in Opština Prijedor listed below have allegedly been destroyed and damaged as follows:

a. the parish church in Prijedor (built in 1896) was destroyed on 29 August 1992;
b. Kozarac church, affiliated with the Prijedor Parish, was heavily damaged in June 1992;
c. the parish church in Ljubija was burnt down and heavily damaged in June 1992;
d. the pastoral centre in Ljubija was damaged and looted in the period between July and August 1992;
e. Brsevo church, affiliated with the Stara Rijeka Parish, was burnt down in July 1992;
f. the Sunday school hall and rectory in Brsevo was burnt down in July 1992;
g. the parish church in Surkovac was destroyed in March 1993;
h. the pastoral centre in Surkovac was heavily damaged in the period between July and December 1992 and sustained further damage in the period between January and March 1993;
i. Tomasica church, affiliated with the Sasina Parish, was destroyed in November 1992;
j. Donja Ravska church, affiliated with the Ravska Parish, was destroyed in July 1992.
The sacral institutions were allegedly desecrated, destroyed and damaged for no military purpose and not in connection with any military activity as such.

A Serbian official in Banja Luka, who later was asked about the destruction of mosques and churches, responded that a number of such buildings had been misused as convenient places for battle. Being tall and of solid construction, mosques and churches were suitable for snipers to shoot from. «From that point on», these buildings «cease to have sacred importance», he added. Obviously, every building fitting a sniper has not been razed in Opstina Prijedor. On the contrary, there is no report of any general communal or Serbian construction in the district which was levelled to prevent snipers from misusing it.

According to an article printed by the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Serbia (i.e. Serbia proper), not a single Serbian sacred object has been destroyed or damaged in Opstina Prijedor. The map, which is attached to the article, shows destruction and damage related to Eparchy seats, monasteries, religious service objects (cathedrals, parish churches and chapels) and parish seats, and other church objects.

Save for buildings not specific to the non-Serbian traditions - especially in Prijedor town - most of the non-Serbian homes and habitations have been severely damaged, if not completely destroyed. Large-scale devastation is the case in the Kozarac area (see Chapter VII.B. supra) and in the villages and hamlets on the left bank of the Sana River (see Chapter VII.D. supra). Heavily damaged are not only the variety of architectural expressions, but also the outer frame for the sociological and anthropological expressions of the pluralistic culture in the district.

**B. Destruction of immaterial expressions of culture**

The material destruction of non-Serbian cultural property has obviously had implications for both spiritual and other immaterial aspects of the same culture. This in addition to the fact that the main bearers of the traditions - the different non-Serbian groups and their leaders, religious leaders, and artists among them - having been exterminated or deported, leaves limited traces of the living non-Serbian cultures in Opstina Prijedor. The non-Serbian cultures, with religious and secular aspects, have furthermore been ostracized and targeted as such for dismantling also through the persecution of the remaining non-Serbs in the area (see Chapter IX.C. supra). The non-Serbs still living in the district have more than enough with securing their physical integrity (see Chapter XIII.G. infra) that they should not also provoke antagonism by trying to revive in public their non-Serbian cultural characteristics - despised as these are by the Serbs in power. By exiling non-Serbian cultural expressions to the private domain of a, in every sense, deprived and marginal population, the non-Serbian cultures as such are almost totally ruined in the district.

The destruction of the broad platform of the multi-ethnic culture in Opstina Prijedor makes an impact not only on the non-Serbian aspects of this culture, but on the local cultural situation as such. Being Serbian in Opstina Prijedor - in interaction with the non-Serbian majority population - was probably quite different from being Serbian in an all Serbian environment. It takes little imagination to foresee that the devastation of large parts of the local culture in combination with the violence utilized to accomplish the
destruction, will create, in part, a cultural vacuum in an overall situation which is dominated by negative and destructive forces. This is undoubtedly a threat also to what was known to be the Serbian culture in Opstina Prijedor with its «Kozara brotherhood».

Traditional names, which were used in the multi-ethnic society but which under the Serbian regime are considered inappropriate, have been or are to be altered to satisfy «the wish of the Serbian people». The pre-fix «Bosnian» is deleted.

In general, there is a strong Serbification not only aimed at excluding everything non-Serbian but also at eliminating anything specific for the Bosnian Serbs, to make the latter group homogeneous with the Serbs in Serbia. One thing is that now the Latin alphabet has been replaced by the Cyrillic script. Problems arise, however, when even, as now, the Bosnian Serbian written language (the Jekavian dialect) is ostracized, and replaced by the written Serbian language used in Serbia (the Ekavian dialect). The latter has made even the Serbian Academy of Sciences in Belgrade, the incarnation of Serbdom, protest what they consider to be cultural linguistic destruction. There are also other signs of harmonization which means replacing anything genuine or distinctively Bosnian with what is main-stream Serbian.

XII. Finalizing the main phase of the catastrophe

The main purpose of the Serbian manoeuvres in Opstina Prijedor was «ethnic cleansing» of the non-Serbs to secure a homogeneous Serbian district. If the Serbs could achieve their objective of «ethnic cleansing», it already looked as if that would be rewarded by the international community. A pure or almost pure Serbian population appeared to be the precondition for Serbian territorial supremacy. What was new was that it seemed as if an internationally recognized State - here BiH - could be divided up along ethnic lines when at the same time very little, if any, attention was paid to the means used to make the population in the respective areas homogeneous. Peace proposals along such lines were soon to be made by peace negotiators appointed, inter alia, by the United Nations. How can one of the most basic concerns of the United Nations - to liberate mankind from the odious scourge of genocide (see the Preamble to the 1948 Genocide Convention and Part Three, Chapter II, supra) - be achieved, when it de facto may be remunerated by the United Nations?

The main phase of the «ethnic cleansing» in Opstina Prijedor came close to a natural completion as the principal non-Serbian habitations had been wiped out and most of the non-Serbs exterminated or deported. Left of importance were primarily the concentration camp inmates in Logor Omarska (see Chapter VIII.A. supra) and Logor Keraterm (see Chapter VIII.B. supra). These were the leaders of the non-Serbian community. Although their numbers had been much depleted already, even their limited continued presence could possibly still promote a return to the area of non-Serbs and be conducive to claims to this end.

During the first year of conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the international community primarily reacted with a combination of inertia and appeasement - keeping its distance from what was considered merely a civil war and «a blood feud» grown «out of age-old
animosities». Under these overall circumstances, the power change in Opstina Prijedor was initially not taken much notice of internationally. Naturally, one may say. There was not even war in the district, and Opstina Prijedor was not the only district in the former Yugoslavia producing deportees.

Little by little, however, the story of the non-Serbs, arriving especially in central BiH, reached the international community. At first, it was the aid agencies - organs of the United Nations among them - which received the testimonies, personal accounts of agony, and allegations of massive violations of international humanitarian law. At the same time, or probably even earlier, the different foreign intelligence entities operating in the region knew essentially what was happening. Finally, the charges reached the media. On 2 August 1992, the New York tabloid Newsday printed a report by journalist Roy Gutman headlined «The Death Camps of Bosnia». The reports were based on eyewitness accounts. One former detainee told of routine daily slaughter in Logor Omarska. The newspaper article made an immediate impact in the Western world. This was the time when the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadžic, told visitors that:

«The Serbian side energetically denies the existence of camps for civilians anywhere in the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina. There are some prisons for war prisoners established according to law and which the Serbian side always offered for exchange.»

Within days, the first foreign television crew asked access to Logor Omarska, and by mid-September 1992 some 360 reporters had visited Serbian-controlled BiH. The media attention was de facto life-saving.

A. Closing of the concentration camps

Ahead of schedule, the Serbian leaders hastened to clean up and close down both Logor Omarska (see Chapter VIII.A. supra) and Logor Keraterm (see Chapter VIII.B. supra), as especially Logor Omarska became a focus of world attention. Also, Logor Trnopolje (see Chapter VIII.C. supra) improved image-wise in this washing-of-hands-operation. As writes journalist Ed Vulliamy:

«Four days after our visit to Trnopolje, the fence came down and the authorities had painted a sign above the entrance in English, for the benefit of the descending television circus, reading: 'Trnopolje Open Reception Centre'. But the armed guards and the beatings and the atrocious conditions continued.» *43

The concentration camp first emptied was Logor Keraterm. From there, all the prisoners were ostensibly taken to Logor Omarska or Logor Trnopolje. The young and the old were almost all taken to Logor Trnopolje, the rest were divided between Logor Omarska and Logor Trnopolje. Those immediately recognized as more important were taken to Logor Omarska.

As concerns Logor Omarska, on 6 August 1992, 1,360 camp inmates were transferred to Logor Manjača (in the Banja Luka area), 700 prisoners - the younger and the older ones - were transported to Logor Trnopolje, and 175 men were locked up in the garage in Logor
Omarska. Prior to the transfer of male prisoners to Logor Trnopolje, 31 female prisoners were sent there from Logor Omarska. Five female prisoners remained detained in «their» rooms above the «canteen» in Logor Omarska. The same night - the night of 7 August 1992 - beds for the first time arrived at Logor Omarska.

On 5 August 1992, a last bus with captives from outside came to Logor Omarska, but these prisoners were moved that very same night. Allegedly, they would be used as farm labour in the area of Banja Luka. Later, it was stated that these people had been taken to a camp named Topola to which the ICRC had no access. These prisoners were former inhabitants of villages on the left bank of the Sana River, for example, from Rizvanovici. At least one of the men from this group may at present be kept in a detention centre - probably a mine - at Aleksinac in Serbia. It is also reported that a former detainee from Logor Keraterm died in the camp in Aleksinac.

On 22 August 1992, the male prisoners still remaining in Logor Omarska were taken to Logor Manja. On 23 August 1992, two women (whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) were taken to Logor Trnopolje. The three remaining women (whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) have not been heard from since, and other female former detainees in Logor Omarska believe that the three are dead.

The two women transferred from Logor Omarska on 23 August 1992 were detained in Logor Trnopolje together with two women from Trnopolje village. After being registered by the ICRC, they were allowed to move more freely around in Logor Trnopolje. The other women, who had been relocated from Logor Omarska to Logor Trnopolje earlier, were never officially registered as concentration camp inmates by the ICRC.

As Logor Trnopolje was exposed to international attention and its appearance improved, and especially as evacuations out of the camp by international agencies started, there were non-Serbs finding life at liberty in Opstina Prijedor so difficult, not to say dangerous, that they, on their own initiative, out of lack of better options, tried to move into Logor Trnopolje. Some even paid the guards to be accepted as inmates in the camp. It may, of course, be speculated that what they really wanted was third country resettlement. In most cases, that is likely to be theory only, given that at the time the non-Serbian inhabitants in Opstina Prijedor as such and as a whole had well-founded fear of persecution. Still the Serbian regime in Logor Trnopolje included severe abuses of camp inmates. But hiding among the other inmates, detention in the concentration camp may have been perceived as a safer option than venturing out on one's own.

Quoting a woman who had come «voluntarily» to Logor Trnopolje from the village of Trnopolje, Ed Vulliamy wrote:

«The conditions are terrible [in Logor Trnopolje], but it is a little safer. There was terrible shooting and bombing in the village, and we had no food. Here, we have no idea what status we have. We are refugees, but there are guards; and barbed wire. But it is safer than at home.» *44
On the other hand, some of the former Omarska and Keraterm detainees were released from Logor Trnopolje, and returned to Prijedor town or sought shelter there as other non-Serbian habitations were virtually non-existent in the Opstina at the time. These returnees were especially people who still had family members in the district, or who wanted to check if that was the case before they would consider leaving Opstina Prijedor.

One identified and especially ill-reputed Serb (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), belonged to a so-called intervention unit, the kind of units used to trace and capture potential camp inmates (see Chapter V.C. supra). After prisoners had been released from the concentration camps, he and his unit traced and killed some of the former Omarska inmates in Prijedor town. Eight others, who allegedly killed former concentration camp inmates and other non-Serbs, are also identified but their names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

**B. Exchange of prisoners or extermination?**

On 28 July 1992, an exchange of prisoners was to take place. It was to involve 41 male prisoners and two female prisoners from Logor Omarska - the women's names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. They were to be exchanged for other prisoners in Bihać. All were to wear uniforms and Green Berets (Muslim military outfits that is) and to be provided with weapons. It was a bus marked Bihać, and «Seselj» was written on it. Sitting in the bus were men with huge beards and uniforms; they were wearing fur hats with Serbian emblems. The day after, as a female camp inmate was serving food, a Serbian military cursed the mothers of the prisoners and asked who could say that Kozarac had not been attacked by the «Green Berets», i.e. the Muslims! None of the prisoners who were taken out, ostensibly for exchange, have reportedly ever been seen again.

Vojislav Seselj is the self-proclaimed leader of the Cetniks, and as a politician he runs the Serbian Radical Party. He is occasionally referred to as the Red Duke. One hallmark of his Cetniks is uncombed long hair and flowing black beard.

According to the information gathered, no one taken out of Logor Omarska or Logor Keraterm to be supposedly exchanged have ever been seen or heard from again.

According to journalist Ed Vulliamy, he was told about four different categories of prisoners in Logor Omarska when visiting it in August 1992 - at the time when the camp still had some inmates:

«Then there is a fourth category: 'Hostages?' answers Mrs. Balban [who translated for the Serbian regime in Logor Omarska], 'of course we have hostages, people for exchange. We have been offering them since the beginning of the war, but the other side does not want to trade.'» *45

On 4 August 1992, two buses arrived with prisoners from Logor Keraterm, as Keraterm was being closed. It was the most «dangerous» prisoners who were transferred to Logor Omarska. The next day, at about 11:30 p.m. all these prisoners and one prisoner from Logor Omarska (an ear nose and throat specialist from Prijedor, whose name is not disclosed for
confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, who was held in particularly high esteem by his fellow non-Serbs) were taken out to an unknown destination. A prisoner, whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons, later told a fellow prisoner that another man, a Serb, had approached him boasting that he had killed the medical doctor, and that all the other prisoners as well had been killed on 5 August 1992 at Lusci Palanka in the area of Sanski Most. Apparently, none of these prisoners have been heard from again.

The Serbs had their codes, it is claimed. When they said that prisoners were to be taken to Gradiska for exchange, they would allegedly be taken to nearby Gradina to be executed.

If in Opština Prijedor people ever were rounded up for the sole immediate purpose of exchanging them - to serve as «the currency of war» as the expression is in the vernacular - is unknown. Obviously, round-ups for detention and/or deportation also served the ultimate goal of having the non-Serbs leaving the area.

C. Transfer of prisoners to Logor Manja

On 6 August 1992, as Logor Omarska was to close, all the prisoners were called forward. The name of one former employee of Radio Prijedor (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) was not on the list. After one hour it was, however, arranged that he too was included on the list. From this event, it was understood that someone had helped him by having had his name removed from the record of detainees earlier. This was how he had been spared from ever being called forward for interrogation in the concentration camp. In retrospect, camp inmates think that the Serbs intended, however, to kill him during the transport from Logor Omarska.

When convened, on 6 August 1992, the camp inmates thought that they were to be transferred to Trnopolje. But the prisoners understood that this was not the case as 100 persons were squeezed into each bus. What started was the transfer to Logor Manja in the area of Banja Luka. Some prisoners had to lay down under the seats in the buses. The prisoners sitting on the seats were to sit three prisoners on each two seats. The employee of Radio Prijedor was ordered to sit in front on the left side behind the driver. All prisoners had to bend down their heads. With the prisoners in this bus was the previously mentioned (see Chapter XII.A, supra), identified and especially ill-reputed Serb (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), who belonged to a so-called intervention unit.

On 6 August 1992, it was still very hot. The Serbs had turned on the heat in the buses and kept all windows shut. Shots were fired, and Serbs along the roadside were throwing bottles and stones at the buses. The distance between Logor Omarska and Logor Manja is some 60-70 kilometres, the bus ride none the less lasted from about 1:00 p.m. until about 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. Save for water given to one prisoner (an author whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) as a pretext for beating him, the prisoners were not given any water during the trip. The employee of Radio Prijedor fell asleep. As the bus had stopped, he woke up hearing something that ruptured and someone crying out in agony like a child. Later, he learned that the sounds probably had come from a fellow prisoner (the victim's name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) who after torture was killed as he was gored from below on a sword. At the same
moment, the employee of Radio Prijedor was hit in his neck (maybe with the handle of a spade). A scream came from his stomach, and as a reaction, he bounced to his feet trembling uncontrollably. Then, he sat down again.

   
   Afterwards, the especially ill-reputed Serb from the intervention unit boasted that there was a Serb who manufactured a special baton for his comrades to use to handle non-Serbs.

   
   After being seated for about 10 minutes, a Serbian military person came to call the employee of Radio Prijedor to leave the bus. Outside five identified prisoners had been mistreated and had had their throats slashed (the victims' names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons). As he came out, he found himself surrounded by some eight or nine Serbs beating him. He could no longer sense pain, but he knew that as soon as a prisoner was on his knees that prisoner's throat would be slashed. All of a sudden, he ran towards the bus, where he was stopped by a knife in its sheath pressed into his stomach. Possibly because of the scream he had made when he first was hit in his neck, the commander of Logor Manjaca had come out to the buses and told the Serbs there to stop the ill-treatment.

   
   Back in the bus, the employee of Radio Prijedor realized that it was the collar of his jacket which had protected his neck. He was soaking wet with blood. He had a wound in his forehead, one behind the left ear, and one on his chin/mouth; some teeth had been beaten out. Utterly fearful of what could happen if he ventured outside of the bus again, he urinated in his trousers.

   
   The next day the prisoners were thrown out on a field and called forward by name. The first they called for was already dead. Then, an identified Serbian guard, a former policeman, now retired (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), stabbed one other prisoner in his stomach and cut the prisoner's head from the side of the neck.

   
   **D. Executions on the Vlasic Mountain**

   
   One member of the Križni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor, who was engaged in the local Red Cross (his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), allegedly had people pay DEM 50 per person to be transported in Red Cross vehicles towards Travnik. Non-Serbs in four such buses were allegedly among those liquidated at the Vlasic Mountain.

   
   Primo June 1992, the ICRC listed the misuse of the Red Cross emblem as one main obstacle to humanitarian activities in BiH. The misuse was, according to the ICRC, one of several factors causing insecurity for everyone - the local population included.

   
   On 21 August 1992, a convoy of vehicles with people leaving Prijedor for Travnik stopped by Logor Trnopolje and prisoners from the camp could freely enter the buses. More prisoners wanted to join the convoy than there was space for in the buses. One elderly woman warned prisoners against going, saying that she had «heard horrible things». When the convoy reached the Vlasic Mountain the prisoners from Trnopolje were separated from the people from Prijedor. The prisoners - men only - were cramped into two buses,
conceivably 100 men in each bus. The total number was probably no less than 250. Nearby a mountain top, perhaps called Koricanske Stijene (or Kocinske Stjen), the prisoners had to leave the buses next to a cliff above the Ukrina (or Ugljenika) River. The prisoners were lined up in two rows and ordered to kneel down and face the river. It was several hundred metres down to the river. The cliff as such was very steep, but there was also a slope next to it. There was a house on the other side of the valley. It is not far from Skender Vakuf - where some military or paramilitary Serbs had entered the buses.

A firing squad of some 15 Serbian soldiers started shooting the prisoners, of whom a limited few jumped off the mountain before being shot. One of the survivors hid himself laying some 50 or 60 metres down the slope, under the body of one other man who was already dead. Serbian soldiers were also throwing grenades down the slope from above. Some soldiers even came down the slope to see to it that all the prisoners were dead. The next day, dead bodies were piled up and put on fire by Serbs in camouflage uniforms. One of the soldiers was wearing a badge with a white eagle on his cap.

The river, which is reportedly also known as Ugar, is a relatively small stream and there was a small mill there.

The leader of the soldiers was the previously mentioned (see Chapter XII.A. supra) identified and especially ill-reputed Serb (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) who belonged to a so-called intervention unit. Another soldier is also identified, but his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons. Other people have identified the latter as a member of the Serbian Red Cross working in Logor Trnopolje, who once had boasted that he had blown up a Muslim with a bomb.

Reports suggests that another group of prisoners from Logor Trnopolje may have been executed in a similar manner on the Vlasic Mountain on 24 August 1992. Whether this is the time when the prisoners were brought to the cliff in four buses and executed with the assistance also of five White Eagles (Beli Orlovi), is not clear. On the latter occasion, an estimated 250-300 men were killed.

It is suggested in the reports that it may have been a member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor who was the camp director in Logor Trnopolje (his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons), who had organized the massacres. Mostly Muslims were executed on the Vlasic Mountain, but also Croats.

E. Evacuation by international agencies

On 1 October 1992, the two women transferred from Logor Omarska and detained in Logor Trnopolje were released and joined the first convoy to Karlovac (in Croatia).

In early October 1992, the ICRC evacuated some 1,500 concentration camp inmates - mainly men - from Logor Trnopolje. Later a limited number of non-Serbian detainees were exchanged for Serbs from other areas. The first group of prisoners evacuated from Logor Trnopolje left the camp on 1 October 1992. In November 1992, the ICRC was able to
evacuate also the group of prisoners who had been moved to Logor Manjaca after Logor Keraterm and Logor Omarska had been closed down.

The evacuated came to Karlovac in Croatia, wherefrom they were resettled, inter alia, in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In August 1992, the spokesperson of the UNHCR in the organization’s headquarters in Geneva, Silvana Foa, announced that «We will not be accomplices to the despicable policy of ethnic cleansing.» Accepting the haunted people from BiH into Croatia for the UNHCR to find third country resettlement for them from there, could, of course, at a first glance be construed as the UNHCR doing «the dirty job» on behalf of the Serbs as the Serbian ambition was precisely to get rid of the non-Serbs.

On second thought, the UNHCR changed its view. In my opinion, it is morally and ethically indisputable that the international agencies having evacuated and resettled people in need cannot be criticized for that. Every human being has the inherent right to life. The sole responsibility for the «ethnic cleansing» remains with those who made it impossible for the people to remain in Opština Prijedor and those who let that happen. The agencies ameliorated acute suffering and ought not to be accused of having «cleansed» or drained the area of non-Serbs even if some non-Serbs, then not targeted themselves, took the opportunity to leave with the evacuations. The overall situation was ominous and remained so for all non-Serbs, that is the heart of the problem. If any castigation is due, it is for those individuals in international organizations who directly or indirectly concealed the truth and thereby facilitated the perpetuation of the crimes.

In late 1993, Vreme reportedly quoted Lyndall Sax, the Belgrade spokesperson of the UNHCR, as follows:

«From my point of view, it is better to help with the removals. The people should be enabled to live where they want to live. They should not be forced to stay if they do not feel themselves safe. In any case, it is better to keep people alive than do nothing in order to avoid accusations of ethnic cleansing.»

XIII. The subsequent overall situation

After the main phase of the catastrophe was over, a sinister system to prompt an ever higher degree of ethnic homogeneity has continued to prevail. The means applied range from the use of brute force to sophisticated bureaucratic regulations.

On 17 February 1993, «A dramatic cry for help by the [Catholic] Bishop and priests of the Banja Luka diocese» was issued. Opština Prijedor is part of the Banja Luka diocese. After «subjugation over the past ten months to totally unlawful deprivation of our [the Catholics and other non Serbs’] human rights» the situation was considered dramatic and rapidly deteriorating. Massacres and torture being the most grievous crimes, the following was also complained of:
a. the ongoing planned ethnic cleansing;
b. the sacking of a vast number from their employment causing total existential
damage for the affected people, especially for those living in the urban areas;
c. the forceful mobilization of Catholics to fight against their own and other nationals;
d. the exclusion of the Catholics from the political decision-making of their country
including matters of their faith;
e. the destruction of churches and church buildings, and other sacrilege acts;
f. the inability for adult men to move freely; and
g. the lack of health care and exclusion from hospital care.

Despite the Catholic church having been present in the region for seventeen centuries,
some of the Catholic parishes had already at that time been totally emptied of their Catholic
populace.

According to the interview of Simo Drljača (chief of the Serbian secret police in Prijedor
and member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opštine Prijedor), Drljača ascertained that:

«Due to the actions of war, the participation of the authorized workers and their
preventive-repressive activity had a much weaker intensity than during the years before.
Thus were submitted 622 cases of criminal persecution. At check points were controlled
61,290 cars and 72,550 passengers. Due to suspicion that they originate from criminal acts,
19 motor vehicles were confiscated and a large number of things, and all this was orderly
handed over to the Opština commission and stored in the firms Velepromet or
Bosnamontaza. About the later fate of the confiscated things and cars, evidence may be
given by the legal authorities of the Opština organs.

In the past period were registered 792 criminal acts: 776 from the general criminal code and
16 economic criminal acts. The cleared up criminal acts were committed by 261 person (220
adults and 31 under age), and 22 returnees were registered. Of all 792 registered criminal
acts, 250 of them were totally cleared up, while 442 criminal acts remained uncleared (due
to unknown identity [of the perpetrators]). A typical activity of the SJB [the Public Security
Service, see Chapter V.A. supra] and its operative workers was fighting illegal trade with
foreign currency. 25 cases of currency criminality were raised against 31 persons. Besides 28
smugglers of food taken from Agrokomerc - the food was handed over to the Opština and
stored in Velepromet - [arrested], the following was confiscated and deposited at the
Agriprom bank of Banja Luka, Prijedor branch: 1,032,150 dinars, DEM 10,580, ATS 9,720, ITL
2,000, CHF 32, BEF 200, USD 400, and in the coffers of the CSB Banja Luka 3,011,730 dinars
RS [Republika Srpska, i.e. the Serbian Republic], 129,700 dinars RSK [Republika Srpske
Krajine i.e. the Republic of Serbian Krajina], DEM 7,900, ATS 4,400, FRF 500, CHF 410, USD
290, and in the National Bank of Banja Luka large quantities of gold and jewellery.

On the territory of Prijedor, the SJB has registered 58 murders, the victims of which were 23
Serbs, 9 Croats and 20 Muslims, and in 6 cases the victims are unknown. 31 of these cases
were totally cleared up by the SJB, and 18 cases were handed over to the prosecutor in
Prijedor, 13 cases to the military authorities, 6 cases put ad acta, and 22 cases are still under
investigation. Most of these criminal acts were committed while military actions were taking
place in the areas where they were committed. Officials of the SJB intervened 1,097 times
due to different causes (disturbance of public order). . . .
In spite of the documented work done by the workers of the SJB Prijedor, it is normal that more could have been done and better. I am satisfied that I leave behind workers - professionals who know how to do their job, they should just be allowed to do it. Political conditions and war normally hinder professionals from doing their job properly. Also among the police there were profiteers, thieves and cowards, an indicative sign is that so far 130 have been fired.» *46

On 31 October 1992, the BBC reported that representatives of the Serbian enclaves in BiH and Croatia had met and agreed to establish a common currency and common armed forces. This is not a very surprising move to be taken by units in the same federal State. There are also other signs of harmonization not to say preparations for future unification. The official rubber stamps used by the Serbs in BiH display the revitalized old Serbian coat of arms, and the flag is that of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. From the point of view of the Bosnian Serbs, they constitute one of the units of the FRY, although this probably for reasons of convenience and international political pressure has been downplayed by the latter. In general, there is strong pressure to establish a new, exclusively Serbian and conform social order in the district (see Chapter XI.B. supra).

A. Violence

As concerns violence befalling non-Serbs at the hands of Serbs, the overall picture is that incidents of torture, rape and summary executions still occur. Beatings, general harassment and intimidation have reportedly shown an exponential increase. The local Serbian leadership disclaim responsibility normally, and accuse «totally uncontrolled elements» of the misdeeds, or drunk soldiers on their way home from the war, or intoxicated locals.

The ensuing upsurge in crimes which follows a general breakdown in law and order does not qualify as persecution. A general breakdown in law and order may, however, be a premeditated instrument - a situation carefully orchestrated to hide the true nature of the evil. Thus, it should not be accepted at face value that the perpetrators are merely uncontrolled elements, especially not when these elements target almost exclusively non-Serbs who are otherwise discriminated against and persecuted. Unwillingness to chasten, prosecute, and punish «uncontrolled elements» may be another indication that these elements in reality are but a useful tool for the implementation of a policy of persecution.

As violence against non-Serbs was and is conducive to the overall ambition of the Serbian regime, and neither in the past have lead to or at the present leads to prosecution, it may be concluded that this kind of violence at best has been and remains tolerated. It may even have been kindled not to say carefully orchestrated.

B. Evictions

Still there may be a few Catholics (i.e. Croats) living in the Kozarac area, but no Muslims. Only one street in the town is intact. The Serbian administration for some time reportedly made futile efforts to have Serbs move into the area.
Along the main road Prijedor - Banja Luka, in the Kozarac area, for a distance of more than 10 kilometres, almost every house has been destroyed. Many houses were hit in the heavy artillery barrage against the area in May 1992. Later, each house was looted and apparently blown up from the inside - destroying especially the inside and the roof (see Chapter VII.B. supra). This means that the entire area now is more or less a ghost area, and the housing needs major repair before being reinhabited on a permanent basis.

Most of the blown-up houses along the main road have been marked with an X with a circle around it painted in blue. Just after the Serbian military destruction of Kozarac, it was reported that the same sign was painted on the houses in Kozarac with the following colour code: yellow meaning «to be inhabited», blue indicating «to be rebuilt», and red signifying «to be destroyed».

The former non-Serbian habitations on the left bank of the Sana River (see Chapters VII.A. and VII.D. supra) reportedly remains mainly depopulated as well.

More recently, the main evictions took place in Prijedor town, where non-Serbs were evicted to give room - or better housing - to Serbs. Some non-Serbs have been evicted several times; first from their villages to Prijedor town, thence from bigger flats to smaller flats, and finally to nothing. There is information that non-Serbs have been murdered in their own homes by Serbs interested primarily in taking over the housing facilities.

C. No legal protection

Numerous reports relate to violence and abuses committed by paramilitary or irregular military units or armed bandits. Local Serbian authorities time and again emphasize that these groups are not under their command or control. However, the said groups are only uncontrolled in that they do not attack Serbs without facing charges and trials. On several occasions, it has been reported that Serbian police, when called upon during and after incidents where the victims are non-Serbs, have done nothing to stop the perpetrators or to secure any evidence. The police have only told the victims that they must understand that there is no protection for non-Serbs in the Serbian-controlled community and that they had better leave it as soon as possible. Sometimes the perpetrators are said to be Serbian policemen. Whether premeditated or tacitly tolerated, the Serbian leaders de facto accept the activities of the groups as an instrument to further some overall Serbian ambitions. The same is reportedly the case when individual Serbs commit crimes against non-Serbs.

It is a basic principle that the law shall prohibit discrimination and guarantee all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, religion, political or other opinion. Never the less, not even the courts have reportedly seen it as their obligation to seek justice for the non-Serbs. There seems in other words to be no legal protection which can be obtained by the non-Serbs. This is so not only when they have been subjected to violent crimes, but also when non-Serbs are denied their basic rights as citizens, for example, when they are evicted, dismissed from their work, and/or enrolled for working obligation in disregard of the rules for such labour.
Other civil services are also being denied the non-Serbs. Of particular significance, is that they are denied hospital services and other medical services. In this respect, as well, the non-Serbs are without any recourse to a legal system which will help enforce their civil rights.

**D. Forced labour**

The non-Serbs remaining in Opština Prijedor are, in general, not permitted to return to their former occupations. Many - probably almost all able-bodied men - are, however, conscripted to work for the Serbian army to dig trenches on the front lines and to transport live ammunition, for example. Other non-Serbian conscripts work for the civilian Serbian authorities - engaged in cleaning and electrical repair in particular (the latter allegedly with no consideration taken of whether or not the person in case is actually trained to handle this kind of work). The latter is in disregard of Article 5 in the «Decision on Organization and Carrying out of Working Obligation for Defence Matters» which regulates that:

«Working obligation subjects must be assigned on duties and tasks in accordance with their psycho-physical abilities, professional qualifications and necessities of the work and production.»

The regulations are possibly applied differently to Serbs and non-Serbs. There are no age limits in the regulations for people subjected to working obligation. The working obligation seems to be an added burden on the non-Serbs as it is reportedly frequently combined with harassment and other kinds of abuse.

If a person deserts the forced labour, repercussions are likely to befall not only the individual himself, but also that person’s relatives.

As a general rule, pensions have been terminated for non-Serbs, with exceptions such as for relatives of some of those doing forced labour.

**E. Continued detention?**

There are allegations of the following new prison camps in Opština Prijedor:

a. Lisina: north north-east of the village of Lamovita, next to the television transmitter on the Kozara Mountain;

b. Orlovci: in the village of Orlovci; and

c. Gumara: a rubber plant in Prijedor. This camp is said to be for Serbs who refuse to wage war against the non-Serbs.

It is unknown when the camps have been or if they still are operational.

Whether non-Serbian prisoners continue to be incarcerated on the estate of the mine in Ljubija and in the Prijedor suburb of Puharska is also not known. Unconfirmed rumours will have it that some tunnels used to cultivate mushrooms, and also the tunnel between the football stadium and the dressing rooms, both in Ljubija, are used to imprison non-Serbs.
F. Reprisals

A Serb named Dušan, alias Dule, Tadić has been mentioned several times in this analysis (see Chapters III.E., VII.B. and VIII.A. supra). He is from Kozarac where he was the owner of cafe Nippon. He is about 40-years old, approximately 180 centimeters tall, with black hair, and trained in karate (holder of a black belt). When the Serbs took power on 30 April 1992, Dušan Tadić was reportedly president of the SDS at Kozarac. He was a reserve policeman. He was reportedly a highly active participant in the ensuing violence after the bombardment of the Kozarac area came to a halt (see Chapter VII.B. supra). He is said to have been engaged in mishandling, torturing and killing prisoners in Logor Omarska, where he allegedly, inter alia, forced one prisoner to bite off the testicles of other prisoners who died subsequently.

On 12 February 1994, Dušan Tadić was arrested in Germany and has subsequently been transferred to the ICTFY for trial. Immediately after the arrest of Dušan Tadić, a wave of violence against non-Serbs was reported from Opština Prijedor. It was speculated that this was in reprisal for the arrest, or rather for any efforts to follow up on the events in the district with criminal cases against alleged Serbian perpetrators.

Without capitulating to speculations and fear, it ought to be considered on the level of the United Nations and with reference to the upcoming work of the ICTFY if reprisals against non-Serbs still in the district could become a serious problem if only those in inferior positions are held responsible and the rest of the apparat is left in place. Unless the ICTFY attempts to bring superiors to justice for their alleged crimes, they may use the criminal action against underlings as just another reason for abusing non-Serbs - although all available information indicates that they need no pretexts for terror of any kind. For potential witnesses, such theoretical, more than practical, linkage may, however, be a strong emotional constraint which ought not to be underestimated. Considering the amount of solid information and other sources of evidence already available about the events in Opština Prijedor, justice is unlikely to suffer if the international community first aims at prosecuting responsible key leaders (whether or not they will be made available to the court) and thence alleged perpetrators of less significance.

G. Total evacuation of the non-Serbs?

From the very beginning when the violence in Opština Prijedor commenced, Serbian people in the district have been stating that they want an ethnically clean Greater Serbia.

The Herald Tribune reported that:

«Two Muslim villages and a Gypsy one near Prijedor, with a collective population of nearly 1,000 people, have approached the UNHCR [the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] office in Banja Luka to request evacuation.» *47

The last days of March 1994 became a time with a number of reported killings:


b. On 27 March 1994: two identified non-Serbs from Prijedor were killed on working obligations for the Serbs.
c. During the three days 29, 30 and 31 March 1994, 19 identified non-Serbs from Prijedor were killed. Most of the people killed were couples and other immediate family members.
d. The next day, on 1 April 1994: also an identified non-Serb, a 25-year old young man, died from the injuries he sustained the previous day when his parents were killed.

The victims' names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons.

There were other suspected murders as well but the supposed places of murder could not be accessed at the time. Later, it is estimated by people in the district that a total of 47 non-Serbs may have been killed in Opština Prijedor during the last days of March 1994. Among them were reportedly a group who had to dig their own grave before they were shot and buried near the cattle marked at Urije in Prijedor town.

From 29 to 31 March 1994, 20 houses of non-Serbs in Prijedor were bombed and/or burned. One more house inhabited by non-Serbs in Prijedor faced a similar fate on 4 April 1994.

These crimes were reportedly committed, in part, by Serbian police officers in uniform. It was rumoured that the violence was mass revenge killings after six Serbian police officers from Prijedor had been killed in Bihac in the first week of February 1994 (apparently the policemen were trapped and attacked when the front line suddenly was withdrawn). The Bihac pocket is outside of the Serbian-controlled areas in north-western BiH and not at all connected to Opština Prijedor.

At the time, all telephone lines were cut for the minorities, who approached the ICRC and asked that all remaining minority members in Opština Prijedor be evacuated, asserting «If we stay here, we will all be killed».

The international community, considering the situation «simply disastrous», intervened with the local Serbian leaders. The Serbian police chief admitted that there were problems, but claimed that the events were part of a conspiracy by the non-Serbs to slander the Serbs. He ascertained that the Serbs would not stop non-Serbs from leaving the area. Another Serbian local leader concluded that the three nationalities (the Serbs, the Croats and the Muslims) could no longer live together in peace and that there had to be territorial separation.

The President of the ICRC later, on 11 April 1994, in Belgrade held talks even with Slobodan Milošević the President of the FRY to have the abuses stopped. Intervention by the ICRC to have permission to evacuate all non-Serbs remaining in Opština Prijedor who want to leave has, for different reasons of lack of cooperation and safety, not yet yielded any practical results.

The ICRC related the following in its 1994 report on BiH:

«The plight of civilian minority groups in northern Bosnia is a source of grave concern to the ICRC, which has made repeated representations on the subject to the relevant authorities, especially after a deterioration of the situation in the town of Sipovo, south of Banja Luka, in
early March. Despite the guarantees about the safety of minorities given to the ICRC by the highest authorities, about 20 civilians belonging to minority groups were killed in Prijedor on 29 and 30 March. This compelled the ICRC to consider evacuating all those who so wished, as a last resort to save their lives.

The ICRC has therefore requested to be allowed to transfer, in satisfactory conditions of security, all those wishing to be evacuated. After an initial favourable response from the Bosnian Serb authorities, conditions were imposed on the ICRC that rendered the evacuation unfeasible.

The ICRC is continuing its representation to the Bosnian Serb authorities, asking them to take urgent practical measures to guarantee the safety of Muslims and Croats in the region and to convince these minorities that they can remain safely in their homes. At the same time, the ICRC is pursuing its efforts to deploy delegates in Prijedor and facilitate the transfer of persons wishing to leave the town. » *48

**XIV. Endnote**

An identified Serbian violinist (whose name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons) had been awarded several international prizes for his music. He was reportedly killed in Prijedor by fellow Serbs after he, when they all were sitting in a coffee bar, had told them that he disapproved of their brutality towards non-Serbs.

Serbian inhabitants in Omarska village held a protest meeting against the existence of Logor Omarska.

From the village of Omarska, Serbian women approached Logor Omarska to give food to the camp inmates, and to demand their release. Serbian women even tried to stage a demonstration against Logor Omarska in Prijedor town in front of the town hall and the police centre (next to the town hall).

Serbs were among those alerting the Serbian police of imminent destruction of cultural property in Prijedor, although to no avail.

There is no question that there were many Serbian individuals in Opština Prijedor who had mercy for non-Serbs, protecting and assisting them as best they could - at great risk to their own security. The Serbian leaders did not tolerate any such «collaboration». Serbs found to have assisted any non-Serbs were severely punished, and some Serbs even paid with their lives for their mercy.

**Part Three**

**The law**

The following discussion of the applicable law is also found in the Final Report of the Commission of Experts. *49
I. Crimes against humanity

A. The Statute of the ICTFY

Article 5 of the statute of the ICTFY affirms the competence of the ICTFY to prosecute persons committing «crimes against humanity», which are defined as specified acts «committed in armed conflict, whether international or internal in character, and directed against any civilian population», such as national, political, ethnic, racial or religious groups.

The definition of crimes against humanity in Article 5 of the Statute codifies accepted principles of international law applicable erga omnes. As ascertained by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, there are «elementary dictates of humanity» to be recognized under all circumstances. The United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 95 (I) of 11 December 1946 affirmed the principles of international law recognized by the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the judgement of the Tribunal. *50

The Nuremberg application of «crimes against humanity» was a response to the shortcoming in international law that many crimes committed during World War II could not technically be regarded as war crimes stricto sensu on account of one or several elements, which were of a different nature. «Crimes against humanity» was, therefore, conceived to redress crimes of an equally serious character and on a vast scale, organized and systematic, and most ruthlessly carried out.

B. Armed conflict

Crimes against humanity apply to all contexts. They are not, therefore, confined to situations of international armed conflict, but also apply to all armed conflicts including internal ones - civil wars and insurrection - and whatever casus mixtus may arise in between internal and international armed conflict. Thus, it includes all armed conflict, whether they are of an international or non-international character. However, not every act committed by force of arms is an armed conflict; a genuine armed conflict has to be distinguished from a mere act of banditry or an unorganized and short-lived insurrection. Crimes against humanity are also no longer dependant on their linkage to crimes against peace or war crimes.

Articles 2 and 3 of the Statute of the ICTFY address «Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949» and «Violations of the laws and customs of war». Article 5, which concerns crimes against humanity, contains minimum provisions which must be respected, a fortiori, whether or not Articles 2 or 3 are applicable to a specific conflict.

C. Protected persons

Article 5 of the Statute of the ICTFY protects «any civilian population», which undoubtedly includes the whole of the population of the area afflicted by the armed conflict, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, nationality, religion or political opinion. Refugees are not different from other civilians, and as such are protected within the meaning of «civilian population». «Civilian population» is used in this context in contradistinction to combatants or members of armed forces.
It seems obvious that Article 5 applies first and foremost to civilians, meaning people who are not combatants. This, however, should not lead to any quick conclusions concerning people who at one particular point in time did bear arms. One practical example: in the former Yugoslavia, large-scale arbitrary killings were one of the hallmarks of attacks by a given group. Information about such arbitrary killings was then used by the same group to instill fear and demand total subjugation of the other group in other areas as well. Many of the most barbarous onslaughts on villages started with heavy artillery bombardments followed by the villages being stormed by infantry in tandem, while paramilitary groups sought the inhabitants in each and every house. A head of family who under such circumstances tries to protect his family gun-in-hand does not thereby lose his status as a civilian. Maybe the same is the case for the sole policeman or local defence guard doing the same, even if they joined hands to try to prevent the cataclysm. Information of the overall circumstances is relevant for the interpretation of the provision in a spirit consistent with its purpose. Under such circumstances, the distinction between improvised self-defence and actual military defence may be subtle, but none the less important. This is no less so when the legitimate authorities in the area - as part and parcel of an overall plan of destruction - had previously been given an ultimatum to arm all the local defence guards.

The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg stated the following concerning crimes against humanity and the importance of the overall circumstances:

«The defendant contends that steeling the personal property of Jews and other concentration camp inmates is not a crime against humanity. But under the circumstances which we have here related [emphasis added], this plea is and must be rejected. What was done was done pursuant to a government policy, and the thefts were part of a program of extermination and were one of its objectives. It would be a strange doctrine indeed, if, where part of the plan and one of the objectives of murder was to obtain the property of the victim, even to the extent of using the hair from his head and the gold of his mouth, he who knowingly took part in disposing of the loot must be exonerated and held not guilty as a participant in the murder plan. Without doubt all such acts are crimes against humanity and he who participates or plays a consenting part therein is guilty of a crime against humanity.» *51

It is significant to note that Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, Part II «Humane treatment», addresses «Fundamental guarantees» in article 4 and includes in the protected group «all persons who do not take a direct part or who have ceased to take part in hostilities».

D. Acts constituting crimes against humanity

The different acts constituting crimes against humanity are enumerated in article 5 of the statute of the ICTFY, such acts are: «murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, torture, rape, persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds, and other inhumane acts». «Other inhumane acts» covers serious crimes of a nature similar to the other crimes cited. It is not equally obvious if the eiusdem generis principle of interpretation will rule out a wider interpretation. It is necessary to ascertain that the acts
included in the concept of «crimes against humanity» correspond to what is already
considered international customary law.

In the context of crimes against humanity, it is relevant to observe the same kind of
prohibited acts listed in common article 3 (relevant to conflicts not of an international
character) in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, and in Protocol II Additional to the
Geneva Conventions, are mere codification of elementary dictates of humanity. Article 3
prohibits «violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel
treatment and torture; taking of hostages; outrages upon personal dignity, in particular
humiliating and degrading treatment; and the passing of sentences and the carrying out of
executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituent court,
affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized
peoples». Protocol II, Part II, article 4 bans «violence to the life, health and physical or
mental well-being of persons, in particular murder, as well as cruel treatment such as
torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment; collective punishment; taking of
hostages; acts of terrorism; outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and
degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assaults; slavery
and the slave trade in all their forms; pillage; and threats to commit any of the foregoing
acts». The former Yugoslavia signed Protocol II on 11 June 1979 and ratified it that same
day, without reservations, declarations or objections.

Crimes against humanity are not confined to situations where there exists an «intent to
destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such», which
are preconditions for genocide. Crimes against humanity are, however, very serious
international violations «directed against» the protected persons, in contradistinction to a
fate befalling them merely as a side-effect, for example, of a military operation dictated by
military necessity.

**E. Widespread and systematic**

Isolated acts constituting offences, such as extra-judicial executions or other common
crimes punishable under municipal law, do not qualify as crimes against humanity by
themselves. The acts must be part of a policy of persecution or discrimination. In addition,
the acts must be carried out in a systematic way or by means of mass action. Thus, the
number of victims and perpetrators are characteristically high. Because the perpetrators
have a common plan containing the elements described above, they need not resort to the
same means or acts against their victims. It is the systematic process of victimization against
the protected group which is essential. For example, a number of interviewees reported
that some persons had been crucified, but it is not necessary that all victims of the
protected group be crucified or that this particular «inhumane act» be recognized in and of
itself to be part of crimes against humanity. It is the overall context of large-scale
victimization carried out as part of a common plan or design which goes to the element of
systematicity.

It should be noted that the ensuing upsurge in crimes that follows a general breakdown
of law and order does not qualify as crimes against humanity. However, a general
breakdown in law and order may be a premeditated instrument, a situation carefully
orchestrated to hide the true nature of the intended harm. Thus, it should not be accepted at face value that the perpetrators are merely uncontrolled elements, especially not if these elements target almost exclusively groups also otherwise discriminated against and persecuted. Unwillingness to manage, prosecute and punish «uncontrolled elements» may be another indication that these elements are, in reality, but a useful tool for the implementation of a policy of crimes against humanity.

Crimes against humanity may also amount to extermination of national, ethnical, racial, religious or other groups, whether or not the intent which makes such crimes punishable as genocide can be proven. They may also, through «inhume acts», amount to large-scale human degradation. The scale and nature of such crimes become of special significance and of concern to the international community because of the abhorrent character of the overall policy, the means employed to carry out the policy, and the number of victims it produces.

II. Genocide

A. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide states that «genocide is a crime under international law, contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and condemned by the civilized world», and as the United Nations recognized that «at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity».  

The Convention was manifestly adopted for humanitarian and civilizing purposes. Its objectives are to safeguard the very existence of certain human groups and to affirm and emphasize the most elementary principles of humanity and morality. In view of the rights involved, the legal obligations to refrain from genocide are recognized as erga omnes.

When the Convention was drafted, it was already envisaged that it would apply not only to then existing forms of genocide, but also «to any method that might be evolved in the future with a view to destroying the physical existence of a group». As emphasized in the Preamble to the Convention, genocide has marred «all periods of history», and it is this very tragic recognition that gives the concept its historical evolutionary nature.

The Convention must be interpreted in good faith, in accordance with the ordinary meaning of its terms, in their context, and in the light of its object and purpose. Moreover, the text of the Convention should be interpreted in such a way that a reason and a meaning can be attributed to every word. No word or provision may be disregarded or treated as superfluous, unless this is absolutely necessary to give effect to the terms read as a whole.

Genocide is a crime under international law regardless of «whether committed in time of peace or in time of war» (see article I). Thus, irrespective of the context in which it occurs (for example, peace time, internal strife, international armed conflict or whatever the general overall situation) genocide is a punishable international crime.
The acts specified in the Convention must be «committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such» (see article II).

**B. The extent of destruction of a group**

Destruction of a group «in whole or in part» does not mean that the group in its entirety must be exterminated. The words «in whole or in part» were inserted in the text to make it clear that it is not necessary to aim at killing all the members of the group.

According to the United Nations Special Rapporteur, B. Whitaker:

«'In part' would seem to imply a reasonably significant number, relative to the total of the group as a whole, or else a significant section of a group such as its leadership. . . . considerations of both proportionate scale and of total numbers are relevant.» *55

If essentially the total leadership of a group is targeted, it could also amount to genocide. Such leadership includes political and administrative leaders, religious leaders, academics and intellectuals, business leaders and others - the totality per se may be a strong indication of genocide regardless of the actual numbers killed. A corroborating argument will be the fate of the rest of the group. The character of the attack on the leadership must be viewed in the context of the fate or what happened to the rest of the group. If a group has its leadership exterminated, and at the same time or in the wake of that, has a relatively large number of the members of the group killed or subjected to other heinous acts, for example, deported on a large scale or forced to flee, the cluster of violations ought to be considered in its entirety in order to interpret the provisions of the Convention in a spirit consistent with its purpose. Similarly, the extermination of a group's law-enforcement and military personnel may be a significant section of a group in that it renders the group at large defenceless against other abuses of a similar or other nature, particularly if the leadership is being eliminated as well. Thus, the intent to destroy the fabric of a society through the extermination of its leadership, when accompanied by other acts of elimination of a segment of society, can also be deemed genocide.

**C. The groups protected**

«National, ethnical, racial or religious groups» are all protected. The different groups relevant to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia - the Serbs, the Croats, the Muslims, the Gypsies, and others - all have status as ethnic groups, and may, at least in part, be characterized by religion, ethnicity, and nationality. It is not a condition that the victim group be a minority, it might as well be a numerical majority.

If there are several or more than one victim groups, and each group as such is protected, it may be within the spirit and purpose of the Convention to consider all the victim groups as a larger entity. The case being, for example, that there is evidence that group A wants to destroy in whole or in part groups B, C and D, or rather everyone who does not belong to the «national, ethnical, racial or religious» group A. In a sense, group A has defined a pluralistic non-A group using national, ethnical, racial and religious criteria for the definition. It seems relevant to analyse the fate of the non-A group along similar lines as
if the non-A group had been homogenous. This is important if, for example, group B and to a lesser degree group C have provided the non-A group with all its leaders. Group D, on the other hand, has a more marginal role in the non-A group community because of its small numbers or other reasons. Genocide, «an odious scourge» which the Convention intends «to liberate mankind from» (see the Preamble to the Convention), would as a legal concept be a weak or even useless instrument if the overall circumstances of mixed groups were not covered. The core of this reasoning is that in one-against-everyone-else-cases the question of a significant number or a significant section of the group must be answered with reference to all the target groups as a larger whole.

**D. Intent**

It is the element of intent to destroy a designated group in whole or in part, which makes crimes of mass murder and crimes against humanity qualify as genocide. To be genocide within the meaning of the Convention, the crimes against a number of individuals must be directed at their collectivity or at them in their collective character or capacity. This can be deduced from the words «as such» stated in article II of the Convention (see para. 638 supra). In most countries, penal codes do not regard motives, rather only intent, as the subjective or mental constituent element of a crime. Motive and intent may be closely linked, but motive is not mentioned in the Convention. The necessary element of intent may be inferred from sufficient facts. In certain cases, there will be evidence of actions or omissions of such a degree of criminal negligence or recklessness that the defendant may reasonably be assumed to have been aware of the consequences of his or her conduct, which goes to the establishment of intent, but not necessarily motive.

**E. Acts constituting the crime of genocide**

The different acts constituting the crime of genocide are enumerated in article II of the Convention, such acts are: «killing members of a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group». Each of these categories of acts can constitute the crime of genocide, as could any combination of these acts.

**F. Punishable acts**

Article III of the Convention lists the punishable acts as being: «genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct or public incitement to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide and complicity in genocide». This enumeration indicates how far the crime needs to have advanced before it becomes punishable. For example, an attempt will suffice. Secondly, it describes what kind of involvement in an actual genocide may result in penal responsibility under the Convention. Thus, criminal responsibility extends to those involved in incitement, conspiracy and attempt, as well as individuals actually executing the specific acts prohibited by the Convention. Political masterminds or propaganda people are no less responsible than the individuals who perform the actual carnage. There are, therefore,
several legal bases for criminal responsibility for individuals who engage in or are part of the various aspects of genocide.

G. Culpability

It is explicitly stated in the Convention that people who have committed genocide shall be punished whether they are «constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals» (see article IV). Public officials include both civilian and military personnel and everyone who holds (or held) a public office - be it legislative, administrative or judicial. To meet the aims of the Convention, people in the said categories must be treated equally irrespective of their de jure or de facto positions as decision makers. As individuals, they are subject to prosecution like any other individual violator. They cannot hide behind any shield of immunity. The legal and moral responsibilities are the same and the need to prevent genocide no less clear because of the position of the violator.

H. The Statute of the ICTFY

The statute of the ICTFY, article 4, affirms the competence of the ICTFY to prosecute persons committing genocide. The definition of genocide in Article 4 of the Statute is identical to the provisions of the Genocide Convention.

Associated notes

Notes of annex V

*1 Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993.

*2 Sinisa Vujakovic's Interview of Simo Drljaca, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

*3 Id.


*9 Sinisa Vujakovic's Interview of Simo Drljaca, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).


Siniša Vujaković's Interview of Simo Drljača, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Id.

Ed Vulliamy, Seasons in Hell: Understanding Bosnia’s War 100 (1994).

Siniša Vujaković's Interview of Simo Drljača, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

See «Dragan Janjetović - Janjac, leader of ‘Manijakosi’ was buried in Svodna on Sunday», Kozarski Vjesnik, 3 September 1993.

See «The anniversary of the 6th (2nd) Battalion of the 43rd Brigade», Kozarski Vjesnik, 25 June 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

As quoted in «The anniversary of the 6th (2nd) Battalion of the 43rd Brigade», Kozarski Vjesnik, 25 June 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Siniša Vujaković's Interview of Simo Drljača, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Interview of Colonel Milan Milivojević, Vreme (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Interview of a Serbian Association of War Veterans, Vreme, 6 December 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Id.

Vreme, 15 November 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).


Sinisa Vujakovic's Interview of Simo Drljaca, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).


Id. at 101-02.

Id. at 103.


Id. at 103.


Kozarski Vjesnik, 2 July 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Kozarski Vjesnik, 16 July 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

Id.

Sinisa Vujakovic's Interview of Simo Drljaca, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).

«Serbian sacred objects in the territories of former Yugoslav republics which have been destroyed or damaged during the war 1991-93», Serbia, No. 23, 22 March 1993.


Id. at 103.

Sinisa Vujakovic's Interview of Simo Drljaca, Kozarski Vjesnik, 9 April 1993 (the original is written in the Serbian language).


U.S. von Weizsaecker (Ministries Case), 14 Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10 at 611 (1949) (The Green Series). See also International Military Tribunals sitting at Nuremberg, reported in Trial of the Major War Criminlas before the International Military Tribunal (1949).

General Assembly resolution 260 (III) of 9 December 1948, annex, second and third preambular paragraphs.

From a statement made by Mr. Morozov, representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on 19 April 1948 during the debate in the Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide (E/AC.25/SR.12).
