

7D

29.

MILADIN GVOZDENOVIC (of father Sreten)
Year of birth: 1925
Place of birth: Zagoni, commune of Bratunac
Place of residence: Zagoni
Profession: pensioner

S T A T E M E N T

I have been living in Zagoni - a village near Bratunac, completely populated by Serbs - all my life. I remember well the last war, during which Zagoni was burned down. That, however, had been done by the Ustashi who came from Bratunac. We had no problems with the Moslems from the neighbouring villages of Blječeva, Čizmići and Mekote. When the Ustashi were advancing we found refuge in their villages and when the Chetniks came by we sheltered them in our village. We had good relations with them from that war until 1990, at which time they started provoking us, Serbs, in different ways. Let me give you an example: on 18 May 1990, during a bus ride, Šaćir Memišević, son of Nurija, from Blječeva, wanted to tear my "šajkača" (cap which is a part of the Serbian national dress) I used to wear all the time and which had not bothered him until then. He likewise wanted to tear the "šajkača" of Mladjo from Bratunac, whose last name I forgot, and who from then on wore a visored cap, out of fear. In 1991, after those Moslems in Kajići were killed, there was firing during the night at our village from Blječeva, and we had to organize guards around the village. After that we started arming ourselves on our own, whichever way we could and knew how. When the real war started, there was almost daily firing at our village from the villages of Blječeva and Pale, while we were working on the land, and our guards responded to those provocations.

On 5 July 1992, I was at home in Zagoni. At about 11.00 a.m. o'clock I went to my brother Rajko's place. It was peaceful, but I felt something in the air. At about 3.00 p.m. I decided to go home in order to hear the news broadcast. Grenade firing started and it went on for some 10 minutes. At the same time firing from infantry weapons started from Pale and Blječeva. Soon, there was firing from all sides from the direction of Kaolin and Ladja screaming, shouting and noise made by banging pots and pans was heard. The assailants the village from all sides. I tried to find a way out of the village, and I stole my way to my son Radoje's place. At the crossroads above his house I came across the body of his dead daughter Rada. Since I could not pull her body out, I took her Scorpion and somehow succeeded in breaching through the encirclement. From the crossroads above "Papratnica" I saw our houses on fire. I heard and recognized the voice of Rada Milošević, Milenko's wife. She was screaming. When everything was over, she was found dead in the village. As her four year old child had disappeared, we thought that it too, had been killed and thrown into the fire. However, two weeks later, it was exchanged safe and sound, since the Moslems had taken it away that day.

89-a

I saw many people attacking our village that day, but I could not recognize any of them.

That day, they plundered all the houses and then set them on fire and burned them down. They killed the pigs in the courtyards and drove the other livestock away.

On that day, the following persons were killed in the village: Rada Gvozdenović, daughter of Radoje; my son Dragoljub Gvozdenović; Blagoje Gvozdenović, son of Milorad; my brother Rajko Gvozdenović; Miloš Milošević, son of Jovan; Mirko Dimitrić, son of Mitar; Mileva Dimitrić, all from Zagoni; Ćedo and his wife Dušanka, Miho Malović from Bratunac; Ljubica Milošević was wounded, but she died in the health station in Bratunac; Professor Jašinski, who was also wounded died in hospital, while the wounded Radojka Gvozdenović, Rajko's wife, survived.

I am ready to repeat this statement before any court of law or organization.

Statement given in Bratunac,
on 9 February 1993

signed

Miladin Gvozdenović

12 D

38

TATOMIR (of father Radoje) GVOZDENOVIC
Born on 29 February 1976
Born in Ljubovija
Resident of Zagonj
Student

S T A T E M E N T

I lived with my parents in our house at Zagonj. Before the war, we were on good terms with our neighbours both from Blječeva and from Čizmić. I had many friends in those villages with whom I mixed and went to school. When the war broke out we set up guards around our village. There were frequent Muslim provocations from the villages of Blječeva, Čizmić and Poso; they would fire at our positions using infantry weapons and we would fire back but there was never any larger-scale assault. Early in the morning on 5 July 1992 I went to Bratunac to escort young soldiers. When the army left, I and my brother Dragan returned to Zagonj at around 13.00 hrs. My brother went immediately to the position. I, my sister Rada and godfather Goran Stojić from Studenac stayed at home. Around 15 hrs. the village came under cannon and mortar fire from the direction of Pale and within 10 minutes 30 of such grenades fell on it. I took my rifle straightaway and left for the position to defend the village, knowing that having shelled us they would launch an infantry attack. Goran stayed in the house to wake up Rada who was asleep, and it was agreed that he would go to the position and Rada would withdraw toward Bogunovac. By the time I reached my position, my house had been fired on from all directions. From the slope which we call 'Ladja' I heard them shooting and shouting 'Allah uegber'. I further heard heavy shooting from the direction of Jelovo and realized that the village was totally encircled. At the same time, a group of Muslims set out from the direction of Budak and Blječeva, drumming the saucapans and shouting 'Catch the one from Dubovi under Medja alive, there are two of them on the road near Išćić crane' etc. I recognized among the attackers Nurija Muratović's son known as Štico who was my classmate from Blječevo although I don't remember his first name any longer. I also recognized Muriz Martović from Čizmić who shouted 'Catch me Dragan alive, f... it!' In fact, Muriz was my brother Dragan's schoolmate. I could not recognize anyone else because they were unshaven and bearded. They were clad in uniforms and civilian clothes, moved in groups of 15 or so, were armed with automatic weapons (automatic rifles, Thompsons, and an occasional hunting rifle). They would barge into houses in groups, take out valuables and then set them ablaze. They first set on fire my Uncle Ljuba's house, then those of Uncle Blagoje, Sava, Rajo, Ilija, Miloš, Nedja, Mitar, Nega, etc. I watched it all from the nearby hill known as Kruška, having managed to break through the siege and was then about 300 meters away from them but able to see everything well. Soon our army arrived and pushed back the enemy. I entered the village with the army. I first came across Uncle Drago's body and further away lay the body of my dead sister Rada. I helped others drag out the bodies (from the ruins) and I know that the

BOŽANA GVOZDENOVIĆ
Year of birth: 1950
Place of birth: Obadi, commune of Srebrenica.
Place of residence: Žagoni, commune of Bratunac
Profession: housewife

S T A T E M E N T

We got along well with our neighbours, the Moslems from Blječeva and Čizmići. We visited each other both on feast days and at times of mourning. When the war started we did not have any contacts since we started keeping watch around our own villages. Occasionally they fired at our guards, but they did not attack the village.

On 5 July 1992, I was at home attending to my daily chores. At 1 p. m. Desa, my sister-in-law, called me to join her in collecting the hay in the field called "Milanovača" on the side of the hill facing Blječeva. A group of eight of us, six women and two elderly men, gathered to collect the hay. When we entered the field somebody started firing at us with a machine gun from Mujčin and Zejneba Muratović's house in Blječeva and we moved away. After it had stopped, we started collecting the hay. We worked together for about an hour and then sat down in the shade to rest a bit and have a drink of water. As we sat down, somebody fired a machine gun again from the same house. I saw two men on the window, but could not recognize them. At the same time there was mortar and cannon firing all over the village and our positions. There were many grenades, but I didn't count them. We started running towards the cemetery where our men were on guard. People from Blječeva started shouting "drag them to the river, take them alive!" I saw two men with rifles and yellow bands around their sleeves coming towards us from the creek. I knew that they were Ustashi, because our soldiers wore no insignia. We continued running, and when I reached our trench I asked my husband Radoje about the children, because our daughter Rada, 1973, had stayed at home and I had no idea what had happened to our sons Tatomir and Dragan. Radoje told me to go and see what had happened to them because he had to stay and organize the defense, since the Ustashi were attacking from all sides. I heard them yelling "attack the Chetniks, don't let them go to Kaolin, get them alive." Among them I recognized Muriz Muratović from Blječeva, who was my son Dragan's school-mate and fellow conscript. He and another fellow whom I did not recognize came up to Veso's stables in the hamlet of Jelah, while Desa and I hid under the shed of that same stable. The fellow whom I did not know told him "set Veso's stable on fire". He thought for a minute and then replied "let's get them alive, there they are, running down the fields, and we'll come back later. They went towards the place where crying and screaming of women was coming from. From that place I went towards my home and went in, but Rada was not in the house. I then went back to Veso's house, hid with Desa under the veranda and when my husband Radoje came along, the three of us started towards "Papratnica", wherefrom he went further to see

10 D

90-a

what had become of the others, while Desa and I started towards Kaolin. Our army from Bratunac had already reached Kaolin and they had pushed the Ustashi back to Blječeva. Before help had come, the Ustashi had already killed my daughter Rada on the crossroad, and ten other men and women in the village. They burned down almost all the houses, only four remained. They killed the livestock, took all the more valuable things from the houses, and then burned the houses down, yelling, firing and swearing all the time. I am ready to repeat this statement before any court of justice or international organization.

Bratunac, 5 January 1993

fingerprint of the right
thumb

144/93
13