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THE CASE
of
ARCHBISHOP STEPINAC



Embassy of the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia
Washington

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Information Officer
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FOREWORD

This document assembling facts in the case of Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac of Yugoslavia has been prepared because the arrest and trial of the Archbishop are still being used in the United States in a campaign of misrepresentation against the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia. This campaign, accusing Yugoslavia of religious persecution—which does not exist in my country and which is specifically outlawed by the Constitution—has gone to considerable lengths. Petitions for which thousands of names have been obtained have been submitted to the White House and to the Department of State. Resolutions have been introduced in the Congress. In the face of such organized and continuing attacks I have felt compelled, in justice to the government and people of Yugoslavia, to make this material available in English. It shows that Archbishop Stepinac was tried and convicted solely because of the crimes in which he engaged against his own nation—the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, later the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia—and against his own countrymen.

Americans who may have been misinformed on the point should know also that millions of patriotic citizens of Yugoslavia are Catholics, enjoying full freedom of worship today under constitutional guarantees. Having firsthand knowledge of the role played by Archbishop Stepinac during the war, they do not identify their religion with the secular political course in support of Hitler and Mussolini which he chose to follow.

SAVA N. KOSANOVIC,
*Ambassador of the Federal
Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia.*

August, 1947.

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PART I

1. What are the charges against Archbishop Stepinac?

When Adolf Hitler, during the execution of his plan to conquer Europe and the world, attacked the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941, it became immediately apparent that the German Wehrmacht had at its command powerful treacherous groups within the Yugoslav state. The Yugoslav Army, engaged in a deadly struggle against the overwhelmingly superior forces of the Nazi invaders, had to contend from the start with military bands working for the enemy in its rear. These were the so-called Ustashi terroristic detachments which, in close cooperation with and sometimes under the direct leadership of those Roman Catholic priests who were members of the Ustashi, threatened the communication lines of the fighting Yugoslav Army, and attacked and disarmed isolated Army units.

Suffering under the blows of the German Wehrmacht, and stabbed in the back by the Ustashi, the Yugoslav Army resisted heroically until it was broken after two weeks of fighting.

After the defeat of the Yugoslav Army parts of the country were occupied by the Wehrmacht, and other parts were given over to the Ustashi, who set up a Nazi puppet state, which they called the Independent State of Croatia. From the beginning it became apparent that in this new puppet state power rested entirely in the hands of the Ustashi and their collaborators in the higher and lower Catholic clergy.

A wave of terror soon swept the newly organized Independent State of Croatia. Of the 2,000,000 Serbs in Croatia, the Ustashi program, now put into action, called for one third to be driven from their homes back to Serbia, another third to be murdered and the rest forced, under threat of torture and death, to convert to the Roman faith. Of the 80,000 Jews in Yugoslavia, 60,000 were killed, the great majority in Croatia. As will be seen in following chapters, based on documentary evidence, these almost incredible atrocities were committed with the full knowledge and active support of one part of the Roman hierarchy in Croatia. Archbishop Stepinac was the responsible head of that hierarchy.

Investigation by the Yugoslav War Crimes Commission

established that Archbishop Stepinac had played a leading part in the conspiracy that led to the conquest and breakdown of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. It was furthermore established that Archbishop Stepinac played a role in governing the Nazi puppet Croatian state, that many members of his clergy participated actively in atrocities and mass murders, and, finally, that they collaborated with the enemy down to the last day of the Nazi rule, and continued after the liberation to conspire against the newly created Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia.

2. Why was Archbishop Stepinac not arrested immediately after the liberation of Yugoslavia?

When Archbishop Stepinac was arrested and brought to trial in September, 1946, one argument of the critics ran along these lines: Why did the Yugoslav Government not arrest Archbishop Stepinac immediately after liberation if his offenses were so grave? If they really had the evidence, why did they wait so long?

The answer is that the Yugoslav Government, far from being motivated by vengeful feelings, made a serious effort to avoid the necessity of taking court action against Archbishop Stepinac. It endeavored earnestly and patiently to reach a modus vivendi making possible a settlement of the Stepinac case.

When the War Crimes investigation produced evidence of the Archbishop's complicity in the barbarous regime of Ante Pavelic in puppet Croatia, the Yugoslav Government informed the Vatican of the nature and volume of this evidence and asked that Stepinac be withdrawn. What happened was described by Marshal Tito in an address at Zagreb on October 31, 1946:

"When the Pope's representative to our Government, Bishop Hurley,* paid me his first visit I raised the question of Stepinac. 'Have him transferred from Yugoslavia,' I said, 'for otherwise we shall be obliged to place him under arrest.' I warned Bishop Hurley of the course we had to follow. I discussed the matter with him in detail. I acquainted him with Stepinac's many hostile acts toward our country. I gave him a

* The Vatican sent Bishop Joseph Patrick Hurley of St. Augustine, Florida, to Belgrade in October, 1945, to serve as acting Apostolic Nuncio. In this capacity he attended sessions of the trial of Archbishop Stepinac, and presumably made a report—which has never been published—to his superiors.

file of documentary evidence of the Archbishop's crimes.

"We waited four months without receiving any reply. Then the authorities arrested Stepinac and he was brought to trial, in the same manner as any other individual who works against the people."

3. The Yugoslav Tragedy

To understand fully the role Archbishop Stepinac played during the crucial pre-war years, as well as during the war and after the liberation of Yugoslavia, it is necessary to remember the centuries-old struggle which the South Slavic peoples, the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Macedonians carried on for their independence. The Slavic peoples of the Balkans have a glorious tradition as fierce and stubborn fighters for their cultural and religious heritage as well as for national independence. During 500 years of Turkish rule over the Balkans, the Serbs formed the very core of the resistance movement. When, during the last century, the old Ottoman Empire declined, the Balkan peoples gained their national independence. The great powers carved the Balkans into smaller states which subsequently became pawns in the intrigues of the European powers.

Imperial Germany especially, together with the old Habsburg Empire, followed a program aimed at dominating the Balkans. This old Pan-German program for conquest, known as the Berlin-Bagdad Railroad Project, threatened vital points and communication lines of the British Empire and, in addition, brought tremendous danger to Russia. It was this German-Austrian aggressive policy against the Balkans, especially against Serbia, that finally provoked World War I.

One has to remember that at that time the German General Staff, with the help of the Austro-Hungarian regime, was using every conspiratorial device to stir up hate among the peoples of the Balkans. Following the old directive "divide and conquer," Germany and Austria were particularly eager to exploit and capitalize on religious differences between the Serbs and Croats. The Serbs, by tradition, belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Croats and Slovenes to the Roman Catholic faith.

The defeat of the central powers in 1918 brought great changes to the Balkans. The old Habsburg Empire was dissolved and the South Slavs, the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes,



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formed the new Kingdom of Yugoslavia on the basis of their close racial and linguistic affinities. It was the task of this new United Slavic state to block another attempt of German aggression against the Balkans and the Near East.

But in this it did not succeed. For the young nation made numerous mistakes. One was too great a centralization under Serbian hegemony (a mistake that the federative structure of the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia has avoided). This resulted, among other things, in a corresponding separatist sentiment in Croatia. And cleverly and persistently throughout the between-wars period the Germans used for their own ends every divisive inheritance from the past, every legislative and administrative mistake of the new Kingdom of Yugoslavia which tended to keep alive these divisive feelings.

With the resurrection of Germany's might under Adolf Hitler, German-inspired intrigues and conspiracies in the Balkans became ever bolder, and such terroristic organizations as the Ustashi in Croatia were found to be willing instruments in the plans of Mussolini and the German General Staff.

After Hitler's rise the peace-loving European nations became alarmed about the new German threat to the post-Versailles order, and the Yugoslav Government then declared itself willing to make commitments towards a strong defensive alliance. In 1934 preliminary discussions for such an alliance between France and other powers were far advanced. In October of that year King Alexander of Yugoslavia visited France. In Marseilles he was welcomed by French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou, who at that time was working on a new European security program. As the two men, King Alexander and Foreign Minister Barthou, rode through the streets of Marseilles they were struck down suddenly by bullets from well-posted assassins; both men were killed. Investigation uncovered an international plot. The details were of so sensational and delicate a nature that the French government, for fear of repercussions abroad, found it expedient to make only perhaps 10 per cent of the political background story publicly known. The investigation established the fact that the murder ring, members of the Croat terrorist Ustashi organization, had been supplied with money, weapons and false passports by Nazi authorities in Munich, by Mussolini, and by Horthy's Hungary.

The leader of the murder gang, Ante Pavelic, who had lived in Italy since 1929, was first arrested and then set free by

Mussolini. Pavelic was sentenced to death, in absentia, by a French court.*

It will be shown later, through documents, that Ante Pavelic and the Ustashi were from the beginning in close contact with some representatives of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy as well as with a section of the lower clergy in Croatia. Evidence will be produced that shows how the Ustashi and one part of the Catholic clergy conspired in the overthrow of the Yugoslav government by secret collaboration with the Nazis. It will be demonstrated, furthermore, how both the Ustashi and a section of the Roman Hierarchy became partners in Axis conquests and established their own Independent State of Croatia, a ruthless terroristic puppet regime whose political and administrative apparatus was participated in by the Ustashi and parts of the Roman Hierarchy.

When Hitler attacked the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941,† the Ustashi, including many Catholic priests who were among its members, directed active fighting in the rear of the regular Yugoslav army. This well-organized Fifth Column helped the German High Command in the conquest of Yugoslavia. After the defeat of the Yugoslav Army this combine, the Ustashi and fascist elements of the clergy, launched one of the most horrible massacres in recorded history. Of the two million Serbs who for centuries had lived peacefully among the Croats, hundreds of thousands were driven from their villages and towns and their property stolen. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs were tortured and slaughtered in and out of concentration camps, and the rest were "converted" by force to the Roman faith. Torture and death were also the lot of Croatians who refused to support the quisling cause, and of the Jews.

The man under whose spiritual blessing and active support these monstrous crimes were committed was Aloysius Stepinac, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb.

* Page 922, Vol. 23, 1942 Edition Encyclopedia Britannica

"It was proved that the assassination had been inaugurated by a Croat revolutionary organization under Dr. Ante Pavelic the head of the terrorist Ustashi and his fellow worker Slavko Kvaternik. A French court sentenced them to death in absentia for the murders. Both were living in Italy, where apparently they were on the best of terms with the fascist government."

† The Nazi attack followed swiftly on the coup d'etat of March 27, 1941, in which the people of Yugoslavia threw out the Zvetkovic-Macek government which on March 25, 1941, had signed in Vienna a pact putting Yugoslavia in the Axis camp.

PART II

4. The Preparation of the Plot

After the liberation of Yugoslavia the Government appointed a commission to investigate the crimes committed by the Axis invaders, by the Ustashi and by other collaborators. This commission paid special attention to the question of how the high treason against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had been prepared. The well-timed stab in the back made it obvious from the beginning that there probably had been close cooperation between the German Wehrmacht and the fifth column. Careful investigation established the fact that from the time of the revival of the Ustashi terrorist organization in the late twenties the closest ties had existed between the Ustashi and sections of both the lower and higher Catholic clergy. The investigating commission found abundant evidence that the plot against Yugoslavia had been thoroughly prepared over a long period by Hitler and Mussolini, by their Ustashi agents and by influential representatives of the Roman Hierarchy in Yugoslavia.

An overwhelming part of the evidence establishing the fact that treason and conspiracy were participated in by the Roman Hierarchy and parts of the lower clergy came from the culprits themselves. The investigating commission found thousands of printed reports, along with articles in both the official ecclesiastical press and the priest-controlled Catholic newspapers, which gave an impressive picture of the manner in which the crime was prepared.

One great error of supporters of the Independent State of Croatia was an over-confident belief that it would endure at least as long as Hitler's thousand-year Reich. This confidence explains why they did not hesitate to see their plans and schemes exposed in print. Indeed, they boasted publicly, some of the priests, about the conspiracy and about their close connections with the Ustashi during the period when this organization was outlawed in pre-war Yugoslavia. After the puppet state had been created they felt free to describe in jubilant articles how zealously members of the clergy had worked for *Der Tag*, how the monasteries had been used as clandestine headquarters for the illegal Ustashi movement, how they had been in constant contact with the plotters abroad, how they had organized the monks and the Catholic

youth as "Crusaders" for the coming uprising, and how they had endangered in many different ways the very existence of pre-war Yugoslavia.

Evidence found by the investigating commission gave a clear picture of the organizational structure of the conspiracy. The whole plot was directed by responsible members of the Roman Hierarchy. Practical execution of the plan was channeled through "Catholic Action" and its various affiliated organizations such as the "Great Brotherhood of Crusaders," the academic society "Domagoj," the Catholic student association "Mahnich," the "Great Sisterhood of Crusaders," and many others.

The presidents and members of the directing bodies of these organizations were appointed by Archbishop Stepinac. They were in most cases well-known priests or secretly sworn members of the Ustashi. All these forces were mobilized for concerted action with the openly professed aim of spreading fascist ideology. This propaganda persuaded the faithful that it would be a good deed, in the highest interests of Croatia and the Catholic Church, to kill or convert the Serbs and to exterminate the Jews. How boldly this propaganda was published in the responsible Catholic press will be shown.

That "Catholic Action" was the organizing power for the Ustashi uprising was confirmed in a speech by Ante Pavelic a few weeks after he had taken over leadership of the regime in Croatia. The Pavelic organ "Hrvatski Narod" in its issue of June 24, 1941, printed a speech which Pavelic delivered when he received the delegates of "Catholic Action". Pavelic was quoted as saying: "In our political struggle it is certain that Catholic Action played an important role." The editor of the "Katolicki Tjednik" (Catholic Weekly) Monsignor Kralik praised, in the issue of April 27, 1941, the accomplishments of "Catholic Action," of which he was an influential leader, in organizing the Crusader Youth. He emphasized that the educational program was in accordance with the political program of the Ustashi and concluded his article by stating that in the future the sacrifices of the Crusaders should be even greater, and should be in deeds rather than in words alone. - The main outlets for the political work of "Catholic Action" were the "Brotherhood and Sisterhood of the Crusaders." The "Great Brotherhood of Crusaders" was composed of about 540 societies with some 30,000 members, while the "Great Sis-

terhood of Crusaders" had about 452 societies with 18,935 members. Under the cover of alleged religious work, these organizations played an important role in inculcating the spirit of fascism and religious and race hatreds on the youth. Members were indoctrinated with the Ustashi ideas of nationalistic chauvinism. At meetings of these organizations Pavelic and the Ustashi were hailed as liberators of the Croat people, Hitler and Mussolini were praised as friends and allies, hatred toward Serbs and Jews was spread and Yugoslavia, Great Britain, the United States and the USSR were attacked.

The Crusaders had their own "sport courses" for military drill. The Crusader weekly "Nedelja" (Sunday) of July 11, 1943, printed an article telling of the military courses the Crusaders had at their camps, where they were training officers for future Ustashi formations. The same publication on April 27, 1941, had written about this military training in the field.

The periodical "Krizar" (Crusader) of February, 1942, wrote that the Crusaders organization served the Croatian youth from 1929 to 1934 as a place of refuge in the difficult struggle, and that a large number of young men learned for the first time in the dark Crusader halls about the Ustashi precursors, Starcevic and Kvaternik, about Dr. Ante Pavelic and the Lika uprising—an uprising against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia ten years before World War II. Regular meetings were held in Pozega in 1940—before the attack on Yugoslavia—under the fictitious name of "Mary's Congregation" in the Crusaders' home. Leaflets were brought from Zagreb, then mimeographed and distributed. These meetings were attended by Priest Franjo Pipinic, who later helped organize the disarming of the Yugoslav Army.

A wealth of evidence makes it clear that the Brotherhood and the Sisterhood of the Crusaders were used as blinds for illegal activities in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of the outlawed Ustashi movement. When the Kingdom of Yugoslavia collapsed many members of the Crusaders and affiliated organizations assumed important functions in the Ustashi state. From the first day of war the Crusaders put themselves solidly behind Ante Pavelic. They greeted with extraordinary enthusiasm the formation of the quisling state.

The Catholic periodical "Nedelja" of April 27, 1941, No. 15, carried an article on page 2 entitled "The Crusaders Extend

Greetings to The Croatian State and Its Poglavnik (Fuehrer)". This article reads, in part, as follows:

"The *Great Brotherhood of the Crusaders* has sent through the Ustashi army chaplain, Dr. Ivo Guberina, and through Msgrs. Cvitanovic and Vitezic, the following greetings to the Poglavnik:

"Our rejoicing and happiness is indescribable over the fact, to greet in the name of the Great Brotherhood of the Crusaders and of the entire Crusader organization our Poglavnik, the liberator of the Croatian people, the founder and chief of the Independent State of Croatia. Raised in the spirit of radical Catholicism, which knows no compromises so far as principles are concerned, they never knew what it meant to give in and abandon any part of the program of Croatian nationalism.

"Chieftain! The Crusaders greet you and express to you their great love and devotion. May the Almighty bestow on you and on our state His blessings in abundance, and the Crusaders will continue to build immortal souls for God and unbreakable characters for the Croatian people. God is alive! For the Fatherland we are ready!"

The Crusader organization was centrally directed from Zagreb. Archbishop Stepinac personally confirmed the choice of its leaders. For president of the organization Stepinac selected the widely-known fascist Dr. Feliks Niedzielski, and as first curate and vice-president he appointed Msgr. Milan Beluhan. After establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, Dr. Niedzielski became a high Ustashi official in Bosnia.

What the actual work of this purportedly religious organization was in pre-war Yugoslavia is indicated by the words of its chief curate and vice-president, Msgr. Beluhan. Together with a group of Crusader officers he visited Pavelic on June 1, 1941, and on that occasion made the following statement:

"Chieftain! The Croat men and women Crusaders have begun their struggle for the souls of Croat youth in a time when the last Serbian tyranny has fallen upon the Croat people. While you, our chief, shook the foundations of bloody Yugoslavia with your hard work, sacrifice and persevering struggle from abroad,

we visited the villages and towns of all parts of Yugoslavia and aroused faith and strengthened hope in the souls of our youth." (The Crusaders' weekly "Nedelja" June 29, 1941.)

This address, with its admission of the extended activities of the Crusaders for the Ustashi cause, illustrates the tie between the plotters abroad and the political arm of a certain section of the Roman Hierarchy, the Crusaders. Archbishop Stepinac was well acquainted with the activities of the Crusaders. After the annual convention of the organization in 1942, he received its leaders and, according to a report published in "Nedelja" of October 18, 1942, told them: "The history of the Crusader organization is well known to me. Let today's convention be an inspiration for your work and at the same time proof of the widespread and active nature of your organization."

The Ustashi character of the Crusaders became very clear in the days of the German-Italian attack on Yugoslavia. At that period of great danger for Yugoslavia's continued existence, members of the Crusaders attacked and wherever possible disarmed units of the hard pressed Yugoslav Army, and simultaneously formed the nuclei of the first Ustashi military units. In the horrible Ustashi massacres which began a little later the Crusaders were outstanding for their cruelty.

A similar role in the dissemination of Ustashi propaganda in pre-war Yugoslavia was played by other religious organizations, among which "Marijina Kongregacija" (Congregation of Mary) and "Sveucilisko Katolicko drustvo Domagoj" (The Domagoj Catholic University Society) were most prominent. These Catholic organizations all carried on their activities within the framework of Catholic Action, which was directed by Archbishop Stepinac.

The War Crimes Commission established the fact that the first meeting of the Ustashi, early in 1929 (twelve years before the attack on Yugoslavia), was held in the canon's house (kurija), across the street from the Archbishop's residence on the Kaptol in Zagreb. When the Ustashi came to power in 1941 a plaque was placed, with solemn ceremony, on the building in memory of that meeting. The War Crimes Commission found also ample evidence that in pre-war Yugoslavia many churches and monasteries had served as secret meeting places for the Ustashi. To cite but a few, meetings of the

leaders of the illegal Ustashi movement in Yugoslavia and of Pavelic's delegates from Italy and Germany were held in the Franciscan monastery in Cuntic. One of the most important centers for the dissemination of Ustashi propaganda was the Franciscan monastery on Siroki Brijeg in Hercegovina, where, according to "Hrvatski Narod" of June 4, 1941, the Franciscan cleric Dr. Radoslav Glavas founded a secret Ustashi organization among high school boys.

Priests held positions of great trust in the illegal Ustashi organization; many took advantage of their privileges as priests to perform courier service between the various Ustashi organizations, and others even organized secret Ustashi groups. The priest of the parish of Ogulin, Honorary Canon Ivan Mikan, was the main organizer of illegal Ustashi activity in Ogulin. The Franciscan Dr. Peter Berkovic, head priest in Drnis, founded several Ustashi organizations in his district and for years held office as a trusted Ustashi official for the entire Drnis district.

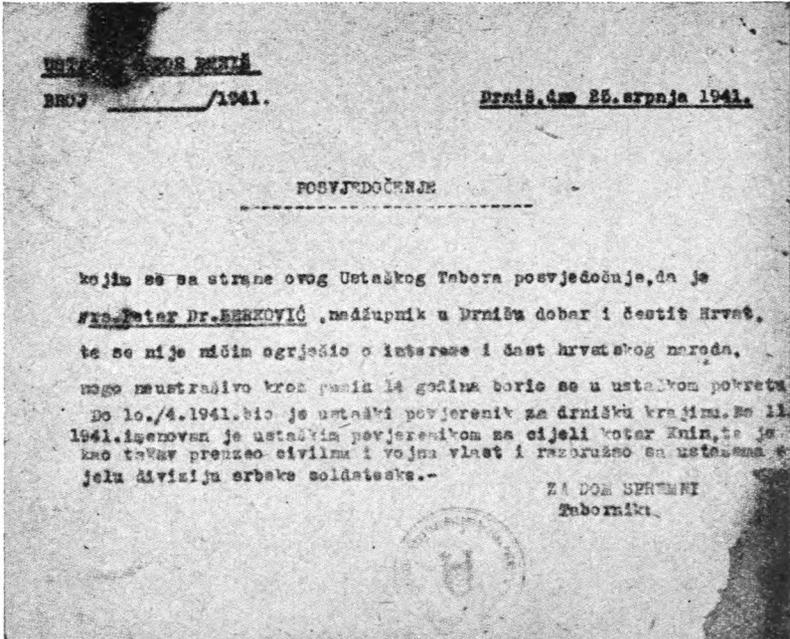
In a petition to the Ministry of Agriculture, dated May 7, 1942, con. No. 638, Dr. Berkovic recounted the following services rendered to the Ustashi organization:

"During 14 years that I spent as priest in Drnis, my parish house was in a true sense of the word an Ustashi home. It was the meeting place of all Ustashi, not only for those from our region but also for all those who came there to organize the Ustashi movement. Ustashi leaflets were received there, and were distributed from there. Before the uprising I was an Ustashi confidante and a state commissioner, and I took in my hands all civil and military powers, and with the Ustashi I disarmed one entire division."

The services rendered by Dr. Berkovic to the Ustashi movement are also seen from the following document issued by the Ustashi Tabor in Drnis on July 25, 1941:

"Affidavit by which this Ustashi Tabor testifies that Fra Peter Dr. Berkovic, priest in Drnis, is a good and honest Croatian, and that he has never sinned against the interests and honor of the Croatian people but has fearlessly spent 14 years fighting for the Ustashi movement. Until April 10, 1941, he was Ustashi

confidante for the Drnis region. On April 11, 1941, he was appointed Ustashi confidante for the entire district of Knin. In that capacity he took in his hands all civil and military powers and together with the Ustashi disarmed an entire division of the Yugoslav Army."



An Ustashi affidavit issued for Fra Peter Dr. Berkovic in Drnis, July 25, 1941, certifying he had served the Ustashi cause for 14 years and, with the Ustashi, disarmed an entire division of the Yugoslav Army.

Secret meetings of Ustashi leaders were held for years in the parish house of Vilim Cecelja, priest from Kustosija near Zagreb, according to the paper "Hrvatski Narod," No. 67, 1941. One of those attending these meetings was the leader of the illegal Ustashi organization in all Yugoslavia, Slavko Kvaternik,* later Supreme Commander of the military forces of quisling Ante Pavelic. Others included Dr. Mladen Lorkovic, later Minister of Foreign Affairs in Pavelic's government; Dr. Mile Budak, later Minister of Education and Pavelic's deputy.

* Handed over as war criminal by Anglo-American authorities; condemned to death, after trial, on June 7, 1947.

After the retreat of the Ustashi from Zagreb, documents found in their files listed the names of people proposed for decoration as members of the Ustashi organization, prior to October, 1934, that is before the Marseilles assassination of King Alexander. Among others these documents named the following priests: Vilim Cecelja, Dr. Radoslav Glavas, Ivan Mikan, Dr. Franjo Binicki, Canon Dr. Tomo Seferovic, Ivan Jakovic, Franciscan Didak Ceric, Franciscan Mladen Barbaric, etc.

Mention has been made of the fact that many Catholic priests took advantage of the full freedom of movement allowed them to act as couriers for the illegal Ustashi organization. Others went still further and, on their official trips abroad, especially to the Vatican on church business, carried messages from the Ustashi in Yugoslavia to Ante Pavelic in Italy. Branimir Zupancic, a priest from Bosnian Gradiska, on a trip through Italy, met with Pavelic on December 7, 1938. Zupancic told the investigating authorities that an Italian priest made it possible for him to meet Ante Pavelic in the sacristy of his church. This statement is confirmed by an article in "Hrvatski Narod" of August 30, 1941, describing an interview in which Zupancic gave details of this meeting. When this priest got into trouble later with the Yugoslav police, Archbishop Stepinac intervened in his behalf.

That one section of the Catholic clergy abused its privileges to maintain contacts between the Ustashi exiles in Italy and the fatherland was admitted in "Katolicki List" on May 7, 1941. In the column "Church News" an audience Pavelic granted to a committee of the assembly of the Zagreb Spiritual Youth is described. Pavelic told this group, according to "Katolicki List," that during "his most difficult days he received the greatest amount of help and understanding from the young monks, especially from Hercegovina. They came when no one else could bring him news."

The highest priests in the Catholic Hierarchy engaged in the same kind of activities. The Archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Saric, visited Ustashi leaders in South America and wrote openly of this in the "Katolicki Tjednik" of May 18, 1941. During one of his trips to the Vatican, in 1938, Archbishop Saric met Pavelic, at that time under death sentences imposed by both French and Yugoslav courts, in the Basilica of St. Peter's and later wrote a poem, "Ode to the Chieftain",

Poglavniku Oda

Poglavnik »Za Dom«
Sve Hrvate »Spreman«

Onaj u Buzicki svetog Petra
Vidj' T. b. u Vjehom Grada puznik,
Njema u Tobom najprije drag je bio
Ka Dom naš ma.

Sam Bog Tebe protio Dobri, Jaht,
Da izvedeš za Dom naš sveto djelo
Tebi Ante Starčev' udekanov'e
Ideal bio.

Vi nam obo Hrvatski idrah,
Pradjedovih brašter sveta prava,
Dok je zanca, obo ste krana naša,
Vjehna nam .

Ti si za Dom zrtovro svaga sebi,
Smjeli ho keraj, od vjere junač tvoj,
Za sloboda nato si naš g' Doma,
Ustado divni!

Dobar Genaj, dubok si kao maha,
Zabud vneti urliči na svik strama,
Ti ho prorok goram i dolom vidit'
»Bog i Hrvata«

»Samo Bog je, Najvrij, naš gospodar,
Bog je šit naš, u Njega naš je Utkra«
S tim si u cjelom pđocu Ti umarot
Utkronaj zora

Covjek ama i zroa i poštenja,
Covjek, koji na vlada, nego rada,
Covjek, koji pokleko nije nikad
Naš Lucmida!

Dom Tvoj svako črtva je i rad pošten,
Kao svaca Ti si nam čut i zjajna,
I Tvoj svito obara sve pugnaje,
Ti si nam Zrinjski!

Puno tišat, strma, pravdu dišat,
A sloboda druga Ti kao mah,
Za nje Ti si našao popat diva
Na sve hajduke;

I na Jude, kojim sve para bio,
Koji kjele prodali naše duše,
Koji pili umnu našom nje
Iedarj joda



Prvi Ti si našao našeg Doma,
I sloboda domal šivite naše
Od tog raju puberog, od maršalona
Od hajdučima.

Ze Dom drugi Ti si Hrvata svio:
»Nek ste spremni, nek ste ho oimao
(Jama)«
Tad te Dom naš Bolji obazraj skama
Hrvatako slava.

I ho amoz' jednako Ti nas grijeh,
Vodiš Zagreb, Hrvatako kraljstvo svio
Vidiš Beosa, ona je, velič, bioer
Hrvatakoj Kruni.

I dan i noc tako an narod radiš,
Svaki cio Hrvat je Tebi ma,
Ke na svuca grije se na tvom svio
Ustado junač.

S Tvoim svio uduhaj leti i neba:
»Boko Sveta, Lijepa Naša čuvaj«
Ona Tebi usada je prva brava,
Ze nje se mošk.

Zato sve nas u kole zoveš divno,
Kako rada, napretka i poštenja,
U tom baše bit će nam naše mila
Hrvatako živa.

Što sve man podnio an taj pokret?
Svi hajduci vrbotali duhu Tvoju,
Ke braj' čuvaj u sviječ ideal strava,
Al Te Bog brava

Bog ti obo otkrpu u tuđim,
Bog Ti vjara svjedoča šovom-pranom,
Kejn nikad vije uakmi na ču,
Junače svote!

Naš se barjak pod našom domas vija,
Naše obo radeva svaz lije,
Tvoje svote cjelovom biti čelo
I grad i zelo.

Pa ho domal pokretu naša svota!
Duše naše do Bašjezi duži naše!
Tebe Voda Hrvataki Narod traže
Kamoti hjeba.

A mi spremni bit čemo tuzda na Dom,
Vanda spremni rudi i umrt na Dom,
Vanda i Bogom šarov i marom an Dom,
Ze Dom svoj dragi!

Doktor Ante Pavelić ime draga,
Ima u njem Hrvataki i naše blago,
Nek Te On, Kralj Nebeski, vanda prah,
Voda naš slava!

1900 B. 2076



**PROVIDNOST BOŽJA
ODREĐUJE SVJETOVIMA+**
**ODREĐILA JE HRVATSKOM NARODU PUT-
KOJIM JE PROLAZIO KROZ TJEKOVE+**
NIJEM U NASTREŽIM ČASOVIMA KUGUBO VJERE-
I ZATO MU JE BOŽJA PROVIDNOST DOSUDILA
SLOBODU+
BOGU HVALI+
U NJEGOVU SE POMOĆ UZDA+
RADI+
I BOG ĆE MU RAD BLAGOSLOVITI!

A. Pavelić



Archbishop Ivan Sarić's ode in praise of Ante Pavelić as it appeared in Katolicki Tjednik, with Pavelić's autographed photograph.

about this encounter. The poem was printed in the Ustashi newspaper "Nova Hrvatska" (New Croatia) on December 25, 1941; in "Katolicki Tjednik" (Catholic Weekly), and in various other Catholic publications. It starts:

In the Basilica of St. Peter
In the eternal city the poet saw you,
Your embrace was dear to me
As our home is to all of us.

There is no room for doubt that part of the Catholic clergy had systematically prepared for the coming uprising. Their professed plan was to destroy Yugoslavia and all possibility of Serbo-Croat unity and to create Independent Croatia as a fascist state. From a wealth of evidence, a few samples may be sufficient to illustrate how their thinking ran.

"Hrvatski Narod" of April 25, 1941, wrote that young priests in Dubrovnik propagated the Croatian nationalist program, calling for complete separation from Serbia, as early as 1925. "Nova Hrvatska" of June 1, 1943, wrote that the Canon in Ogulin, Ivan Mikan, was in closest cooperation with the future minister, Dr. Lovro Susic, and that he was preparing the spirit of the people for the establishment of Croatian independence. As an uncompromising nationalist, he welcomed Pavelic's Independent Croatia enthusiastically and proudly.

In the organ of the Archbishopric of Vrhbosna, Nos. 3 and 4 for March and April, 1942, Dr. Dragutin Kamber, Catholic priest, stated editorially that it was "superfluous to emphasize the fact that the Croatian Roman Catholic priests are profoundly happy in having their independent state; their enormous majority belonged to that spearhead which was preparing the arrival of Independent Croatia." He concluded that "Words are too weak to describe the feeling with which they welcomed their state."

Thus did the editor of an official diocese publication declare openly that the majority of the Roman clergy welcomed puppet Croatia as "their state."

5. Creation of the Nazi Puppet State

The Germans and Italians launched their surprise attack on

Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941.* Simultaneously the Ustashi, at many points in Croatia, formed treacherous armed bands which attacked isolated Yugoslav Army groups from the rear. The Ustashi bands had the task of helping the invading Axis enemy by disrupting lines of communication in their own country, and by sabotaging the mobilization of the Yugoslav Army. In wartime such crimes are punished by every nation with summary death.

ARMED CATHOLIC CLERGY IN UPRISING

Many Catholic priests boasted openly of their treacherous activities in the Catholic papers; the exploits of others were recalled later when their obituaries were published.

The Ustashi paper "Hrvatski Narod" of July 4, 1941, hailed the Franciscan priest Dr. Radoslav Glavas as a great organizer of the Ustashi. The article said in part:

"A young and energetic Franciscan, Dr. Radoslav Glavas, came to Siroki Brijeg and placed himself at the head of the struggle. A plan was even drawn to prevent the mobilization of the Yugoslav Army. Thus the historic day of April 10th was welcomed, and in the night between April 10th and 11th the Ustashi disarmed the local gendarmerie and captured the post office."

"Hrvatski Narod," No. 251, of June 4, 1944, page 3, carried a death notice, written by priest Eugen Beluhan, of Chaplain Ivan Miletic, which in describing his Ustashi activities asserted:

"As a priest he assisted in the disruption of the Yugoslav Army during the revolution."

The Catholic weekly "Nedelja," in its issue of June 22, 1941, describes in an article entitled "The Last Convulsion of Yugoslavia on the Island of Pag" the manner in which the priest on that island took part in disarming the Yugoslav Army:

"Late at night younger Croatians would follow the development of events. The Reverend Stipanov in Vlasici on Pag would also listen to the news and ride

* See footnote page 11.

on his bicycle to inform the officers and soldiers. Thus the new events found us prepared and enthusiastic. It was decided to disarm the officers from Serbia and to send the soldiers to their homes. About midnight Lieutenant Orsanic came to my home and asked me to take a carbine in my hands and find eight youths more for the purpose of capturing Serbian officers, gendarmes and treasury agents."

The Ustashi periodical "Za Dom" No. 1, April, 1941, adds:

"Another priest, joining forces with two customs guards, captured two generals and 40 officers, while a Franciscan brother, with the help of a number of youths, disarmed an entire Serbian company."

Pavelic's "Hrvatski Narod" of July 25, 1944, published a death notice about Priest Don Ilija Tomas which read in part:

"He accepted with joy in his heart the Ustashi ideas, and as far back as 1937 we see him as a sworn Ustashi in the din of work, exertion and struggle.

"The war started, but the Croatians did not want to wage war against their old allies the Germans; they are throwing down arms and Don Ilija collects them. He works together with his neighbor from the other side of Neretva, the priest Don Juro Vrdoljak-Biscevic—and the two of them like two giants rise to the defense of their people against the Serbian plundering bands. It seems that it is not known that as early as April 8, 1941, they proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia!

"Transport is interrupted, because the transport center, Capljinac, is held by two Ustashi, two Catholic priests, Don Ilija Tomas, priest in Klepci, and Don Juraj Vrdoljak-Biscevic, priest in Studenac. They disarmed whatever army units tried to escape through Capljinac. They even captured a cannon, while Croatian soldiers came voluntarily to serve as reinforcements. Thus, the two of them, cut off from the world and surrounded by the Serbian army, held on amid unceasing dangers and battles until April 20th, when the Germans came to their assistance. Shortly after that, Don Ilija was appointed Ustashi Commissioner for the entire region."

There is an endless list of such reports in the files of the War Crimes Commission. There was, for instance, Father Emanuel Rajich, priest in Gornji Vakuf, who participated in disarming the Yugoslav Army, organized Ustashi rule in Gornji Vakuf and was appointed Ustashi tabornik. In that capacity he organized the first Ustashi army unit in Gornji Vakuf. There was the Catholic priest Ante Klaric Tepeluh from the village of Tramosnica, district of Gradacac, who in April, 1941, became an Ustashi tabornik and took part in disarming the Yugoslav Army. There was Father Karlo Grbavac, priest in the district of Duvno, together with Mato Kapulica the Ustashi emigre who returned from Italy to take an active part in disarming the Yugoslav Army. After the formation of the quisling state Father Grbavac became Ustashi confidante in that parish.

The active participation of one part of the Catholic clergy in the betrayal of Yugoslavia could have been possible only on the basis of instructions from highest church authorities. On April 11, 1941, the day after the traitor Kvaternik* and the Germany Army had entered the Croatian capital, the Zagreb radio station instructed the people to welcome the German Army and "to seek answers to all questions from the Catholic parish offices, where instructions will be given about the future work." Thus from the first day of Nazi occupation the Catholic parishes were used as political propaganda agencies for the invaders and their Ustashi quislings.

PRIESTS BECOME ADMINISTRATORS IN THE NAZI PUPPET STATE

Immediately after Pavelic and his circle assumed power, with the backing of the Nazi fascist conquerors, many priests were appointed to local and provincial administrative posts in the newly created Ustashi state. Others became members of the highest state institutions, as a later chapter will show.

The paper of the Catholic Crusaders, "Nedelja," in its issue of August 10, 1941, reported that priest Grga Peinovic, a director of the "Brotherhood of the Crusaders," was appointed president of the Ustashi Central Propaganda Office. In an article entitled "Crusaders in the Independent State of Croatia," the same paper pointed to the fact that many persons trained in the Crusader organization were now occupying high

* See footnote page 19.

07

Policiji - Doboju
 da se telefonira u
 Broj i da se pronade
 u mala pu Kosa Gajic
 sa ženom i da se pogleda
 na mon se sa...
 ili dragocjenost...
 spisi da se...
 Kamber

Dragi naš POGLAVNIČE!

Toliko se divim temeljnim potezima Vaše politike u ovim prvim danima ukrašenule Hrvatske, da ne mogu, a da Vas to ne kažem.

Naročito smatram vrlo mudrim i dalekovidnim gestama biranje središta državnog u Bosni i biranje talijanskog princa za hrvatskog kralja. Ova druga činjenica pored mudrosti i brige sa našu granicu najdražoj strani naše Hrvatske pokazuje i Vašu osobnu moralnu valičinu, da se odričete jednog kresa koji je trebao da okiti Vašu osobu, zato jer je to bilo na veću korist Države. Hvala Vam i mnogo nas ipak ima koji to vidimo i ahvadamo.

Ja bih bio slobodan izneti jednu malu sugestiju. U ovom je:

Bosna je bila sadnji oblik samostalne hrvatske Države. Njegovina kraljica Katarina umrla je u Rimu i ostavila Papi u srboličku baštinu ali u realnu brigu bosanaka kraljestvo i krunu. U ovoj svtoj jubilejskoj godini bilo bi dobro da se sveti Otao nagovori da javnim aktom tu krunu uspostavi i pridruži je Zvani-mirovoj.

A Jajce je bilo kraljevski grad. I njegova romantika, njegova sličnost sa Fivlijem i blizina sa budućim središtem u Banjoj Luci činila bi od njega i sada idealnu kraljevsku residen-ciju.

Pa tamo je još uvijek neoštećen zvonik impozantne Kraljevske crkve svetog Luke. Braća Hrvati muslimani neće bez sumnje ništa imati protiv da se ta crkva obnovi - jer je u posjedu Vakafa. To bi trebalo da bude kraljevska crkva.

Ja neću duljiti. Nisao je tu. Možda ste i Vi već prije mislili. ~~U~~ Vaša volja - i bide tako.
 Ja Vas još jedanput pozdravljam u dubokom poštovanju i sa istinskom sahrvalnošću!

Za Dom Spremnii

Doboju, 6/VI.1941.

Šupnik i sa sada kot. povjerenik

Doboju.
 Kamber

Official documents bearing the signature of Priest Dragutin Kamber, Ustashi confidante. Top, order to the police in Doboju; below, letter dated June 6, 1941, to Ante Pavelic.

positions in the Ustashi state. The president of the Crusaders, priest Dr. Felix Niedzielski, was made Ustashi Vice-Governor of Bosnia during the first days of the Pavelic regime.

"Novi List," No. 34, of July 1, 1941, carried an order of the government appointing priest Didak Coric to the post of tabornik in Jaska; Ante Djuric, priest in the village of Divusa, to the post of logornik for the District of Drvar; and priest Dragan Petranovic to the post of pobocnik (adjutant) in the camp for the District of Ogulin.

The same newspaper, No. 54, in 1941, reported the appointment of priest Stjepan Lukic to the post of logorni pobocnik (camp adjutant) of the Zepce camp. Cecelja Martin, priest in Recice, District of Karlovac, was appointed to the post of Ustashi tabornik for the county of Recice. Dr. Dragutin Kamber, priest in Doboje, was appointed in April, 1941, to the post of Ustashi confidante for the District of Doboje, with all political and civil power thus concentrated in his hands. These are but a few examples from hundreds of cases in which priests, from the very beginning, made common cause with the Ustashi and obtained their rewards.

"THERE WILL BE PURGES"

The Ustashi began putting their criminal program into execution immediately upon establishment of the Independent



Priest Ivan Mikan (right) and Ante Pavelic (center), quisling ruler of Croatia during the German occupation, at an Ustashi meeting in Ogulin, April 13, 1941.

State of Croatia. After the Yugoslav Army was disarmed the Ustashi and the Crusaders started the killing of Serbs, Jews and anti-fascist Croats, and again many Roman Catholic priests played an active role in the mass slaughter of innocent people.

When the traitor Pavelic returned from Italy to Zagreb to assume leadership in the puppet state he stopped off in the town of Ogulin on April 13, 1941. There he was greeted by one of the most fanatical Ustashi disciples, the canon Ivan Mikan. In a public meeting this Ustashi priest acclaimed Pavelic and incited the people to hatred against the Serbs and the Jews. In his speech he proclaimed "There will be purges," and he threatened that "the dogs (the Serbs) will be driven across the Drina." Priest Ivan Mikan must already have had knowledge of the program Pavelic intended to execute during the coming months in the puppet state of Croatia.

"GOD HAS GIVEN US ANTE PAVELIC AND ADOLF HITLER"

From the pulpit and in their own press, sections of both higher and lower Catholic clergy propagated Nazi-fascist ideas under the cloak of religious and moral teachings. They sang the praises of Germany and Italy and simultaneously castigated the democratic Western powers. They told the faithful that Hitler was a crusader for the Lord and that Pavelic and the Ustashi had been sent by God to the Croatian people; abundant evidence of this appears in two late chapters. A few examples may suffice at this point.

Priest Dr. Felix Neidzielski, who was appointed by Archbishop Stepinac a leader of the Crusader organizations, wrote of Ante Pavelic:

"In his political farsightedness he did not seek contacts with politicians, but with great men, with the leader of Italy and with the leader of the German people . . . God who directs the destiny of nations and controls the hearts of Kings has given us Dr. Ante Pavelic and moved the leader of a friendly and allied people, Adolf Hitler, to use his victorious troops to disperse our oppressors and enable us to create the Independent State of Croatia. Glory be to God, our gratitude to Adolf Hitler and infinite love and loyalty to chief Dr. Ante Pavelic!" ("Nedelja," April 27, 1941.)

The boldness of the propaganda for the Nazis is illustrated in an article by priest Petar Pajic which appeared in the organ of the Archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Saric, "Katolicki Tjednik" (The Catholic Weekly), No. 35, of August 31, 1941. Entitled "Hitler Upholds the Missions," the article said:

"Until now, God spoke through papal encyclicals, numerous sermons, catechisms, the Christian press, through missions, through the heroic examples of the saints, and so on . . . And? They closed their ears. They were deaf. Now God has decided to use other methods. He will prepare missions. European missions! World missions! They will be upheld not by priests but by army commanders led by Hitler. The sermons will be well heard with the help of cannons, machine guns, tanks and bombers. The language of these sermons will be international. No one will be able to complain that he did not understand it, because all people know very well what death is, and what wounds, disease, hunger, fear, slavery and poverty are."

Can there be any question that a priest would write thus in an official organ of the Catholic church without the consent, if not the approval, of his superiors?

The fanatical devotion of the Ustashi and parts of the Catholic clergy to Nazism was so clear that the German Wehrmacht decided after a brief occupation, that it could safely leave Croatia. Hitler appears to have felt certain that he could put the task of supporting the German war machine and applying all measures necessary to clean the country of "unreliable" elements entirely in the hands of the Ustashi quislings.

An instance of this devotion was a speech made by priest Dr. Dragutin Kamber, who was Ustashi confidante in Doboj. This collaborator expressed his love of Nazism on July 9, 1941, at a reception given German occupation forces on the occasion of their departure from Doboj. His speech, reported in "Novi List" of August 16, 1941, said in part:

"We love you sincerely as friends; we respect you highly; and all of us are sorry, deeply sorry, that we must part. We love you! We love you because you carry in your hands the most powerful sword that has ever been forged in the history of mankind. You are

nedjelja

Tjednik za katolički rad i socijalni život i prosvjetu

Godina XIII.

ZAGREB, 27. TRAVNJA 1941.

BROJ 15

OBNOVLJENA JE Nezavisna Država Hrvatska

U skrs 1941. godine bio je za Hrvatski Narod najsrjetniji Ustari, jer nam je donio i Ukrañute Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, koja je na Veliki Četvrtak proglašena u glavnom gradu Zagrebu.

Teško je naći dovoljno pravih riječi, kojima bismo mogli opisati veličinu i značenje ovog događaja. Istaknemo samo to, da narod i društvenom kulturom i životom državnom svijest, kao što je hrvatski narod, zasluzuje da ima svoju vlastitu državu. Hrvatski je narain narod bio i u svojoj predratnoj zajednici svijestan, da pravno potpuno posobna država Hrvatska i uvijek je ljubomorno čuvalo sve osanke svoje državne samostalnosti. Svi su gotovo Hrvati bez iznimke osuđivali one, koji su prvog prosinca 1918. godine na srpskom tlu pokloniški i ropški sručili savremnu hrvatsku državu. Sebički, rodniki i građanski širi slojevi hrvatskog naroda smatrali su one, koji su bili krivci ovog znanostnog čina, hrvatskim narodnim izdajcima, te su se s ponosom sjekali svih onih, koji su i g. 1918. upozoravali, da je potrebno osuvratiti hrvatsku nacionalnu i državnu individualnost. U tim slojevima hrvatskog naroda stalno je sijajala i sve jače doista do krañaja misao, da hrvatski narod ne može biti sretan i zadovoljan, dok se opet ne ostvari samostalnost, Nezavisna Država Hrvatska.

Otkad je nakon uvođenja diktature u bivšoj i nepovratnoj Jugoslaviji današnji Poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić otišao u inozemstvo, pogledi su Hrvata bili upereni stalno u tog junakskog borca u tuđini. Sporazum, koji su politički sredstavnici Hrvata u državi učinili s predstavnicima Beograda, hrvatski narod nije nikad priznao mekim deflaktivnim činom. I sami današnji politički predstavnici morali su narodu govoriti, da sporazumom nije ostvaren politički program hrvatskoga naroda, već da će taj biti ostvaren tek kad se osnuje Nezavisna Država Hrvatska. Reklo se, da je sporazum tek stepenica na putu hrvatskoj državnoj nezavisnosti i da je on uzdignut u sporazum s Poglavnikom u tuđini.

No Narod je znao gdje je i u čim je latina. Stoga je i potpuno samostojno, da hrvatski vojnici nam služili upute tih svojih političkih predstavnika, da drže disciplinu u vojsci, te su spontano i jednodušno položili svoje oružje i bratski dočekali oslobođilačku njemačku vojsku. Vojska Adolfa Hitlera, vode Njemačkog Naroda, bila je najsvetanije dočekana u hrvatskim krajevima, jer je sručila tu osmrtañenu kulu, što se nazivala Jugoslavijom. U danima pred ovogodišnji Ustari došlo je na vidjelo ono, što hrvatski narod misli i osjeća: da traži uništenje Jugoslavije i osutak Države Hrvatske. To je bio glas hrvatskog naroda, klik pred cijelim kulturnim svijetom. Hrvatski se narod



POGLAVNIK DR. ANTE PAVELIĆ

plinu u vojsci, te su spontano i jednodušno položili svoje oružje i bratski dočekali oslobođilačku njemačku vojsku. Vojska Adolfa Hitlera, vode Njemačkog Naroda, bila je najsvetanije dočekana u hrvatskim krajevima, jer je sručila tu osmrtañenu kulu, što se nazivala Jugoslavijom. U danima pred ovogodišnji Ustari došlo je na vidjelo ono, što hrvatski narod misli i osjeća: da traži uništenje Jugoslavije i osutak Države Hrvatske. To je bio glas hrvatskog naroda, klik pred cijelim kulturnim svijetom. Hrvatski se narod

osjetio preretnim, što su ostvareni njegovi vjekovni ideali, ideali nezavisnosti i slobode!

I mi pozdravljamo našu Hrvatsku Državu! Kao i do sad, tako ćemo i oadać sve svoje sile složiti u napredak, da tako zajedničkim silama ostvarimo nova, bolja vremena i novi život hrvatskoga naroda.

Da živi Hrvatski Narod!

Da živi Poglavnik Dr. Ante Pavelić!



U pratnji Poglavnika dra Ante Pavelića, povratili su se u domovinu naši dñini Ustari, koji čuvaju stražu na Markovom trgu

Osutak vojske i morarice Države Hrvatske

Zagreb, 11. travnja. Po nalogu Poglavnika dra Ante Pavelića najpoznatiji vojnici osutakih snaga Države Hrvatske iz Slavko Kvaternikovog prozupa je ovaj Zaton i osutak vojske i morarice Države Hrvatske:

§ 1.

Vojsku i morarice Države Hrvatske sastavljaju svi vojni obveznici dosadašnje vojske i morarice Kraljevine Jugoslavije: članici, podčlanici i rezervisti, koji su dana 1. studenoga 1918. bili zavičajnici u ma kojoj općini, koja je dana sastavila Državu Hrvatsku ili gdje su oživi bili toga dana zavičajnici tih općina.

§ 2.

Sva vojna lica, navođena, u § 1. prethodno bitu današnjem članom obveznici vojske i morarice Kraljevine Jugoslavije. Riječavaju sa stopa pričinu vjernosti u taj vojski položen pa im se sabranjuje u taj vojski od dana ma kakove vremenje vojnih čina bilo sa teritorije bilo izvan teritorije Države Hrvatske.

Ti radi protiv te iznimke) hrivno je stalois vedañeñe, pa ih ho be kazati smrtu.

§ 3.

Svim vojnim obveznicima vojske i morarice dosadašnje Kraljevine Jugoslavije, članicima, vojnim obveznicima, podčlanicima i rezervistima bez razlika oružja, aktivnim i rezervnim, koji nisu 1. studenoga 1918. bili zavičajnici ma u kojoj općini, koja je dana sastavila Državu Hrvatsku, i članovima takovih osoba, oduzima se sadašnji vojni lic, pa im se na teritoriji Države Hrvatske sabranjuje svaki nastup i rad u ime vojske i morarice. Svaki njihov nastup i rad kao vojnika smatrać se se neprijateljskim činom protiv Države Hrvatske i prema tome s njima postupati. Zbog jednaki oñje obrambene snage izdat će oduzete i odstranjene tih lic sa teritorije Države Hrvatske.

§ 4.

Vojski i morarici Države Hrvatske, sastavljene po § 1. ovog zakona, smatrać je pružiti sigurnost i zaštiti Državi Hrvatskoj protiv napadnih i nesudarajih neprijatelja i davati njim rad i poratak prema propisanih zakona.

§ 5.

Svi članovi vojske i morarice Države Hrvatske, haće ih ustanovljaje § 1.

Front page of Nedjelja of April 27, 1941, after the German invasion, proclaiming the recreation of the Independent State of Croatia and welcoming the return of Pavelic. Lower picture shows a group of Ustashi who returned from Italy with Pavelic—Pavelic's "band of cutthroats." (See "The Ciano Diaries," Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1946, page 342)

brothers and manly knights by your behavior and by your deeds. The Paradise to which the Germans are going needs no better propagandists than the soldiers of Germany, this German army . . . We respect you because you are fighting to give political and social justice to all of Europe. With the blood and the bones of precious German soldiers, the flower of Germany, you are building the foundations of a happy world for future generations.”

6. Archbishop Stepinac Blesses The Criminals

On April 10, 1941, the German Army entered Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. On that very same day Pavelic's Slavko Kvaternik,* leader of the illegal Ustashi movement, proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia and formed the first Ustashi government. Archbishop Stepinac at once sided with the Ustashi traitors and helped them take over the government. On April 12, 1941, while fighting between the Germans and the Yugoslav Army was still going on in the Bosnian mountains—while millions of patriotic Yugoslavs were still determined to resist the invaders—Archbishop Stepinac openly called on Kvaternik and congratulated him on his success.

The day before Easter, Slavko Kvaternik visited Archbishop Stepinac. The official organ of the Archbishopric, “Katolicki List,” reported that the Archbishop had expressed his highest satisfaction to Kvaternik. The Ustashi newspaper “Hrvatske Novosti,” in its Easter issue, underlined the significance of this interchange of visits and pointed out the cordiality with which the Archbishop of Zagreb had greeted the deputy of Dr. Pavelic. This newspaper drew the conclusion that the foundation was laid for intimate cooperation between the Ustashi movement and the highest representative of the Roman Catholic Church in the Croatian State.

What other conclusion could the lower clergy reach, despite the knowledge that both Kvaternik and Pavelic had been sentenced to death in absentia for their roles in the murder of King Alexander and French Foreign Minister Barthou?

On April 13, 1941, Ante Pavelic reached Zagreb from Italy. On the very next day—the Royal Yugoslav Army was still fighting—Archbishop Stepinac paid him a visit, to greet him and voice his congratulations.

* See footnote page 19.

Two weeks later, on April 28, 1941, Archbishop Stepinac issued a pastoral letter asking the clergy to respond without hesitation to his call that they take part in the exalted work of defending and improving the Independent State of Croatia. He emphasized his deep conviction that the efforts of the Poglavnik would meet with complete understanding and support, basing this confidence on his acquaintance with the men now directing the destiny of the Croatian people. He believed and hoped, his letter said, that in the resurrected Croatian State the Church would be able in complete freedom to preach "the invincible principles of eternal truth and justice." The pastoral letter, which was also published in "Nedjelja" and "Katolicki List" on April 28, 1941, declared:

"Honorable brethren, there is not one among you who did not recently witness the most significant event in the life of the Croatian people among whom we act as herald of Christ's word. These are events that fulfilled the long-dreamed of and desired ideal of our people. . . . You should therefore readily answer my call to do elevated work for the safeguarding and the progress of the Independent State of Croatia. . . . Prove yourselves, honorable brethren, and fulfill now your duty toward the young Independent State of Croatia."

The Ustashi section of the clergy, which had been active in terrorism even before the war, did not need this circular to tell them how to act. But a great part of the Catholic clergy, not earlier involved in the Ustashi movement, accepted the circular as a directive, an order from their most responsible chief; and in accordance with its exhortations placed themselves at the disposal of the Ustashi. Answering the call of the Primate of the church, many priests then engaged actively in supporting the Ustashi regime.

"WE IMPLORE THE LORD OF THE STARS . . ."

On Easter Day, 1941, Archbishop Stepinac announced from the pulpit in the Cathedral of Zagreb the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. Thus in the church itself he celebrated high treason against Yugoslavia and identified himself with the traitors, the attempted destroyers of his own country. The Archbishop ended his sermon with these words:

“Jesus, our resurrected Saviour! . . . I pray Thee tell the Croatian people, who are now facing a new era of life, what you told the apostles after the Resurrection: Peace be with you!”

The foregoing quotation is from the official organ of the —Archbishopric of Zagreb, “Katolicki List,” No. 16, 1941. In the same issue of this newspaper is a detailed review of the events that transpired from April 10 up to the first speech delivered by Dr. Ante Pavelic on April 15, 1941. The official journal of the Archbishop of Zagreb reported in detail the rapid events leading to the collapse of Yugoslavia, the role of the Ustashi and their supporters and, finally, the great contributions of Mussolini and Hitler. Pavelic’s, Hitler’s and Mussolini’s telegrams and the names of the members of the first Ustashi government were published. There was also a leading article entitled “The Independent State of Croatia.” This article could not have been published without the authorization of Archbishop Stepinac. The article concludes that the Independent State of Croatia was created by All-Powerful Providence in the year of the national jubilee. The Catholic Church prays the Lord to enable the Croatian people to find in it the fulfillment of their justified aspirations,

“convinced that all conditions are present for the fulfillment of the word of God: ‘Blessed are the people whose Master is God.’ With these desires and prayers we enter the Independent State of Croatia.”

In this manner the official organ of the Archbishop of Zagreb, “Katolicki List,” expressed its approval of the Ustashi regime. Thus the intimate contacts between the highest members of the clergy and the Ustashi plotters were made immediately clear for all to see.

The ties between the Ustashi regime and high authorities of the Catholic Church in Croatia were further revealed in that immediately after publication of the pastoral letter by Archbishop Stepinac “Katolicki List” published “The Principles of the Government of the Independent State of Croatia and of the Ustashi Movement,” to acquaint its readers with the basic directives regulating the life of every individual in the new puppet state. In line with these directives Croatia soon was converted into a virtual concentration camp.

Recognition of the Ustashi regime by Archbishop Stepinac

was announced to the people by having the pastoral letter read in every Croatian parish. It was also read over the radio. The impression this had on the people, and especially on the clergy, was indicated by Father Peter Glavas, who, during his trial after liberation, said in his own defense:

“The order given by Archbishop Stepinac to the people over the radio to fight for the Independent State of Croatia constituted a political directive to the clergy.”

On June 28, 1941, Archbishop Stepinac at the head of the other bishops greeted Pavelic and promised him their sincere and loyal cooperation. On that occasion Stepinac told Pavelic:

“And while we greet you cordially as head of the Independent State of Croatia, we implore the Lord of the Stars to give his divine blessings to the leader of our people.”



Archbishop Stepinac and other Catholic bishops of Croatia pay their respects to Ante Pavelic, puppet ruler of Croatia under the Nazis. Archbishop Stepinac is at Pavelic's right.

Every July, Archbishop Stepinac led the procession of the people of Zagreb to pay homage to the Holy Mother of Bistrice. During the Ustashi regime the first such procession was especially festive. It was attended by an unusually large number of people, and its political character was strongly marked. The principal speakers pointed out that the Independent State of Croatia was given to the Croatian people as a gift through the intercession of the Holy Mother of Bistrice. According to "Hrvatski Glas" of July 15, 1941, five candles were carried in the procession: "two as a sign of gratitude for the happy return of our chieftain; two for his heroic fighters; and one with the chieftain's picture as a sign of gratitude for his happiness and health."

Archbishop Stepinac and many high-ranking priests of the Catholic Hierarchy accepted appointment to the Ustashi parliament, the Sabor. The Ustashi parliament met on February 23, 1942. Its opening gave Archbishop Stepinac another opportunity to manifest solemnly his approval of the Ustashi regime. He celebrated the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Church of St. Marko. On this occasion the Ustashi leader Pavelic was received at the entrance to the church and accompanied by the entire hierarchy of the Archbishopric of Zagreb. The Archbishop greeted Pavelic with an address which was published later by the entire press. According to the "Katolicki Tjednik" of February 26, 1942, the Archbishop said in conclusion:

"The re-establishment of the Croatian parliament is accompanied by the prayers of the church and by our hearts. Let the Eternal Judge, who rules over the destinies of nations with His all-powerful hand, build a solid foundation for the Croatian parliament. May the Almighty carve in the hearts of all your collaborators the same sense of profound and tireless responsibility so that they are enabled to assist you, the chief of the Independent State of Croatia, in the reconstruction of our dear fatherland on the eternal foundations of the principles of Christ."

"Katolicki List" of June 11, 1942, reported that Archbishop Stepinac called upon the priests to say prayers in their churches on the occasion of Pavelic's birthday.

PARTS OF THE HIERARCHY BEHIND PAVELIC AND HITLER

The Catholic bishops, with Archbishop Stepinac at their head, competed with one another in manifestations of loyalty to the Ustashi puppet state and to Ante Pavelic. The Archbishop of Vrhbosna, Ivan Saric, enthusiastically greeted Pavelic's access to power. In April, 1941, he published the poem * in which the Ustashi traitor was praised as the hero of the Croatian people. Like Stepinac, Archbishop Saric was, from the beginning, in closest collaboration with leading Ustashi officials and commanding generals of the Wehrmacht. When the traitor Kvaternik† and the German General Gleis von Horstenan visited Archbishop Saric, the latter praised the Ustashi revolution and, finally, blessed Kvaternik and the Ustashi Army.

Complete solidarity with the new puppet state and with Pavelic was announced by the Bishop of Split, Dr. Kvirin Bonefacic, head of the oldest Dalmatian diocese. In April, 1941, he sent a long telegram to Pavelic in which he said he was certain that he also expressed the sentiments of the other three Dalmatian bishops in promising to cooperate with the chieftain wholeheartedly. Concluding, he asked the Lord to bless Pavelic and to crown his great work with success for the happiness and salvation of the Croatian people. In a telegram to Kvaternik he greeted the military leader and all members of the Ustashi government. These telegrams were published in the Split newspaper "Novo Doba" (New Era) of April 18, 1941. The "Novo Doba" of April 23, 1941, carried the text of a long message sent to Pavelic by the Bishop of Hvar, Miho Pusic. In this message the Bishop declared that the great leader Pavelic was the first fighter for national resurrection and expressed the deep gratitude, devotion and loyalty of the Catholic Church. The Bishop also implored the Almighty to bestow his blessings abundantly on Pavelic.

The Bishop of Djakovo, Dr. Antun Aksamovic, together with his entire consistory, greeted the return of the quisling Pavelic with the following message:

"Into the hands of the great son of the Croatian people, the hero of our race, the Liberator and Cre-

* See pages 21-22.

† See footnote page 19.

ator of the Independent State of Croatia, sovereign and leader, Dr. Pavelic, we place our sacred oath that we will remain wide awake as guardians of national consciousness on the eastern ramparts of our dear fatherland. . . . May divine blessing accompany our proud hero and wise leader Ante Pavelic."

On June 25, 1941, Bishop Dr. Buric officiated at the installation of the Ustashi Governor Miroslav Susic of the Province of Vinodol. "Novi List" of June 27, 1941, reported that on this occasion the Bishop gave a luncheon for the Governor and for Italian General Fiorensoli. In his speech the Bishop assured the Ustashi government and its leader that they could count on fullest support of the Catholic Church. "Katolicki Tjednik" of June 15, 1941, published the Bishop's pastoral letter in which he called upon the clergy and the people to give solemn thanks to God that they had lived to see the Independent State of Croatia established. There are many more such messages, speeches and articles. When the entire Episcopate was assembled in Zagreb on June 25 and 26, 1941, the conference gave Ante Pavelic an ovation and Archbishop Stepinac promised the quisling government the sincere and loyal cooperation of the Roman Hierarchy. Reports of the Bishops Conference and of the reception by Pavelic appeared in the newspaper "Nedelja" (Sunday) and in "Katolicki Tjednik", both of July 6, 1941.

The fanatical Ustashi spirit of the hierarchy found further expression in a speech which Archbishop Ivan Saric delivered in the presence of German and Ustashi officers. In this talk Pavelic was praised as "a wonderful leader who can serve as an example to us in every way." The Archbishop concluded:

"Commend yourselves to our beloved Lord with whose help we will gain the final victory together with our dear friends and allies. Therefore, with faith in God and with devotion to our beloved leader, we must always be ready to die for the Chief and for the Fatherland." ("Novi List," November 10, 1942)

7. Nazi Doctrine in the Catholic Press

The most important means for propagating Ustashi ideas in Croatia was the Catholic press which, playing upon the deep religious nature of the people, represented Pavelic and



Praise for Pavelic in various Catholic publications.

the Ustashi as having been sent by God to the Croatian people. This press was especially skillful in sowing the seeds of religious hatred toward the Serbs, racial hatred toward the Jews and hatred for Yugoslavia.

Immediately after proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia the Catholic press placed itself without reservation at the disposal of the Ustashi and the occupiers.

“CHRIST AND USTASHI MARCH TOGETHER . . .”

“Glasnik Biskupije Bosanske i Sremske” (The Voice of the Bosnian and Srem Bishops), No. 13, of July 15, 1941, wrote as follows of the establishment of the puppet state:

“Holy is this year of the resurrection of the Independent State of Croatia. The gallant image of our chieftain appeared in the rainbow. It can and it must be said of him that he is a man of Providence. He is the symbol of the 13-century-old religion, the faith, courage, gallantry, prudence, nobility, honesty and character of the Croatian people.”

“Glasnik Sv. Ante” (The Voice of Saint Anthony) in the issue of December 12, 1941, said that the creation of the independent State of Croatia was God’s work:

“The Croatians who are mostly a Catholic people consider such a great historical event as some fortunate accident, or as a stroke of luck. No, this is the work of God and providence.”

“Vjesnik Pocasne Straze Srca Isusova” (The Courier of the Honorable Guards of Christ’s Heart) wrote in a similar vein in issues Nos. 5 and 6 of 1941. An article entitled “The Banner of Croatia—the Heart of Christ” said:

“In the early spring the Croatian people experienced their resurrection at the time of Christ’s resurrection. The great son of the Croatian people returned and gave their liberty and ancient rights. And this is also the work of God, the Lord did it all and that is why it is strange to our eyes.”

The voice of the Crusader movement, “Nedelja” compared the Ustashi with Christ. In its issue of June 6, 1941, an article entitled “Christ and Croatia” reads:

“Christ and the Ustashi and Christ and the Croatians march together through history. From the first day of its existence the Ustashi movement has been fighting for the victory of Christ’s principles, for the victory of justice, freedom and truth. Our Holy Savior will help us in the future as he has done until now, that is why the new Ustashi Croatia will be Christ’s, ours and no one else’s.”

CATHOLIC PRESS IN CRUSADE FOR FASCISM

The Catholic press served as an effective instrument in paving the way for fascism. The Catholic Church and its lay organizations were owners and publishers of about 50 newspapers and periodicals. The entire Catholic press was controlled and directed from the headquarters of “Catholic Action.”

The leading Catholic papers, especially “Hrvatska Straza” (Croatian Guard) in Zagreb, “Katolicki Tjednik” in Sarajevo, organ of “Catholic Action,” “Katolicki List” in Zagreb and “Katolicka Rijec” (Catholic Expression) in Split wrote in the spirit of fascism. This most influential part of the Catholic press greeted with joy and sympathy the successes of fascism in all European countries and systematically poisoned public opinion with some sort of national-socialist ideology, while concealing all the horrors of fascism and Nazism. It deceived the people by portraying for them the “beauties” and “successes” of fascist regimes. This Catholic press was engaged, before the war, in preparing the ground for establishment of a fascist regime in Yugoslavia. It attacked all citizens who opposed the fascist assaults. Every person, whether liberal or conservative, who did not side with the clerical-fascist view was labeled “communist.”

The Catholic press reached people in all walks of life especially in the villages and small towns, and had a wide circle of readers. Its influence was great. An interesting example of how the Catholic press felt about itself is contained in an article in the “Hrvatska Straza”. Reviewing the first 10 years of its existence on July 2, 1939—two years before the war in Yugoslavia—this newspaper said:

“In place of aimless wanderings, ideological disputes and party factionalism, the Croatian people need an

era of building up a firm and definite national, cultural and social ideology.

“Today, 10 years after the first appearance of this Catholic daily, thousands of its pages and millions of lines show not only the enormous exertions of our staff, but also our clear line from which we never deviated. Since our beginning we were radical Croats and always radical Catholics . . . that has been our slogan, which we have never betrayed.

“This newspaper concentrates its attention on the currents of ideas and defends and promotes a clear and definite stand. Such newspapers have a special significance when they conduct a campaign. At first what they write does not attract unusual attention, but persistent repetition of the chosen thesis and its illustration by examples and quotations and always with new evidence are fruitful. . . .

“We started many struggles. An example of the success of our campaign is our struggle against the Popular Fronts. . . .

“Our unyielding and objective reporting about Spain is also well known, so much so that Spain itself admitted that we possessed better and more effective material than the editorial boards of the well-known Spanish papers. . . .

“In all our struggles we became known as a dangerous opponent. . . .”

How this crusading for fascism met with the approval of Archbishop Stepinac was shown in the 1942 New Year's issue of this newspaper in an article entitled: “Our Highest Shepherd on ‘Hrvatska Straza’ on New Year's Day.” This declaration by Archbishop Stepinac read:

“‘Hrvatska Straza’ has always defended the religious ideals of the Croatian people without which the nation itself means nothing. Let it continue on that road in the Independent State of Croatia. It can render no greater service to its people than by spreading and defending the principles, which God has placed as the foundation of the lives of individuals and peoples. May the blessings of God accompany it in that work.”

PRAISING HITLER'S "NEW ORDER" . . .

The Catholic press in Yugoslavia played an important role in the pre-war propagation of Nazi-fascist ideas under the cloak of religious principles. It praised Nazism and Hitler's "New Order" while at the same time it persistently attacked the Western powers, the United States, Great Britain and France, terming them countries of "decayed" democracy and Jewish plutocracy.

The "Katolicki Tjednik", organ of "Catholic Action" published under the direction of the Archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Saric, printed an article entitled "A New Order Must Come." It appeared in No. 4, 1941—before the war—and repeated the Nazi leitmotiv that the Axis powers were fighting for a new social order and just distribution of wealth as well as for space in the world. The article branded English hegemony and "Jewish capitalist plutocracy". The main Catholic daily, "Hrvatska Straza" whose editor, Dr. Janko Shimrak, became a bishop under Pavelic, openly and consistently praised Hitler's success in domestic and foreign policy. In the issue of March 12, 1938, Hitler's occupation of Austria was defended and praised. Later this paper hailed Hitler's successes in Czechoslovakia, Poland and France.

Priest Dragutin Kamber, mentioned previously, published an article in the Sarajevo newspaper "Osvit" of December 18, 1942, under the title: "Why Do I Want the Germans and Their Allies to Win?" This developed the thesis that, "1, Without the Germans, that is, the Axis, our nation would die and we would not have an Independent State of Croatia; 2, From the international point of view, Germany and the Croatians have the same enemies."

The Ustashi supported the "theory" that the Croatians were not of Slav descent at all, but were Gothic-German, with the aim of more successfully inciting Croat hatred against the Yugoslav state, the Serbs and other Slavs. One of the founders of this race theory was the well-known priest Kerubin Segvic. In 1931, he wrote a book entitled "The Gothic Descentance of the Croats." The book was published in the German language in Germany long before the war, and later was translated into Italian. It played an important part in disseminating fascist ideas among the Croatian people because it purported to show racial and blood ties between the Croa-

tians and the Germans, paving the way for union of the Croatian people with Nazi Germany.

The Catholic Crusader paper "Nedelja", in its issue of June 15, 1941, printed on the front page an article directed against the defeated Yugoslav Army. Contrasting the Yugoslav soldier and the Nazi conquerors, the article stated:

"Later we learned to know a different kind of soldier—the German soldier. In him we saw something diametrically opposed to that soldiery which collapsed, as if struck by lightning, exactly at the time it was supposed to justify its 'reputation.' While every Yugoslav soldier looked like a beggar, the German soldier showed us that even a soldier can be a gentleman . . . They always behaved in a fine and noble manner like their leaders."

PROPAGANDA FOR CLERICAL-FASCISM

Much space in the Catholic press was devoted to praising the so-called "Corporate State," the authoritarian system of various countries, in which the Roman clergy played a dominant role. Frequent reports and articles about the achievements of the clerical dictatorship under Msgr. Josip Tiso* in the "Independent State of Slovakia," and about the influence of the Catholic Church in Hungary, in Vichy France and Franco Spain were printed in the Catholic papers. Tiso's Slovak national socialism, under which all political power was concentrated in the hands of Catholic priests, was praised as the ideal corporate state. The Catholic daily "Hrvatska Straza" of July 1, 1940, stated that in the Independent State of Slovakia (which the Germans had created with the help of clerical quislings) the people became sovereign citizens after they were freed from their political oppressors. The same paper in its issue of August 6, 1940, praised the Slovak Minister of Internal Affairs, Alexander Mach, who was a sort of Himmler in that country, as "a man of action" and added: "We need such men today, only they can create a new world and a new order." "Hrvatska Straza" of March 2, 1938, in an article "Young Croatia for Anschluss" greeted the Anschluss of Austria: "Hitler, the leader of the German

* Slovak quisling executed April 18, 1947, after condemnation by Czechoslovak court.

people, proclaimed it his life work to build on the ruins of old Germany and Jewish-democratic social order a new, happy and satisfied great Germany."

The Zagreb "Katolicki List," the organ of Archbishop Stepinac, in January, 1940, carried an article entitled "Catholicism and Slovakian National Socialism" which read in part:

"In a modern state, which placed the interests of the people above all other considerations, the church and the state must cooperate in order to avoid all conflicts and misunderstandings. Thus, in accordance with the teachings of Christ, the Church in Slovakia had already exerted itself to arrange a new life for the Slovakian people.

"The views of Dr. Tuka are fulfilled by the formation of a 'people's Slovakia,' which has the approval of the President of the Republic, Msgr. Dr. Josip Tiso. In the National-Socialist system in Slovakia, the Church will not be persecuted. Persecutions will be used against the opponents of National-Socialism."

Similar articles were published in other Catholic papers to convince the Croatian people that the clerical corporate state was on the march everywhere. In the Catholic daily, "Hrvatska Straza," fascist Hungary was praised as early as April 3, 1938, for "solving the social problems by accepting the main principle of the Christian corporate state." There can be little doubt that this idea of the so-called corporate state was in the minds of the Ustashi in their plot against pre-war Yugoslavia. The pattern would be to help Nazi Germany overcome and dominate the Balkans and in return be allowed to set up their own Independent State of Croatia.

8. Exterminate the Jews

Following the example of the Nazis, the Ustashi and their clerical backers repeated all the slogans and lies of the ill-famed Streicher brand in their anti-Semitic campaign.

While the civilized world was expressing horror at the manner in which the Jewish question was being solved by the Axis through mass murder, the Catholic press in Yugoslavia prepared the people to accept similar measures. The Catholic daily "Hrvatska Straza" of August 24, 1940, published an article under the title "The Jewish Question in the

Near Future.” The article approved the anti-Jewish measures in the Axis countries and put special emphasis on the proposal that Jews from all parts of the world be sent to the island of Madagascar. The article concluded with the statement that the Jewish question existed in many other countries and that final solutions should be put into effect everywhere.

The Catholic University Society “Domagoj” published various pamphlets propagating fascist-Ustashi ideas. Before the war, the Domagoj distributed a brochure entitled: “Why Jews are Persecuted in Germany,” which voiced approval of Hitler’s terror against the Jews. The following is from that brochure:

“There are measures which the Germans can and must undertake for their own protection. . . . Let us



Brochures published by Croat Catholic University organization. That at upper left is entitled, “Why the Jews Are Persecuted in Germany.”

remember that people with weak or incorrect Christian concepts opened the doors to domination by Jews in Germany. What was spoiled by some is now being put aright by others.”

The Catholic Crusader paper “Nedelja” voiced approval of the Nazi racist theories and wrote in an article about “Jewish Atavism”:

“Up to the birth of Christ, Jewish atavism proved its sinful inclinations toward knavery, its lack of gratitude to God, its ruthless selfishness, its disobedience toward the heads of the state, its anarchism, its love of profit-making through the accumulation of worldly goods by means of corruption, blood-thirstiness, despotism, lasciviousness and homosexuality, incorrigible stubbornness and haughtiness . . . Having realized all this, we dare to conclude that the Jews have always been destructive regardless of whether they governed themselves or were governed by others. The Jews will never change, because according to the laws of psychology their national soul cannot change for the better as long as the human race continues to exist.”

This religious and race hatred spread through the entire Catholic press. “Glas Sv. Ante” (Voice of St. Anthony), Nos. 7 and 8, 1942, for instance, wrote of the Jews:

“The ‘Talmud’ is a work which the Jews created through the centuries. That type of work, however, must also come to an end. The struggling peoples’ movements have uncovered the work of the Jews among the nations and have warned of its dangers, which threatened to ruin the best and most positive forces in all nations. The Croatian people have also had an accounting with such Jewish activity and have shown, under the leadership of the Ustashi movement, how deceitful and ruinous is the activity carried on by the Jews among the Croatian people.”

While the slaughter of the Jews was at its height in the puppet state, “Katolicki Tjednik” of May 25, 1941, carried an article entitled “Why Are the Jews Being Persecuted?” This article, written by the editor of this Catholic Action publication, Priest Franjo Kralik, said in part:

“In order to maintain a correct point of view in evaluating the Jewish movement in the world, it is necessary to keep in mind a number of important facts. It is an undeniable truth that the Jews, a small people, scattered throughout the world and pursued by God’s curse, are an object of ridicule and scorn on the part of all other peoples. They suc-

ceeded through their commercial talents in forcing themselves upon governments and rulers either as financiers or as secret manipulators and occasionally as open, bloody dictators. . . .

“The descendants of those who hated Jesus, who condemned him to death, who crucified him and immediately persecuted his pupils, are guilty of greater excesses than those of their forefathers. Greed is growing. The Jews, who pushed Europe and the entire world into a disaster—a world disaster, moral, cultural and economic—developed an appetite which nothing less than the world as a whole could satisfy . . . As soon as a revolution is engineered by them, they slaughter mercilessly the intelligentsia. The Satan helped them to invent Socialism and Communism. And they invented them and directed this liberal world movement of the workers—they, the most cruel and soulless of men, the most awful capitalists, the Jews. . . .

“And did the Socialists and Communists not begin to defend them and praise these Jews who are the greatest criminals in the world? . . . Love has its limits . . . We must not permit the grain of the secretly organized world Jewry to teach us the meaning of justice in order to enable them criminally to plunder while all others are slaves. The movement for freeing the world from the Jews is a movement for the renaissance of human dignity. The Almighty and All-wise God is behind this movement.”

The “renaissance of human dignity” in the Independent State of Croatia reached its peak with the deliberate mass slaughter of hundreds of thousands of innocent people.

9. The Nightmare of Horrors . . .

It has been shown that in the very first days of the Ustashi uprising a Catholic priest boasted in public that “there will be purges.”

More or less “spontaneous” killings of Serbs and Jews occurred during the days when, with the help of German and Italian troops, the Ustashi destroyed the legal authorities and created the “independent” puppet state.

As soon as the Ustashi were firmly in control they began to prepare murder on the largest scale, carrying out a carefully prepared plan of physical extermination of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. Horror and frightful slaughter struck down hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Neither the aged nor the young were spared. The brutality of these acts is difficult for those who did not witness them to comprehend. Those who by chance escaped death were compelled by measures of extreme oppression to accept the Catholic faith.

It should not go unnoticed that this campaign of slaughter fitted in very well with the plans of the Nazis. Hitler had just launched his attack against the Soviet Union, on June 22, 1941, and Ustashi terrorism that would, it was hoped, keep the people of Croatia subdued, would obviate the necessity of maintaining large German garrisons there.

“CATHOLIC RADICALISM”

What happened in the late summer of 1941 and thereafter in Yugoslavia was the final triumph of the “Catholic radicalism” of which the newspaper “Hrvatska Straza” had spoken so proudly and which Archbishop Stepinac had praised. The real nature of “Catholic Radicalism” became manifest in outbursts of fanatical hatred towards the Orthodox religion, the Serb people and the Yugoslav state.

Raised in a spirit of “Catholic radicalism,” many Catholic priests actively participated in the Ustashi mass murders. Never was one of those priest-criminals called to task by Archbishop Stepinac or by any other Church authority. Many priests were the chief organizers of the massacres in their districts, and many personally dipped their hands in the blood of the Serbs and the Jews. They killed with even greater hatred the Croat-Catholics when the latter sided with the partisans.

The Italian fascist journalist Corrado Zolle wrote in the newspaper “Il Resto del Carlino,” September 18, 1941, an article entitled “Gli Ucellini di Gracac” (The Birds of Gracac), on the occasion of a massacre of Serbs by the priest Morber in the village of Stikada near Gracac. Contrasting the Catholic priests in Croatia with the great Saint, Francis of Assisi, Zolle wrote:

“The first Franciscan from Assisi fraternized with the birds, but these his students and spiritual suc-

cessors in the Independent State of Croatia are filled with hatred and kill innocent people, their brothers by the heavenly father, brothers by language, brothers by blood and brothers because they came from the same mother country, suckled from the same breasts; they kill, they murder, they bury people alive in ditches, throw the dead headlong into the river, into the sea or into the many ravines. There are bands of murderers who were led and who are still led by Catholic priests and monks."

Throughout the world the deeds of these Catholic priests were known. Archbishop Stepinac of Zagreb also knew; it was under his jurisdiction that they took place; but never once did he voice a protest against these horrors. Nor were the priest criminals called to answer for their crimes throughout the life of the Independent State of Croatia.

Not even when he received the protest sent him by Dr. Prvislav Grisogno, a Catholic Croat and former Minister in the Royal Yugoslav cabinet, did Archbishop Stepinac speak up. This letter, dated Belgrade, February 8, 1942, is quoted on pages 57 and 58 of "Ally Betrayed," by David Martin, (Prentice Hall, New York, 1946, foreword by Rebecca West) where it reads in part:

"In all these unprecedented crimes, worse than pagan, our Catholic Church has also participated in two ways. First, a large number of priests, clerics, friars and organized Catholic youth actively participated in all these crimes; but more terrible, even, Catholic priests became camp commanders and, as such, ordered or tolerated the horrible tortures, murders and massacres of a baptized people. One Catholic priest slit the throat of an Orthodox Serbian priest. None of this could have been done without the permission of their Bishops, and, since it was done, they should have been brought to the ecclesiastical court and unfrocked. Since this did not happen, then obviously the Bishops gave their consent, by acquiescence at least.

"Friars and nuns carried Ustashi knives in one hand and a cross and a prayer-book in the other. The province of Srem is covered with the leaflets of

Bishop Aksentovic, which were printed in his own print shop at Zadar. He calls upon the Serbs, through these newspapers, to save their lives and property, recommending the Catholic faith to them. . . . In our country not one Bishop has decried the fate of the innocent Christian Serbs who have suffered more than the Jews in Germany. . . .

I write you this . . . to save my soul and I leave it to you to find a way to save your soul."

"WITH A MALLET ON THE FOREHEAD . . ."

Archbishop Stepinac could even read the incitements to murder in his own Catholic newspapers. The Crusader weekly "Nedelja" on August 10, 1941, published an article which stated "the talk about so-called religious tolerance is now stopped." This article appeared at a moment when the slaughter of the Serbian people was at its height. A little later, in its issue of August 24, 1941, "Nedelja" printed an article justifying the mass murders being committed in many parts of Croatia. Declaring the time had come for a final accounting with the Serbs, the paper said: "They have been hit with a mallet on the forehead; evil must be punished!"

The "evil" was Yugoslavia, where the Serbs and Croats could live together.

How some spokesmen for the Roman hierarchy felt about the mass murder of Serbs was indicated in the official newspaper of the Sarajevo Archbishopric, "Katolicki Tjednik," on July 21, 1942, when it carried an article recounting the highlights in Ante Pavelic's life and recalling the great moment when Pavelic shouted in the parliament: "I shall be most happy when it becomes possible for me and the entire Croatian people to tell you Serbians 'good-night' . . ." The same article declared that all instructions of the chieftain must be carried out in order to clean up the "barbarian East," and concluded:

"Through various protective laws the Ustashi state is exterminating foreign influences and domestic evils. Death penalty is provided for those who are morally destroying the offspring of the Croatian people."

The paper "Nova Hrvatska" of June 28, 1941, lauded priest

Marko Calusic, who led 180 armed Ustashi, as a man who was "always ready to shoulder a gun."

FROM THE RECORD . . .

Some Roman Catholic priests, especially Franciscans, who had become sworn members of the Ustashi, had taken an oath to fight with dagger and gun for the "triumph of Christ and Croatia." How some of these priests conducted themselves after Pavelic, in July, 1941, gave the signal that inaugurated the mass killings, may be illustrated by a few cases from the files of the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes. Out of hundreds of cases, mention is made here of only a few which are typical:

Priest Bozo Simlesa in the village of Listani was one of the most active members of the Ustashi. He was entrusted with the post of chief in the District of Livno. During the slaughter of the Serbs in the county of Listani he told the people from the pulpit that the time had arrived to exterminate all Serbs living in Croatia. He personally organized the Ustashi militia and obtained arms for it. On July 27, 1941, he held a meeting in the village and when he was informed that all Serbian men had been murdered and that women and children were to be killed that night, he told them not to wait for the night, for 24 hours had already passed since the chief had issued his order that not a single Serb must be left alive in Croatia.

* * *

The first Ustashi confidante in the District of Udbina was the Franciscan priest Mate Mogus, who had organized the Ustashi militia and disarmed the Yugoslav troops. At a meeting in Udbina on June 13, 1941, he said:

"Look, people, at these 16 brave Ustashi, who have 16,000 bullets and who will kill 16,000 Serbs, after which we will divide among us in a brotherly manner the Mutilic and Krbava fields."

This speech was the signal for the beginning of the slaughter of the Serbian people in the District of Udbina.

* * *

In the village of Tramosnica, priest Ante Klaric became the first Ustashi commissar, and personally led Ustashi units

in attacks on Serbian villages. He organized the Ustashi militia and, according to witnesses, spoke from the pulpit as follows:

“You are old women and you should put on skirts, you have not yet killed a single Serb. We have no weapons and no knives and we should forge them out of old scythes and sickles, so that you can cut the throats of Serbs whenever you see them.”

One practice of Klaric and the Ustashi in Serbian villages was to line up the Serbs in two rows, face to face, and then order them to slap one another's faces and insult and curse one another. In one instance he kept the victims locked in a school house for several days without food or water. Then before his eyes, the Ustashi beat them with gun butts and whips, and, by prior agreement, beat them all the harder the more Klaric asked them not to. Relics plundered from Serbian churches later were found in his home in most unbecoming places.

* * *

Jesuit priest Dr. Dragutin Kamber,* a sworn Ustashi before the collapse of Yugoslavia, was appointed Ustashi confidante for the District of Doboje. He ordered the killing of about 300 persons in Doboje, and had about 250 more court-martialed, of whom most were shot.

* * *

Priest Ivan Raguz was in close contact with prominent Ustashi in Stolac. Two days before the slaughter he declared there would be “scrambled eggs” and that he would take care of all Serbs. He boasted openly in the cafes that all questions were being solved by him jointly with the Ustashi, and urged the killings of all Serbs, including children, so that “even the seed of these beasts is not left.”

* * *

Slaughter of the Serbs in Bosanska Gradiska was organized by priest Dr. Branimir Zupanic. As an Ustashi before the fall of Yugoslavia and a personal friend of Ante Pavelic, his words were decisive at the meeting at which the decision was reached to kill the Serbs. By his command in the village of Ragolje alone, more than 400 men, women and children had their throats cut.

* See page 26.

Fra Franjo Udovic, priest in the village of Koricane, organized and commanded the militia, which he personally led when it burned the property of the Serbian people in the villages of Koricane and Imljane. He personally divided cattle plundered from the victims among his Ustashi.

* * *

Chief organizer of massacres of the Serbs in Bosnia was curate Bozidar Brale from Sarajevo. He took part in the killings with gun in hand and advocated "liquidation of the Serbs without compromise." Archbishop Saric later named the same Brale to the presidency of the Spiritual Board of the Archbishopric of Sarajevo.

* * *

Priest Srecko Peric of the Gorica monastery near Livno declared in one of his sermons in the church in Gorica:

"Kill and massacre all Serbs. First of all, kill my sister, who is married to a Serb and then all Serbs. When you finish this work, come to me here in the church and I will confess you and free you from sin."

* * *

The massacre then began, and by August 10, 1941, 5,600 Serbs had been killed in the District of Livno alone.

* * *

Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic was a member of the illegal Ustashi organization before the war. After establishment of the Independent State of Croatia he participated in massacres in the villages of Drakulic, near Banjaluka. According to his own admission at a hearing his first victim was a child, whom he killed personally while telling the Ustashi:

"Ustashi, I re-christen these degenerates in the name of God and you follow my example."

That was in the village of Drakulic, where 1,500 Serbs were killed in one day. Ustashi authorities later made this Franciscan commandant of Jasenovac, an Ustashi concentration camp which equalled Dachau in horror. When captured, Filipovic admitted he had ordered the murder of 40,000 men, women and children in the camp. Besides Filipovic, the Catholic priests Zvonko Brekalo, Zvonko Lipovac, Franciscan Culina and others also worked at the Jasenovac camp.

* * *

In Dvor na Uni priest Anton Djuric kept a diary of his activities as an Ustashi functionary. The diary shows that at his order the Ustashi plundered and burned the village of Segestin, where 150 Serbs were murdered, and that in the village Goricka he arrested 117 people, who were sent to a concentration camp, where most of them were killed.

* * *

A group of Franciscan priests who tortured and finally killed 25 Serbs in the village of Kase took pictures of the "execution."

* * *



Franciscan
Miroslav Filipovic.
Left, as a priest;
right, in Ustashi uniform.



In Hercegovina the center of the Ustashi movement was located in the Franciscan monastery and the high school of Siroki Brijeg. The Catholic Dean in Stolac in Hercegovina, priest Marko Zovko, was responsible for the murder of 200 persons, whose bodies were thrown into a ditch in a field in Vidovo. Curate Ilija Tomas from the village of Klepac was responsible for the death of many Serbs in that district. In order more easily to capture frightened victims who were fleeing to the mountains, he promised them that no harm would befall them if they would embrace the Catholic religion.



JASENOVAC

Victims at the notorious Ustashi concentration camp, above, being robbed; below, an execution at the edge of a mass grave. (These photographs were found on a captured Ustashi)

Many of them believed this and called on him, whereupon he turned them over to the Ustashi, who murdered them.

* * *

In the village of Stikade, in Lika, the Ustashi were under the leadership of the Catholic priest Morber. Morber invited the Serbs to be converted to the Catholic religion. Those of them who accepted in good faith his proposal to be converted the Ustashi surrounded and massacred with rifles and hammers and threw the bodies into a ditch. When the bodies were dug up later it was established that many had been alive when buried.

* * *

Franciscans from the monastery in Sinj, Ivan Hrstic, Stanko Litre and Joso Olujic, personally maltreated captured Partisan Serbs and Partisan Croats. Hrstic was a major and Litre a captain in the Ustashi army.

* * *

Franciscan Mijo Cujic of Duvno personally gave instructions regarding the massacre of Serbs in the villages of Prisoje and Vrila, where not one person was allowed to remain alive.

This Ustashi program of mass murder as a way of helping Hitler and Mussolini resulted in the death of over 800,000 persons—Serbs, Croat anti-fascists, Jews.

10. Forcible Conversion

One of the most cynical chapters in the activities of one section of the Catholic Church in Croatia was the forced conversion of the Serbs.

The compulsory change from the Orthodox faith to the Roman Church was part of the Ustashi program of "ridding Croatian territory of foreign elements." The policy of forcible conversion was officially adopted by the Catholic hierarchy in Croatia. On November 17, 1941, Archbishop Stepinac convened a Bishops' conference in Zagreb, at which the program of forcible conversion of Serbs was given canonic sanction. At this conference, the so-called Committee of Three was chosen, whose task was to solve the question of conversions in conjunction with the Ustashi Ministry of Justice and Religion. The Committee consisted of Archbishop Stepinac, the Bishop of Senj, Viktor Buric, and the Apostolic Administrator, Dr. Janko Simrak. The conference also issued a reso-

34/511

Apostolska Administratura

Križevačke Biskupije

Broj: Pres. K. 723-1942.

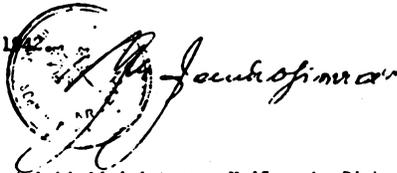
Otvorana odredba

Podpisani Apostolski Administrator Križevačke Biskupije ovime određuje, da v. p. Vened Samilović preuzme bivšu grkoistočnu parohiju u Bolfanu sa fl. u Čukovec sa svim njesinim pokretnim i nepokretnim imetkom t. j. crkvom, parohijskim domom, gospodarskim zgradama, zemljištem i raspoloživom imovinom, i da je pripoji Križevačkoj Biskupiji na osnovu želje žiteljstva te parohije, koja mu je izražena u više navrata pismenim i usmenim putem.

Prigodom same predaje parohije neka se sastavi zapisnik s crkvenim bivšim odborom i s vidjenijim vjernicima te parohije u dva jednaka primjerka, od kojih će se jedan pohraniti u pisnohrani parohije, a drugi u pisnohrani Konzistorijalne Biskupske Kancelarije u Križevcima.

Ovime se prema tomu proglašuje, da je inkorporirana grkokatoličkoj Križevačkoj Biskupiji, koja će do sada njome upravljati.

U Križevcima, dne 3. lipnja 1942.



Apostolski Administrator Križevačke Biskupije.

P.S. Ako ste već preuzeli župu u Bolfanu, onda je dostatno, da odete u Bolfan u ovu nedjelju dne 7. lipnja i da tamo svetu službu odslužite. Na mjesto Vas služiti će u Lepavini svetu službu Preč. G. Ilija Garapić, koji će radi toga stići u Lepavinu dne 6. lipnja poslije podne oko četiri i pol sata. S. Preč. Garapicem dolazi i Preč. Pavić radi službe u Vel. Pogancu. Posetarajte se sa kaleže i t. d. sa Bolfan i sa Poganez.

Document signed by Bishop Simrak ordering Priest Gavrilovic to take over the church and all property of the Serbian Orthodox parish in Bolfan.

(See page 82)

lution, numbered 253, in which directions were given relating to the way conversions were to be carried out.

On the basis of these directives, many Catholic priests engaged actively in the work of conversion. According to Stepinac's report to the Pope of May 18, 1944, 240,000 Serbs were converted. The man who became Archbishop Stepinac's right hand in pressing a large part of the Orthodox Serbs into the Roman Church was Bishop Janko Simrak. Before his elevation into the hierarchy, Dr. Janko Simrak was editor-in-chief of the Catholic daily "Hrvatska Straza." This newspaper all through its existence was most outspoken for fascism, and its chief, Dr. Simrak, played a most important role in the Ustashi movement.

In October, 1941, Dr. Simrak was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Greek-Catholic Bishopric of Krizevci. His task was to force as many Serbs as possible into the Roman Church. In June, 1942, he was appointed Bishop of Krizevci, and in December of that year he was consecrated in the presence of Archbishop Stepinac and other members of the hierarchy. A short time after the Bishops' conference at Zagreb had decided to force the conversion of Orthodox Serbs, the Apostolic Administrator, Dr. Simrak, issued a directive which was published in the official "Bishopric News" of Krizevci, No. 2, 1942. The text reads in part as follows:

*Directive regarding the conversion of members of
the Eastern Orthodox Church in
Slavonia, Srijem and Bosnia.*

Special offices and church committees must be created immediately for those to be converted. These committees will help the curates with their work, not only in organizing the conversions, but in creating parishes of those convertees. Let every curate remember that these are historic days for our missions, and we must under no circumstances let this opportunity pass by but must work with all our strength to attain our goals. Now we must show with our work what we have been talking about for centuries in theory. We have done very little until now as far as conversion is concerned, simply because we were undetermined and afraid of small obstacles and complaints from people. Every great work has someone

opposing it, but we must not allow our spirits to be lowered. Our universal mission, the salvation of souls and the greatest glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, is involved in this issue. Our work is legal because it is in accord with official Vatican policy, with the directives of the saintly congregation of the Cardinals for the Eastern church . . . and with the circular of the government of the Independent State of Croatia of July 30, 1941, which desires that members of the Eastern Orthodox Church be converted to the Catholic faith.

One of the biggest mass conversions of Serbs took place in the bishopric of Djakovo under the leadership of Bishop Aksamovic. There were some priests who thought that forcible conversion was not in the spirit of Christian teaching, but pressure from their bishops obliged them to fall into line. Bishop Aksamovic's chaplain, Dr. Djuka Maric, at a hearing before Yugoslav authorities said:

"I and my friend and colleague Stjepan Bogutovac were forced by our bishop, Aksamovic, to go as missionaries to the Orthodox towns of Paucje and Cenkovovo and to perform there the rituals of rechristening all the inhabitants within a week's time."

In 1941, the printer for the official Diocesan journal of Djakovo issued a leaflet which was widely distributed among the Serbs. It read:

A FRIENDLY SUGGESTION

The Lord Jesus Christ said that there shall be one pasture and one shepherd. This unity must be carried out in the Independent State of Croatia. Inhabitants of the Greek-Eastern faith, hear this friendly advice! The Bishop of Djakovo has already received thousands of citizens in the Holy Catholic Church, and these citizens received certificates of honesty from the state authorities. Follow these brothers of yours, and report as soon as possible for rechristening into the Catholic Church. As Catholics, you will be allowed to remain in your homes. You may increase your property in peace and rear your children for God and for the Independent State of

Croatia. In the Catholic Church you will insure the saving of your immortal souls.

As soon as the mass conversions of Serbs began many priests and Ustashi went to Serbian towns and began forcibly carrying out the program. Serbian Orthodox Churches were



Forcible conversion, 1941, in the village of Staza, with armed Ustashi present (upper left) to enforce submission.

turned into Catholic ones. A hint of how these mass conversions were carried out was given on February 25, 1942, in "Nova Hrvatska", an Ustashi newspaper:

"The rechristening was carried out in a very solemn manner by the curate of Petrinja, the most honorable Mihael Razum. An Ustashi company was present at this solemn occasion."

"Katolicki List," organ of the Bishopric of Zagreb, whose columns were controlled by Archbishop Stepinac, wrote in its issue No. 38 in 1941:

"The entire village of Budinci was rechristened to the Catholic faith. A parish of over 2,300 souls was created in the village. The preparation for the rechristening was made by the Franciscan from Nasice,

Father Sidonije Scholz, and other priests such as the chief curate from Osijek. At a banquet in the public hall many significant speeches were made and the Chieftain and Croatia were acclaimed."

Ustashi authorities organized a special government division for religion to expedite the work of rechristening the Serbs. The Ustashi priest Dionizija Juric, a Franciscan and close friend of Pavelic, was appointed to head this division, which devised a plan for the systematic conversion of those Serbs who had been spared from persecution and massacre. Then a veritable race began among some Catholic bishops and priests to see who could convert the most Serbs to the Catholic faith and take the most property from Serb parishes.

A few cases out of hundreds from the files of the Commission for Investigating War Crimes may be cited. One of the most fanatical missionaries for conversion was priest Ante Djuric in the District of Dvor. He ordered the slaughter, plunder and burning of many villages and sent hundreds of Serbs to the concentration camp in Kostajnica. He personally mutilated and killed Serbs from Bosanska Kostajnica. In his speeches he always emphasized that the Serbs in the District of Dvor "have only three ways out: to accept the Catholic faith, to move out or to be cleansed with the metal broom."

Priest Ambrozije Novak, Guardian of the Capucine Monastery in Varazdin, went in 1941 to the village of Mostanica, accompanied by Ustashi and ordered the Serbian people to assemble. He told them, according to the testimony of many witnesses, "you Serbs are condemned to death and you can only escape that sentence by accepting Catholicism!"

Franjo Pipinic, priest in Pozega, carried out mass conversions of Serbs toward the end of 1941 with the assistance of the Ustashi Captain Peranovic. He told the Serbian people that acceptance of Catholicism was the only way in which they could save themselves from death in concentration camps.

Priest Dr. Peter Berkovic, well known as a fascist, participated in mass conversions in the vicinity of Osijek. The services rendered by him are described in the Ustaska Velika Zupa No. 1372, of April 27, 1942, in connection with his transfer to the "Office of Colonization." This report reads in part:

“... His work covers the period from preparation of the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church for conversion to Catholicism until they were actually converted, and thus in the counties of Vocin, Cacinci and Ceralije he converted more than 6,000 persons. . . .”

The curate of Ogulin, Canon Ivan Mikan, wrote leaflets addressed to the Serbs asserting they would suffer unless they allowed themselves to be rechristened. He charged 180 dinars for each conversion so that in one Serb village alone—Jasenak—he collected 80,000 dinars from the Serbs.

Ante Djuric, priest in Divusa, became an Ustashi administrator immediately after establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. He took part in compulsory conversions of the Serbian people. Serbian Orthodox priests, the Very Reverend Mladen Ostojic, from Zirovac, and the Very Reverend Ilija Vranjesevic, from Ljubina, gave the following testimony about Djuric's activities:

“Before our escape, all (Serbian) government employees and teachers received an order from priest Djuric to submit their petitions for conversions to Catholicism or to leave their residence and posts. After they applied for conversion they were told confidentially to coerce all other Serbs to accept Catholicism or else to move wherever they could if they wanted to escape execution.

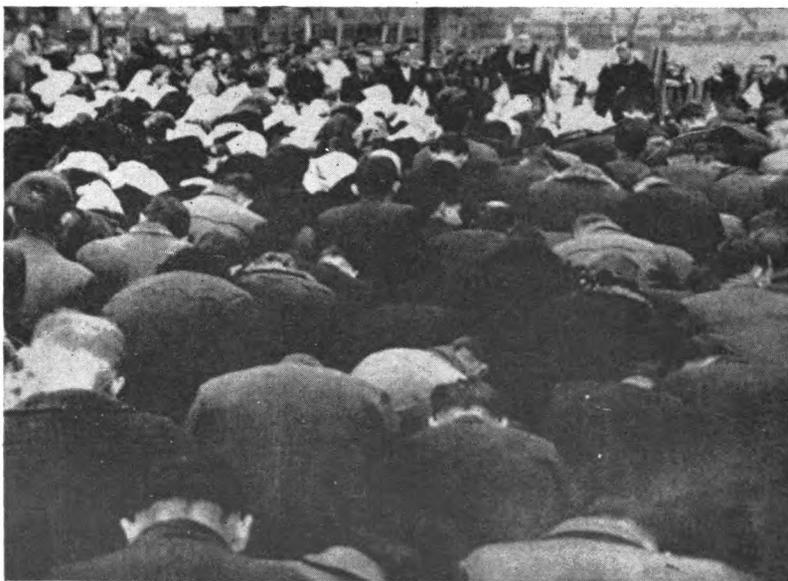
“In this manner, all heads of families were compelled to come to their local teacher, with a 10 dinar tax stamp, to make out a petition for conversion to Catholicism for themselves and their families. . . .

“The Serbs in the District of Dvor na Uni shook with fear at the mention of the name of Priest Djuric, who imprisoned the Serbs in his stable and barn where he tortured them with hunger and whipping until they accepted Catholicism.”

Josip Orlic, priest in Sunja, an old sworn Ustashi, compelled the Serbs in his district to accept Catholicism by threatening them with concentration camps. A great majority of the Serbs there changed to Catholicism in fear for their lives. But even many of those rechristened were carried away to the Jasenovac concentration camp in May, 1942, where prac-

tically all of them were killed. In this district the Ustashi destroyed the Serbian Orthodox churches in Drljace, Brdjani, Kinjacka, Cetvrkovac, Petrinja and Svinjica.

Priest Sidonije Scholz was one of those missionaries "not afraid of small obstacles" in the conversion of the Serbs. Peter V. Kovacevic, teacher from Belenice, gave the following testimony about this priest:



Mass conversions of Serbs in Slavonia, conducted by Priest Sidonije Scholz.

“All evils were endured by the Serbs from the Catholic priests. We accepted the Catholic faith under conditions of most frightful terror. In our district (Nasice) the thunderer among those priests was Pater Sidonije Scholz. He ordered our local priest, George Bogic, to be killed in a most bestial manner. They took him out of his home at night and butchered him—cut off his nose, his tongue, his ears and beard; they cut open his belly and wound the intestines around his neck. . . .”

ARCHBISHOP STEPINAC WAS KEPT INFORMED

In all villages where Serbs had been converted or “rechristened,” the people were compelled by the local Roman priests to send congratulatory telegrams to Archbishop Stepinac expressing their profound devotion. Stepinac was informed of every mass conversion performed in the individual parishes. Many of these telegrams were printed in full in the Ustashi paper “Nova Hrvatska” and in Archbishop Stepinac’s own official Diocesan Journal, “Katolicki List.” As an example, the Ustashi paper “Nova Hrvatska” in its issue of April 9, 1942, printed four such telegrams, all addressed to Archbishop Stepinac, in which mass conversions in villages were reported. One of the four telegrams runs as follows:

“2,300 persons, assembled in Slatinski Drenovac from the villages of Drenovac, Pusina, Kraskovic, Prekorecan, Miljani and Gjurisic, accepted today the protection of the Roman Catholic Church and send their profound greetings to their Head.”

II. The Roman Church and the Ustashi Regime

As has been shown, many Catholic priests, both in spoken word and written article, welcomed the Independent State of Croatia as their own state and greeted Ante Pavelic as a leader sent by God. It was not surprising, then, to find numerous members of both the higher and lower clergy filling official army and administrative posts in the Pavelic state regime.

Many served in the Sabor, or Ustashi state parliament. According to a stenographic report of the Ustashi Sabor, the following priests were members: Dr. Aloysius Stepinac, Croat

metropolitan and Zagreb archbishop; Dr. Ante Aksamovic, bishop of Djakovo; Bozidar Bralo, curate from Sarajevo; Mijo Etinger, curate from Drvar; Ante Irgolic, curate from Far-kasic; Dr. Ante Loncaric, canon from Senj; Stjepan Paunic,

JURISDIKCIJA DOMOBRANSKIH DUŠOBRIŽNIKA.

Predsjedništvo Biskupskih konferencija.

Broj: 22/BK-1942.

Prečasnom Nadbiskupskom Ordinarijatu u Sarajevu.

Čast mi je izvijestiti prečasní Naslov, da sam od Svete Stolice imenovan Vojnim Vikarom »sine titulo« za hrvatsku vojsku. Svojim zamjenikom imenovao sam preč. g. *Stipu Vučetića*, višeg stožernog dušobrižnika kod Ministarstva Hrvatskog Domobranstva, i vlč. g. *Vilima Cecelju*, zamjenika višeg stožernog dušobrižnika kod Ministarstva Hrvatskog Domobranstva, te sam im podijelio u tu svrhu potrebnu jurisdikciju sa svim ovlaštenjima, koja su mi od Svete Stolice dana.

Nadalje sam imenovao domobranske dušobrižnike i podijelio im župničku jurisdikciju.

Da se pak izbjegnu bilo kakovi nesporazumci u jurisdikciji između dijecezanskih Ordinarija i vojnih dušobrižnika, to je Sveta Stolica dekret o jurisdikciji Vojnog Ordinarija za talijansku vojsku (S. Congr. Consistr. od 13. IV. 1940., AAS, 1940., 280; u prilogu se šalje hrvatski prijevod toga dekreta) protegnula i na mene, napose točke 2., 3., 6. i 8. toga dekreta, u kojemu je točno naveden djelokrug vojnih dušobrižnika i njihov odnošaj prema dijecezanskim Ordinarijima kao i dijecezanskih Ordinarija prema vojnom dušobrižništvu i vojnim dušobrižnicima.

Koji vojni dušobrižnici djeluju na Vašem teritoriju, bit ćete obaviješteni naknadno iz kancelarije Vojnog Vikarijata kod Ministarstva Hrvatskog Domobranstva.

U Zagrebu, 20. siječnja 1942.

Dr. Alojzije Stepinac,

Predsjednik Biskupskih Konferencija.

Letter of Archbishop Stepinac informing the Catholic clergy that he is Supreme Apostolic Vicar of the Ustashi army.

curate from Koprivnica; Matija Polić, canon from Bakar; Dr. Tomo Severović, canon from Krizevac; Bonifacio Sipić, curate from Tučep; Franjo Skrinjar, curate from Zelekovac;

Stipe Vucetic, curate from Ledenica, etc., etc. Others held important positions in the executive branch of the government. Priest Bozidar Bralo was for a time Ustashi commissioner for Bosnia and Hercegovina. Others served as Ustashi district administrators.

As for the Ustashi army, Dr. Aloysius Stepinac himself held the position of supreme apostolic vicar. The military vicariat of the armed forces of the quisling Independent State of Croatia was founded in 1941. Archbishop Stepinac was made supreme apostolic vicar by order of the Vatican. As deputies he appointed the Ustashi priests Vilim Cecelja and Stipe Vucetic. In accepting the position as vicar of the army, Archbishop Stepinac indicated to the rest of the Catholic clergy in Croatia by his own example how they should help strengthen Pavelic's regime. Following his lead, 120 Catholic priests volunteered for service in the Ustashi army as military chaplains. These chaplains went everywhere with Pavelic's military units—into battle and plunder and massacre. Some even incited the Ustashi to further criminal acts. It will be recalled how the Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic admitted that, on his orders, 40,000 persons were killed in the concentration camp at Jasenovac.

The Catholic press constantly reported youth meetings and celebrations in Catholic seminaries where Pavelic and the Ustashi regime were enthusiastically acclaimed. The "Glasnik Biskupije Bosanske i Sremske" of April 15, 1942, carried a review of a celebration given by the Society of Religious Youth in connection with the first anniversary of the Ustashi state. In the presence of Bishop Aksamovic and many high clerics a resolution was adopted praising the Pavelic regime and the "social reconstruction on the basis of the principles of the Ustashi movement."

According to Archbishop Stepinac's own paper, "Katolicki List," of April 30, 1942, the students of the Theological Seminary of Zagreb, accompanied by their professors, paid a solemn tribute to Pavelic and praised him as the founder of a new Croatia. In his answer Pavelic stressed the role the Catholic seminaries played in the national reconstruction:

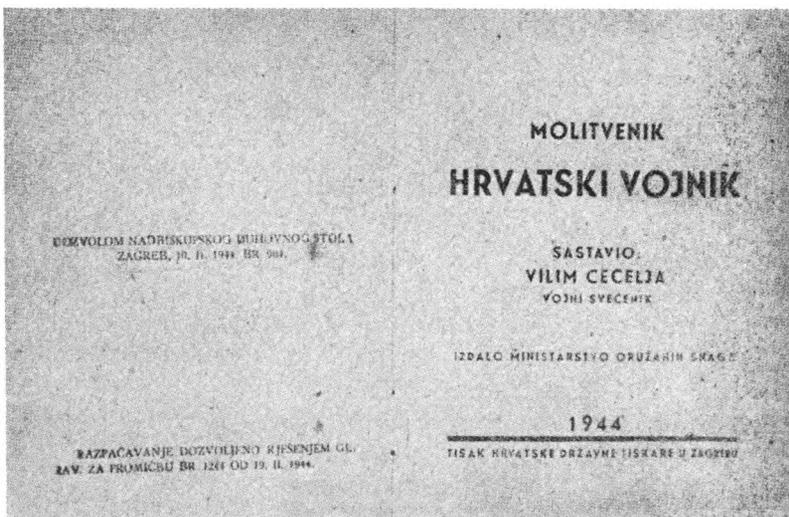
"... I know that the seminaries, especially the seminary of Zagreb, have at all times kept open the doors through which noble sons went to take part in our national reconstruction. I am familiar with all of the

bright moments that came to light under the roof of this seminary. The great patriotic enthusiasm, which today prevails in it, is known to me, and I am certain that through education the future generations of the seminary will follow in your footsteps."

In April, 1944, the Minister of Education, Dr. Makanec, and other members of the Pavelic cabinet, visited the college of the Franciscan monastery in Visoko where they were greeted by priest Drljic who declared:

"Our hearts and the hearts of all our students and clerics are full of joy on this day . . . In the name of the entire faculty as well as in the names of hundreds of youthful Ustashi hearts, of our entire student body, we greet you with the call: Ready for the Chieftain and for the Fatherland!" (Sarajevo "Katolički Dnevnik", No. 4 and 5, 1944).

In other speeches, the ministers were asked to "tell the Chieftain that the Franciscan youth is ready to follow the bright traditions of the past . . . under the wise rule of the Poglavnik."



Right, cover of "The Croatian Soldier," special prayer book issued by Pavelic's War Ministry; left, inside page says book was "edited with permission of Archbishop's Spiritual Board," with distribution authorized by propaganda division of War Ministry.

It was only natural that under such pressure tens of thousands of youngsters filled the cadres of the Ustashi militia and the Black Legion.

Early in 1944 Pavelic's War Ministry issued a special prayer book for soldiers entitled "The Croatian Soldier." The book was prepared by priest Vilim Cecelja, Stepinac's deputy in the army vicariat, and was issued with permission of the Archbishopric Spiritual Board in Zagreb. The Spiritual Board at that time comprised the following members: Archbishop Stepinac, and Bishops Dr. Salis Sevis, Dr. Josip Lah, Ignacije Rodic and Valentin Malek. The prayer book is full of pleas to God on behalf of Pavelic, the Independent State of Croatia and the Ustashi. In one of these the priest asks for blessings of the Ustashi or the Domobranci on the occasion of their taking an oath of loyalty to Pavelic. This blessing reads:

"Almighty and immortal God, father of strength and mercy, who will not allow anyone who believes in you to fail, turn your mercy, Father, to those your children, the Croatian Ustashi and Domobranci, who today take an oath of allegiance to their country and to their chieftain. Help them, God, in your mercy, to accept with all their heart and soul the words that they pronounce, so that they will be ready to give everything for the Croatian fatherland and for the Chieftain, even their lives. Thus may the blessings of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost be upon you and stay with you always. Amen."

As supreme vicar of the Ustashi army, Archbishop Stepinac was present at all of the bigger Ustashi army parades and thus again made clear his connections with Pavelic and the Ustashi.

The army chaplains took an oath before a cross and two candles in front of which were a dagger and revolver. The main task of these army "chaplains" was to take advantage of the religious feelings of the soldiers, to raise their morale in the battle against the allied armies and the Yugoslav Partisans, to goad them on to merciless acts against those who were against them, and to give the soldiers religious support, pardoning their crimes on the grounds that they were battling for the Roman Catholic Church. This may be seen from the speech of one army chaplain, priest Sabic, who told Ustashi recruits on November 12, 1942:

Na prijedlog:

MINISTRA PRAVOSUDA I GOSTOVLJA

Red za zasluge — Veleređ sa zvjezdom
Svojom odredbom oč. broj 111-Zsl.-1944.

Preuzvišenoj gospodi:

Stepinac Alojziju, nadbiskupu zagrebačkom.
(Tek. br. 552-Zsl.)

Što se kao metropolit zagrebački odlučno uzpro-
vio odmerodivanju međumurskog hrvatskog pu-
anstva posredstvom stranih svećenika i što je
osvjedočio zbog neprijateljskog bombardiranja
nezaštićenog zagrebačkog građanstva. Što je kao
nadbiskup razkrinkavao u zemlji i izvan zemlje
odmetnike s područja Nezavisne Države Hrvatske.
Šiće Salih Safvetu, zamjeniku Reis-ul-uleme Sa-
ajevo. (Tek. br. 553-Zsl.)

Što je kao zamjenik vrhovnog poglavara Islamske
jerske zajednice nastojao održati na visini ustroj-
vo povjerene mu vjerske organizacije kao i za
krenu suradnju s hrvatskom državnom vladom
s hrvatskim državnim oblastima.

Mogena Maksimov Ivanović Gregoriju, mitro-
litu zagrebačkom i čiele hrvatsko-pravoslavne
ve. (Tek. br. 554-Zsl.)

Što je kao prvi poglavar pravoslavne crkve u Nezavisnoj
avi Hrvatskoj iztakao se zdušnim radom na
rojstvu i sređivanju pravoslavne crkve.

Popp Filipu, biskupu evangeličkom. (Tek. br.
555-Zsl.)

Što je kao suradivanje, kao poglavar njemačke
ngeličke crkve, s hrvatskom državnom vladom
ržavnim oblastima.

Šarić Ivanu, nadbiskupu sarajevskom. (Tek.
br. 556-Zsl.)

Što je kao nadbiskup Vrhbosanski nesobično dje-
lova među podređenim svećenstvom i narodom
u hrvatskom ustaškom duhu.

Šrebrnić Josipu, biskupu krčkom. (Tek. br.
557-Zsl.)

Što je kao biskup izvršio neumorni rad, koji je
zauzimajući se za progone i zatočene
radane od strane neprijatelja.

Šrebrnić Joži, biskupu banjalučkom. (Tek. br. 558-
Zsl.)

Što je kao biskup izvršio neumorni rad, koji je
zauzimajući se za progone i zatočene
radane od strane neprijatelja.

Narodne Novine publishes a list of Catholic clergy, including Stepinac, given Ustashi decorations. Many of the citations note, among other things, the work which the recipients did in "the Ustashi spirit."

NARODNE NOVINE

Dr. Aršamović Antunu, biskupu — Đakovo.
(Tek. br. 559-Zsl.)

za predanu suradnju s državnom vladom i državnim oblastima u svim narodnim i vjerskim pitanjima svoje biskupije.

Dr. Burić Viktoru, biskupu — Senj. (Tek. br. 560-Zsl.)

što se kao biskup zauzimao za izpačeni narod i bodrio svećenstvo, da izdrži s narodom u najtežim patnjama.

Butorac Pavlu, biskupu kotorskom i administratoru dubrovačke biskupije. (Tek. br. 561-Zsl.)

kao biskup na iztaknutom i ugroženom državnom području branio je prava hrvatskoga naroda.

Dr. Šimrak Janku, biskupu grkokatoličkom. (Tek. br. 562-Zsl.)

za revnostnu službu među svojim svećenstvom i povjerenim mu stadom, kao i za suradnju s hrvatskim državnim oblastima u iskrenom ustaškom duhu.

Dr. Čule Petru, biskupu — Mostar. (Tek. br. 563-Zsl.)

što je kao biskup odlučno zastupao prava hrvatskog naroda protiv vanjskih i unutarnjih neprijatelja na području njegove biskupije.

Red krune kralja Zvonimira I. stupila na zvezdast

“Be proud as you take the Ustashi oath, for with it you become members of the great Ustashi family, brothers and co-workers to our great Chieftain, brothers of those Ustashi who saved the honor of the Croatian people and who with pistol, bomb and dagger have gone further than our enemies ever dreamed they would go. . . .”

Several hundred Catholic priests received high decorations for the support given to the Ustashi authorities. All bishops, with Archbishop Stepinac at their head, received in 1944 the highest Ustashi decoration “The order of Merit.” All these priests were cited for their political services to the Ustashi state or for active participation in battle, either on the Eastern front or in fighting the Partisans.

Some chaplains went with their army units to the Eastern front, where they were decorated with German medals. Niko Daresic, curate from Trsten, fought as a volunteer on the Eastern front with the 369th Legion Regiment, and was decorated with the German medal "Ost Medaille." Priest Grujo Balokovic was active on the Eastern front as a volunteer and as such received two medals. Dr. Stjepan Bogutovac, a priest, was killed fighting on the Eastern front. Celebrated Ustashi chaplains included Dr. Ivo Guberina, chaplain of Pavelic's personal guard, and priests Josip Galesic, Ante Mikulic, Ivan Sehalja, etc.

The "Vjesnik Minorsa" of October 3, 1942, reported that Joseph Kaurinovic, priest in Prijedor, was decorated posthumously with the Great Silver Medal for Bravery, and cited for "his courageous and determined behavior on the occasion of the attack of the rebels on the locality Prijedor, in the spring of 1942, when with gun in hand he perished as a brave defender of the Independent State of Croatia."

The head of the Franciscan monastery in Knin was decorated with the Order of King Zvonimir III with Swords because of "the sacrifices he made in assisting the Croatian and German troops in connection with the capture of Knin and Drnis in September, 1943."

Catholic sisters, of various orders, played an active part in such organizations as the "Ustashi Women's Shoot." According to a report in "Katolicki Tjednik" of December 6, 1942, many Catholic sisters were decorated by Pavelic because of the assistance they gave Ustashi military units in the struggle against the Yugoslav Liberation Army.

Many priests worked directly in the Ustashi propaganda services, and some even in the Gestapo itself; others were active in the Ustashi party and army units. Archbishop Stepinac himself had connections with an agent of the Gestapo, Wilhelm Haeger. Hans Helm, police attache in the German Legation in Zagreb, declared at his hearing September 3, 1945, that Archbishop Stepinac had very close contact with the Gestapo agent Haeger. Haeger performed many favors for Stepinac; among other things, he brought three Catholic priests from Czestochova, Poland. With the help of Archbishop Stepinac, Wilhelm Haeger was able to make a trip to Rome. In 1944 Haeger was ordained a Catholic priest in Vienna.

Dr. Stjepan Lackovic, Archbishop Stepinac's secretary, who today lives in Youngstown, Ohio, had close contact with the Ustashi intelligence service, according to Franjo Figuric, chief of Ustashi military police. At his hearing on September 15, 1945, Figuric stated that Dr. Lackovic was in close touch with Zvonko Katalenic, Ustashi intelligence service agent.

The Bishop of Krk, Dr. Josip Srebrnic, gave information to German and Italian secret police. One proof of this was a circular letter he sent on March 6, 1944, No. 50, ordering the priests of his diocese to report on all happenings in their territory. He wrote: "Representatives of the military and civil authorities are coming to see the Bishop. They assume that he is informed on everything that is happening in his diocese."

The Bishop of Split, Dr. Bonifacic, performed similar services. He suggested that the Italians hold Partisan families responsible for all misfortunes that might befall the occupation army. A letter from the office of the Italian Governor of Dalmatia on December 3, 1941, No. 9139, to the police and VI Army Corps in Split reads:

"In connection with what we reported in our letter No. 51 of November 18, 1941, concerning fighting the Chetnik-communist bandits in the Districts of Sinj, Livno and Bosansko Grahovo, I inform you that the Bishop of Split, recommending warmly the request of Catholic clergy from the above mentioned districts about which you are informed, submits new proposals that for all crimes and damage caused up to now, and for those perpetrated in the future, the families of the bandits who live in those districts be proclaimed responsible. . . ."

Since some high Catholic functionaries engaged in such activities it is easy to understand that parts of the lower clergy did not scruple to maintain contact with the Gestapo, with OVRA and with the Ustashi propaganda services. Two Franciscans from the monastery in Poljud, Marijan Stasic and Ciprijam Lisica, were shown to have given the Italian authorities in Split information regarding Partisan families. Matija Crnkovic, curate from Ludbreg; at his hearing on June 13, 1945, admitted that he gave the occupation authorities names of members of the National Liberation Movement and had many sent to concentration camps. The organizer of the

Ustashi intelligence in northern Dalmatia was the Franciscan Josip Poljak, curate from Perusic. The priests Miroslav Buzuk from Sanski Most and Josip Bekman from Prijedor, at their hearing December 17, 1944, admitted they were Gestapo agents and had collected data about the National Liberation Movement which they sent to the Gestapo in Banja Luka and



Governo della Dalmazia

Tab. 9139

-4 DIC 1941

1940

Zara, 3 dicembre 1941 - XV

Alla E. Prefettura

SPALATO

Al Comando VI° Corpo d'Armata

SPALATO

e, per conoscenza

Alla Direzione Generale Polizia

SPALATO

OGGETTO: Vescovo di Spalato e repressione
della ribellione in Croazia

Comunicasi, per opportuna conoscenza, il sotto
trascritto dispaccio in data 27 novembre u.s. del R. Mi-
nistero degli Affari Esteri, relativo all'argomento in
oggetto:

"Ad ogni buon fine s'informa che il Commissa-
rio Generale Amministrativo Creato, che rappresenta
"il governo Creato presso il Comando della 2° Armata
"per tutte le questioni attinenti alla zona demilitari-
"zata della Croazia in cui le nostre Autorità militari
"esercitano i poteri civili, ha diretto al predetto Co-
"mando il seguente provvedimento:

"In relazione a quanto già esposto nel nostro
"comunicato N° 51 del 18/11/1941, riguardante la lotta
"contro la criminalità criminale-comunista nei distretti
"di Vinj, Livno e Bosansko Grabovo, comuniciamo che il
"Vescovo di Spalato, accogliendo caldamente l'istanza
"del clero cattolico di quei e regioni, già comunicat-
"vi, fa l'ulteriore proposta, che si dichiari resp:

..f..

Letter from the office of the Italian Governor of Dalmatia dated Dec. 3, 1941,
announcing that Bishop Bonifacio of Split proposes to punish the families of
Partisans.

Prijedor by courier and carrier pigeon. Franciscan Vendelin Gasman, head of the monastery in Bjelovar, at his hearing October 2, 1945, revealed how he became an agent of the Gestapo. Among other things, he said: "Knowing very well the surrounding territory of Budrovac and being in good relations with members and sympathizers of the National Liberation Movement, who looked upon me with confidence, not knowing that I was in Gestapo service, I was able to find many active members of the National Liberation Movement. . . I chose the most active collaborators of the National Liberation Movement and gave their names to the Gestapo officers in Bjelovar. I reported Bogdan Goldmajer, Mijo Magic and Grinfeld. They were imprisoned in March, 1944, by the German Army."

PRAISE FOR GERMANY

In November, 1943, Army Chaplain, Captain Teobald Takac, at the conclusion of the celebration of Military Week and after the swearing in of recruits, spoke of the services rendered by the Ustashi soldiers fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Germans. The newspaper "Granicar" of November 12, 1944, carried his speech in full. Among other things, he said:

"Our heroes stood out on the Eastern front in the course of all great battles. At Stalingrad the soldiers of the Croatian infantry regiment even lived to see that epic end of the battle with the encircled VI German Army of General Field Marshal Paulus. With their blood and lives they sealed their loyalty to their great German ally."

On the occasion of the departure of the Pavelic Navy for the Black Sea to fight with its German Ally against the Soviet Army a celebration was held in Zagreb which was attended by members of the Catholic hierarchy, headed by Archbishop Stepinac and the Papal Legate Dr. Ramiro Marccone. A photograph of this celebration was published in many Catholic papers.

Archbishop Stepinac never missed an opportunity to stress the significance of the Ustashi state both in his speeches to the faithful and in his use of the authority of his position. "Katolicki List" of March 19, 1942, carries a speech which he delivered to Catholic university students, reading in part as

follows: "This is the first time that I speak to you from this platform since the dream of your youth has come true and the Independent State of Croatia has become a reality—for which the bones of innumerable heroes of our people have rotted away."

Archbishop Stepinac frequently participated in Ustashi celebrations. "Hrvatski Narod" of April 11, 1942, reported that he took part in a parade of Ustashi military units celebrating the first anniversary of the puppet state. Before the parade Stepinac celebrated a solemn mass which was attended by Pavelic and the Axis diplomatic representatives. The Arch-



Archbishop Stepinac (arrow) is present as a naval unit is blessed before departing for fighting on the Eastern front.

bishop welcomed Pavelic at the entrance to the church on this occasion and escorted him inside.

"Hrvatski Narod" of March 13, 1942, reported that in connection with the celebration of the Pope's crowning, following the solemn mass in the Cathedral Archbishop Stepinac gave a reception in his palace which was attended by many members of the Ustashi government and by Axis diplomats. He did not miss this opportunity to praise the quisling regime, while an Ustashi military band played in the street outside.

Two days later the "Hrvatski Narod" reported that Archbishop Stepinac held a Thanksgiving Mass on the occasion of the third anniversary of the quisling Slovakian state.

Following the pattern set by Archbishop Stepinac, "Katolicki Tjednik," the organ of "Catholic Action," wrote in its issue of April 5, 1942:

"Upon the anniversary of the founding of the Independent State of Croatia, we Catholics will piously clasp our hands and pray to God to let his blessing fall upon our land and our people. Of the individual leaders of our state, the main subject of our prayers and sacrifices will be our Chieftain, Ante Pavelic."

"Glasnik Biskupije Bosanske i Sremske" No. 9, on April 15, 1942, said:

"Every thought of our State independence is closely tied to the name of Ante Pavelic. We must admit that those basic principles upon which the life of our new state must develop are in agreement with the principles of God, nature and positive justice."

Two archbishops, Stepinac and Saric, and one bishop used the inauguration of the new Bishop of Mostar as an occasion for a special pro-Ustashi manifestation. According to two Catholic periodicals, "Katolicki Tjednik" of October 25, 1942, and "Vrhbosna," Nos. 9-10, 1942, the new bishop, Cule, stated in his address that his task was "to cooperate as closely as possible with the Ustashi authorities, to work loyally to strengthen the Independent State of Croatia, and to support with all means the Chieftain, Ante Pavelic." Music was provided by several bands and the choir sang the Ustashi song and the state hymn, while the audience stood at attention with arms stretched out in fascist salute, according to these Catholic publications.

According to "Novi List" of March 8, 1942, Archbishop Saric sent instructions to the clergy to support the Ustashi authorities in all their efforts. The Archbishop often expressed his deep devotion to Dr. Pavelic and he was a most intimate friend of the Ustashi executioners, Dr. Viktor Gutic and Juro Francetic, commander of the "Black Legion." He used the Ustashi salute and employed every opportunity to glorify the Chieftain and the Ustashi regime. "Novi List" of November 10, 1942, reported a speech in which Archbishop Saric said:

"The good Lord loves the Croatian people whose slogan is God and the Croatians. In order to be such we must follow the example of our noble Chieftain,

who can serve as a model to us in every way, including religion. For that purpose you can pray and commend yourself to God with whose help along with that of our great and dear allies we will finally be victorious. With faith in God let us, therefore, always be ready for the Chieftain and for the fatherland."

In connection with the first anniversary of the Independent State, Archbishop Saric published an article in the Sarajevo "Novi List" in which he glorified the Chieftain and expressed his complete loyalty to him and to Ustashi principles. He added that the Chieftain fills every heart with light and love for the fatherland and that he "lives and works as an apostle." The article concluded: "He was given to us by God in whom he, as a man of God, has faith. We have to thank Providence for having given him to us."

Saric's golden jubilee as a priest gave Ustashi authorities and followers another opportunity for manifesting their Ustashi ideology. Saric himself on this occasion published an article in "Hrvatski Narod" of July 30, 1944, entitled: "Thanks to God and to the Poglavnik."

According to the organ of the Split-Makarska bishopric, Nos. 1-5, January-May, 1944, Bishop Bonifacic, of Split, gave a sermon in the cathedral on April 11, 1944, in which he said:

"Today the Croatian people are celebrating their great holiday, the anniversary of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. We should be proud of our state, established by the unselfish work of our Chieftain. This state manifests our only political salvation, our true Croatian national life and our resurrection."

Bishop Aksamovic of Djakovo received a medal from one of Pavelic's delegates, who, in presenting it observed that "His Excellency the Bishop has from the very beginning cooperated with the Ustashi authorities." According to "Hrvatski List" of April 28, 1944, the bishop answered with a speech full of devotion to the Chieftain and the Ustashi regime, concluding: "A few days ago the Chieftain told the people clearly that the Croatian state exists and will remain in existence, and we will add: Every Croatian, young and old, lives for Croatia and will die for Croatia. In that company you will have your bishop."

Neither the capitulation of Italy nor the growing strength of the National Liberation Movement caused the Catholic Episcopate to change its pro-Ustashi and pro-Axis policies. The worse the situation became for the Axis the more firmly Archbishop Stepinac and the Episcopate defended the existence of the Ustashi regime. In his report of May 18, 1943, Stepinac implored the Pope to do something for the rescue of Croatia. Thus, throughout the war, Archbishop Stepinac and a considerable part of the higher and lower clergy bound the fate of the Catholic Church in Croatia to that of the Axis and the Ustashi regime.

12. At the End of the Rope

When Hitler's fascist fortress began to crumble under attacks from the Allies and when the quisling Pavelic had to flee, Archbishop Stepinac undertook all possible measures to relieve the situation for the Ustashi and to help them.

On the insistence of the Ustashi authorities Archbishop Stepinac held a bishops' conference on March 24, 1945, from which emanated a pastoral letter to the Croatian people. The letter defended the criminal policies of Ante Pavelic during the war and sharply attacked the National Liberation Movement as bolshevistic and anti-religious.

It was supposed that the pastoral letter would raise the morale of Pavelic's Croatia, a morale falling because of the swift progress of the Allied armies on all sides. The president of the Ustashi government, Dr. Nikola Mandic, in a hearing before the court, said that Pavelic and the Ustashi government expected great results from the action of the Episcopate. They hoped that the situation would change, and especially that Germany would use her "secret weapons," about which there was much talk. Furthermore, it was supposed that the pastoral letter would have an effect on the Americans and English as well, by emphasizing the battle of the Croatian people was an ideological struggle against "bolshevism," and convincing them of the necessity of retaining the Independent State of Croatia in one form or another.

As the situation for Pavelic and the Ustashi became more difficult, Archbishop Stepinac came to be regarded as the last hope by all those elements that wished to save the Independent State of Croatia. Ten days before the collapse of the Ustashi regime Pavelic asked Stepinac to take over authority. Ste-

P o g l a v n i č e :

Slobodan sam obratiti se na Vas u slijedećoj stvari:

Oo. trapisti morali su napustiti svoj samostan u Rajhenburgu i sada se nalaze kao bezdomci, privremeno kao gosti, kod svoje subraće u samostanu "Marija Zvijezda" u Banja Luci. Budući pak da bi oni vrlo rado osnovali svoj vlastiti samostan negdje u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj, to Vas, Poglavniče, uljudno molim, da bi im podijelili kakvo mjesto, kakvu kuću i nešto zemljišta, da bi mogli urediti svoj vlastiti samostan.

Rea trapista je kontemplativan red, koji se svojim pokorničkim životom, molitvom i postom dozivlje blagoslov s neba.

Trapisti se bave također poljodjelstvom i industrijom i tako mogu mnogo dobra učiniti za svu okolicu, dajući najljepši primjer: skoro treba racionalno obradivati zemlju i izrabiti sve njezine moći, tako da može i u tom pogledu osobito poljodjelac i industrijalac mnogo korisnog naučiti za se i za opće dobro.

Samostan oo. trapista odgaja mladež za samostanski naraštaj, i podučava ih u raznim obrtima. Već u Rajhenburgu su imali više članova hrvatske narodnosti, a i sada se nalazi u njihovu samostanu nekoliko članova hrvatske narodnosti. S vremenom bi se podporom Državnih Vlasti mogla osnovati gospodarska škola.

Budući da su oo. trapisti u Rajhenburgu sve izgubili, to su sada bez ikakvih sredstava i razumljivo je, da oni ne bi mogli plaćati sada ni stan ni zemlju. U Rajhenburgu su oo. trapisti imali 380 hektara dobre zemlje ubrojivši u to i šumu, a naravno da bi se oni zadovoljili sada i s manjom količinom.

./.

Gospodin

Dr. Ante P a v e l i ć ,

Poglavnik Nezavisne Države Hrvatske

Z A G R E B .

A letter from Archbishop Stepinac petitioning Ante Pavelic, Nazi puppet ruler of Croatia, to let Trappist monks take over the Serbian Orthodox Monastery in Orahovica. (Continued on next page.)

U Rajhenburgu je bilo u samostanu 80 redovnika i 12
pitomaca i oko 10 sluga. U Banja Luci ih je sada 30 ,nekoliko ih
je još u Rajhenburgu, a neki su raspršeni po raznim stranama, a
nadaju se, da će se svi opet sastati u zajedničkoj samostanskoj o-
bitelji. Možda bi im se mogao dati srpski samostan u Orahovici
(nekad samostan naših Pavlina).

Čast mi je najtoplije preporučiti Vam, Poglavniče, da se
oo. trapisti smjeste u ovoj nadbiskupiji i da budu tako u duhovnu
i privrednu korist nadbiskupiji i u blagodat čitave Hrvatske
Države Hrvatske.

Izvolite, Poglavniče, i ovom zgodom primiti izraz mog
osobitoga poštovanja.

U Zagrebu, dne 3. listopada 1941.



L. Aljibegović
Nadbiskup.

pinac requested time to think it over, and began consultations regarding the offer. In the meantime the debacle came quickly. When the Ustashi had to flee Zagreb in disorder before attacking Yugoslav armies, they again turned to Stepinac with the request that he recommend their cause to the Holy See. Many Ustashi ministers, such as Canki, Balen and Petric, left their personal belongings in the care of Archbishop Stepinac, and Minister Alajbegovic* buried the files of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Archbishop's palace. When the last hopes for continuing the Independent State of Croatia vanished, Archbishop Stepinac helped highranking Ustashi functionaries, such as Mintas, Smerdel, Suklje, Maric and others, go into hiding.

13. Sharing the Spoils

After the liberation of Yugoslavia the official War Crimes Commission established that one part of the Catholic clergy had used the Ustashi terror not only to force the Eastern Or-

* Extradited by Anglo-American authorities; condemned to death in Zagreb June 7, 1947.

thodox Serbs to accept the Roman faith, but also to obtain possession of the property of the Orthodox Church. This is how it was done.

In June, 1941, the Ustashi Prime Minister issued a decree, No. 11689, which set up an "Office on Religious Affairs." This office was in charge of "all matters pertaining to questions connected with the conversion of the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church." Pavelic appointed his intimate friend, priest Dionizije Juricev, as Chief of the Religious Office. Juricev was a member of the Franciscan order, and one of the oldest sworn members of the Ustashi. He had shared exile with Pavelic. The transfer of confiscated property of the Eastern Orthodox Church to the Roman Catholics was made in a "legal" manner through the Office of Religious Affairs. Rich monasteries, valuable real estate, many Orthodox Churches and a great volume of religious art and treasure thus passed to the Roman Church. The greatest share went to the Order of the Franciscans, who had played a leading part in extermination of the Serbs. In 1941 Pavelic gave to the Franciscan Province of St. Cyril and Methodius in Zagreb the great estate of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Pakrac. The Franciscans moved into the building of the Pakrac Serbian Bishop and from there managed the estate. On October 29, 1941, Pavelic gave the property of the Serbian church in Gospic to the Franciscans of Zagreb.

According to a letter from the Ordinariat of the Bishopric of Djakovo No. 2733/942 of June 8, 1942, twenty-eight Serbian churches had been changed into Catholic churches by that time in the territory of that Bishopric alone.

Archbishop Stepinac himself petitioned Dr. Pavelic to permit the Trappist monks to take over the Serbian Orthodox Monastery in Orahovica, which was confiscated by the Ustashi authorities. A photostat copy of this petition, dated September 3, 1941, bearing the signature of Archbishop Stepinac, is reproduced on pages 80-81.

Much of the loot, including art objects, church articles, gold and precious stones, was never recovered. One incident in particular must be mentioned. After the liberation of Zagreb, Yugoslav authorities found in the crypt of the Franciscan monastery on the Kaptol in Zagreb—very close to the Archbishop's quarters—36 boxes of gold which had been stolen from victims of the Ustashi. Among the articles were

watches, bracelets, earrings, gold teeth, pendants, etc. These boxes were concealed under the bones of long-dead Franciscans. The gold was hidden, it was later established, by the priest Radoslav Glavas acting in agreement with the head of the Franciscans, Modest Martincic, and the head of the Monastery Father Klemen and with the knowledge of Archbishop Stepinac.*

14. The Conspiracy against the Yugoslav Republic

In April 1941—while the Royal Yugoslav Army was still fighting—Archbishop Stepinac joined the enemy. After the liberation of Yugoslavia in 1945, however, he not only did not participate in the work of reconstructing the country but maintained a hostile attitude toward the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia.

Scattered Ustashi groups, hiding in the woods after liberation, soon established contact with the Archbishop's quarters through local curates. The secretary of Dr. Stepinac, priest Viktor Salic, kept the groups in touch with one another.

In the fall of 1945 Pavelic sent to Yugoslavia from abroad one of his most trusted lieutenants, the former Ustashi chief of police, Colonel Erik Lisak. Col. Lisak entered Yugoslavia illegally through Trieste. There he immediately got in touch with the Archbishop's secretary Salic, and thus was able to meet Stepinac. In the Archbishop's quarters he received information regarding the location of the remnants of the Ustashi groups, to whom he sent orders to increase their terrorist activities. On receipt of these directions the Ustashi terrorists launched a program of sabotage and assassination of officials of the new Yugoslav Republic, hoping to render consolidation impossible. One of those killed was Colonel Omerovic, and an attempt was made to assassinate Lt. Colonel Klobocnik.

To camouflage their activities, these groups adopted a "new" name—The Crusaders. Actually this was the name under which they had worked legally in pre-war Yugoslavia. Again the Catholic church became the basis that enabled them to work out their schemes. After the collapse of the puppet state Pavelic and a large number of accused Yugoslav war criminals found refuge in Italy, some of them in various churches and monasteries. From there directives were given to the remnants of the Ustashi-Crusader groups in Yugoslavia.

* See picture on page 92.

The quarters of Archbishop Stepinac became the control center for contacts between these Ustashi-Crusader groups. In the Archbishop's headquarters help was collected for the Crusaders in the woods. All kinds of aid, including medicine and sanitary materials, were dispatched. The Archbishop's secretary, Dr. Salic, helped people to the woods; he sent the Ustashi ensign Safet Pajic to the woods after Pajic had entered Yugoslavia illegally from Italy. A flag was consecrated to the Ustashi-Crusader forces in the chapel of the Archbishop's quarters.

It is significant that the meeting between Archbishop Stepinac and the Ustashi chief of police, Col. Lisak, who had entered Yugoslavia illegally, took place just at the time of the Bishop's Conference in Zagreb at which a pastoral letter was issued. This pastoral letter, of September, 1945, was directed against the federal authorities in Yugoslavia and sought to arouse to action all enemies of the new Yugoslav Republic. The role this pastoral letter played can be judged from the encouragement it gave to the Ustashi groups. Some of the



Crusaders banner blessed in the chapel of the Archbishop of Zagreb after liberation.

captured Crusaders admitted it was their most important propaganda weapon in the battle against the national authorities. The Franciscan Kruno Miklic said at his hearing on January 15, 1946:

“I began working to organize the Crusaders after the Pastoral letter was issued, when I saw what our religious leaders thought of the present government.”

In the fall of 1945 Pavelic sent the notorious Ustashi criminal General Moskov to Yugoslavia to help Lisak in the task of activating the Ustashi-Crusader groups. On his arrival General Moskov immediately got in touch with Archbishop Stepinac. To help Moskov in his travels through the country the Archbishop's headquarters obtained five travel permission cards and sent them to him by Dr. Gulin. Dr. Gulin disclosed after his capture that Moskov had told him the Bishops' Conference was the greatest event in the Ustashi struggle after the fall of the Independent State of Croatia. When he did not succeed in his mission, General Moskov went back to Pavelic. Before his return he gave Dr. Gulin a letter for Archbishop Stepinac, in which he thanked the Archbishop and bade him “defend firmly the cause of justice and faith.” All this was brought out at the Stepinac trial in Zagreb.

Help for the terrorist work of the Crusader bands did not come from the Zagreb Archbishop's quarters alone, but from other Catholic religious centers throughout Yugoslavia as well. The Archbishop's ordinariat in Sarajevo also played the role of an organizer of terrorist Crusader organizations in Bosnia and Hercegovina. There the main organizers were the Sarajevo Archbishop's deputy, canon Marko Alaupovic; Franciscan Ljudevit Josic, from Tuzla; Reverend Ivan Cindric, who organized the Crusader groups in Zenica and Busolac. Franciscan Franjo Slafhauzen drew up a plan for the terrorist attack by the Crusaders on the railroad station Semizovac near Sarajevo. Franciscan Valerijan Voloder printed Crusader leaflets in the Franciscan monastery in Sarajevo. Franciscan Ante Kozina forged travel permits and sent them to the Crusaders in the woods to facilitate their movement throughout the country. Franciscan Kruno Miklic formed Crusader terrorist organizations in Vares.

How various priests took advantage of their positions to work for the Crusaders can be seen from the case of Fran-

ciscan Mamerto Margetic. Franciscan Margetic was the economist of the Zagreb Franciscan monastery. Under the pretext of collecting food, Margetic travelled from one end of the country to the other keeping the various illegal Crusader groups in communication with one another and giving them directives. Thus he got in touch with a Crusader group which worked in the Virovitice region of Slavonia, and then with terrorist groups in the regions of Slavonski Brod, Nova Gradiska, and even with a Ustashi-Crusader group in Lika. In an effort to keep his work secret he used another name—Veseli. Captured Crusaders and Ustashi said at their hearings that a Franciscan named Veseli told them they must hold out because the English and Americans would soon come to Yugoslavia and liquidate the existing government.

Not even the honorable Sisters were excluded from this conspiracy of one section of the Catholic clergy in Yugoslavia. The Sisters Brigita Jurkovic, Karitoza Caleta and Teofanija Djaja collected sanitation materials and sent them to an Ustashi-Crusader group in Papuk. Sisters Marija Diosi, Josipa Hrastek and Marija Martinec from Zagreb collected sanitary materials and sent them to an Ustashi-Crusader group on the mountain of Ivancic.

As to Archbishop Stepinac's aims, an interview that he gave to a British liaison officer, eighteen months before his trial, may be quoted. This officer's report published in the *New Statesman* and *Nation* in London, read in part:

“As I recently had an opportunity of visiting Archbishop Stepinac in Zagreb, I have followed the reports on his trial with great interest.

“Eighteen months ago, while serving as a British Liaison Officer in Yugoslavia, I read in the German-controlled press and heard over the Zagreb radio the call of Archbishop Stepinac to his people to rally to the crumbling Croat State and resist the Allied armies which were advancing towards final victory. A few weeks later Zagreb was freed, Pavelic had fled and the archbishop remained.

“Back in Zagreb a year later, I was surprised, in view of the many changes which had taken place in Yugoslavia, to find that Mgr. Stepinac was still Primate of Croatia. I called on him in his palace and

he talked with me alone for over an hour. He told me frankly that he and those of his priests who had collaborated with the Germans had done so because this issue in the war had been a clear one, between Fascism and Communism; he had chosen the former while Britain had chosen the latter. He regretted the horrors of the Nazi occupation, but he preferred them to the present Federal regime.

"He assured me that, though many might now be infatuated with the new regime, the peasants would one day rise, and he looked to the West to use its atomic power to impose Western civilization on Moscow and Belgrade before it was too late."

Not only the Ustashi themselves, but their supporters in other parts of the world, including the United States, persist in their intrigues against Yugoslavia. As recently as May, 1947, a group of nine priests sent Secretary of State Marshall a petition "on behalf of the American Croatian Catholic Clergy in the United States." Among the signers was Nicholas Sulentic of Waterloo, Iowa, vice-president of the Croatian National Representation for Independence of Croatia—an organization whose activities were considered so harmful to America's war effort that it and its newspaper, "Nezavisna Hrvatska Drzava," were suppressed during the war by the F.B.I. The petition sought American intervention on behalf of fugitive Ustashi war criminals.

Sulentic and his organization have always been a part of the fascist-Ustashi movement, and in 1935 distributed in the United States a leaflet (page 88) soliciting funds on behalf of three men sentenced to life imprisonment for the Barthou-King Alexander assassinations. The leaflet featured a photograph of Ante Pavelic.

15. The Stepinac Trial

Archbishop Stepinac was arrested in Zagreb on September 18, 1946, on charges of having participated in a conspiracy against the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia. Evidence against Stepinac had accumulated during the course of other trials, especially that of a number of priests accused of having been in close contact with Pavelic and other war criminals in foreign countries. These priests had plotted

“Thus, on April 12, 1941, while battles were still being fought against the German and Italian aggressors, he visited the ‘Comander of the Army’ Slavko Kvaternik, and congratulated him on the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia; on April 16, 1941, he officially visited the criminal Pavelic. During the first days of the occupation he gave in the archbishop’s quarters a dinner to Ustashi emigrants and had his picture taken with them. On April 28, 1941, he issued an official circular to the clergy in the Zagreb archbishopric calling upon the priests to collaborate with the traitors, and told them to influence their parishioners to support the Independent State of Croatia. On June 26, 1941, as chairman of the bishops’ conference, after a session at which it was decided to give wholehearted support to the Ustashi authorities, he led a group of Catholic bishops in an audience with Pavelic, and on that occasion greeted this fascist agent as head of the Independent State of Croatia and promised him sincere and loyal cooperation.

“Thus the defendant Stepinac even during the first days of the occupation of our country helped the occupier and the Ustashi, collaborated with them and called upon his clerical subordinates to collaborate with them as well, which hundreds of priests did very actively. He therefore set many priests and believers on a road which ended with treason and betrayal of their country and brought about many war crimes.

“The collaboration stand, work and declarations of the defendant Stepinac made easier the treason of those Ustashi priests who had already been with the Ustashi and incited many other priests to participate in the disarming of the Yugoslav Army, to take over and to organize Ustashi authority, to organize Ustashi commissions, camps, and even Ustashi militia, and so on.

“The Catholic press during the occupation was completely in line with the work and declarations of the defendant Stepinac who, as chairman of the bishops’ conference and chairman of Catholic Action, had supreme control over the writing of the entire

Catholic press in Yugoslavia. In that capacity he actively influenced the way this press wrote, and approved and supported its stand against the Yugoslav people.

“The Catholic press propagated fascism even before the war, as well as other undemocratic programs. From the very beginning to the very end of the occupation this press was pointed in one direction—making propaganda for the fascists and Ustashi, and praising Hitler and Pavelic. This press was full of slander and lies against the National Liberation Movement and sowed the seeds of national, religious and race hatred. How far these activities went can be seen from newspapers such as those that were directed to children and to the youth, ‘Andjeo Cuvar’ (The Angel Guardian), ‘Glasnik Sv. Josipa’ (St. Joseph’s Courier), ‘Crnce’ (The Little Negro), ‘Glasnik Sv. Ante’ (St. Anthony’s Courier), ‘Mali Vrtic’ (The Little Garden), and so on. Many of Pavelic’s pictures were published in these newspapers, and he and his Ustashi were praised and described as God’s missionaries, the executors of God’s providence, and of God’s justice. In this manner the minds of young people were poisoned. From the children’s and youth newspapers up to the adult ones, the newspapers, weeklies, official organs such as ‘Katolicki List’, ‘Katolicki Tjednik’, ‘Bosna Iznad Svega’ (Bosnia Above All), ‘Nedelja’ and so on contained continuous and inflexible propaganda for the Ustashi and fascists, most energetically defended the Pavelic regime and the occupiers, and called upon the people to fight against the National Liberation Movement and the Allies.

“This entire press, under the top leadership of the defendant Stepinac, industriously took note of all the activities of clerical fascist organizations which were in favor of the occupiers and the Ustashi.

“Various Catholic organizations from the group Catholic Action, of which the defendant Stepinac was president, Great Crusaders Brotherhood, Great Crusaders Sisterhood, Domagoj, etc., answered the call of the defendant Stepinac to collaborate with the Ustashi. They became pith and pillar of Ustashism.

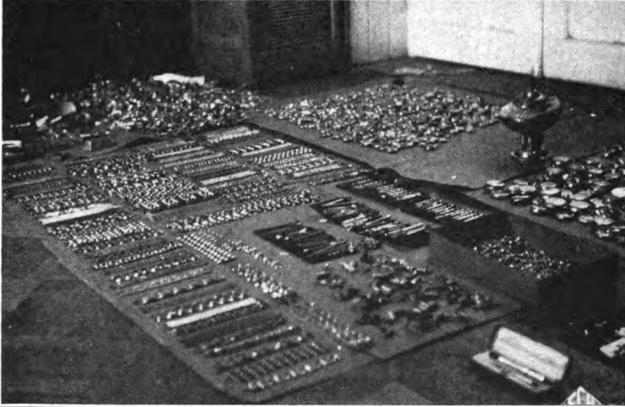
The members of these organizations participated in disarming the Yugoslav Army, established Ustashi authorities, and many of them became functionaries in Ustashi commissions, camps, concentration camps and district councils. Many officers of Pavelic's army were recruited from their ranks and the majority of priests in the Crusaders organizations volunteered for Ustashi and Domobran army units. The president of the Great Crusaders' Brotherhood himself, Dr. Feliks Niedzelski, became an Ustashi vice district chief and administrative head for Ustashi youth.

"The defendant Stepinac upheld and approved such activities on the part of the Crusaders organizations. Many organizers of massacres of the Serbian and Croatian populations came from the ranks of the Crusaders.

"The defendant Stepinac misused even traditional religious ceremonies and turned them into political manifestations for the criminal Pavelic and the Ustashi. This can be seen from the organizations for which he held such ceremonies and by the sermons which he gave.

"At the beginning of 1941 and until liberation, the defendant Stepinac held holy masses every April 10th to celebrate the Independent State of Croatia, and transformed the church holiday of Saint Anthony into a political manifestation for the criminal Pavelic.

"The defendant Stepinac used every possible way during the war and enemy occupation to express his solidarity with the German and Italian conqueror, participating in many official functions, celebrations and congratulations which the representatives of the German and Italian occupation authorities prepared in Zagreb. Thus, for instance, he attended the opening of University Week for German and Croatian soldiers in company with the Ustashi government and German generals led by General Gleise von Horstenau; and also the opening of the Zagreb convention with German, Italian and Ustashi functionaries; as well as the anniversary of the fascist march on Rome, and so forth.



Loot from Ustashi Victims

Top, watches by the handful; center, an assortment; below, coins by the shovelful—all found hidden in Franciscan Monastery in Zagreb.

(See pages 82-83)

“When the Ustashi threatened the Serbs in Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina with massacre unless they joined the Catholic faith, Stepinac accepted this and ‘rechristened’ tens of thousands of Serbs, who had a knife at their throat. In this way he approved and incited the Ustashi to commit further crimes.

“In numerous cases those ‘rechristened’ were later killed in spite of the fact that they had passed into the Catholic faith. In many cases groups of them were killed even as they gathered to be ‘rechristened’.

“During such ‘rechristenings’ of the Serbs, a plenary session of the Catholic episcopacy was held on November 17, 1941, under the chairmanship of the defendant Stepinac. At this meeting Stepinac and the other bishops not only did not condemn but on the contrary accepted the Ustashi ‘rechristenings’ and gave canonic sanction to this revolting war crime.

“At the beginning of 1942 the Vatican appointed the defendant Stepinac apostolic army vicar for Pavelic’s Ustashi and Domobran, and the defendant Stepinac accepted this duty and appointed as his deputies the famous Ustashi priests Stipa Vucetic and Vilim Cecelja. Thus the defendant Stepinac officially became the highest military clergyman in Pavelic’s army. All other army priests were subordinate to him and these are the priests who in the ranks of Ustashi and Domobran formations incited the soldiers to commit crimes or themselves committed crimes against the people.

“Before the fall of the Independent State of Croatia the defendant Stepinac kept the files of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Croatia as well as papers from the Chieftain’s office in the Archbishop’s headquarters. He did this with the intent of hiding them and in agreement with Pavelic. Besides this, the defendant Stepinac hid phonograph records containing all of Pavelic’s speeches in the Archbishop’s quarters. These records were found carefully concealed among the files of the Archbishop’s Spiritual Board in Zagreb.

“Early in the spring of 1945 the Yugoslav Army

finally liberated our country from the occupiers and was cleaning them out. Pavelic, Macek, Stepinac and all anti-people's elements could see the evident fall of the Axis. They made a plan for the renewed occupation of our country by other foreign powers, and in that way planned to overthrow the people's government which had already been established throughout Yugoslavia.

"The Ustashi government found itself in a terrible position. It drew up a memorandum which was submitted to the Supreme Allied Command for the Mediterranean asking for occupation. . . . Thus they represented the situation in Yugoslavia as a civil war to the Allies, and on the basis of that asked for intervention. According to the plan, contact with Anglo-American armies was to be made as soon as possible.

"The defendant Stepinac was active in these plans. He met with Pavelic, talked with Pavelic's delegates Alajbegovic, Edo Bulat and others, and in that connection went to visit Macek* with Moskov.

"The defendant Stepinac, remaining in the country after the liberation, had a systematic plan for sustaining the hope that the 'regime' (as he called it) would soon change. . . .

"On September 19, 1945, the defendant Stepinac received in his Archbishop's quarters the Ustashi colonel and former director for public security, Erich Lisak, and on September 17 and October 3, 1945, he received two letters from the Ustashi colonel Ante Moskov. Both Lisak and Moskov came illegally from abroad to organize, activate and gather together the scattered Crusader groups. On November 8, 1945, Stepinac received an Ustashi student-emigrant who brought him from Salzburg 'The Pledge of Ustashi Intellectuals' that they would fight on for the liberation of the Croatian people. He also received the spy Lela Sopijanec, who went illegally to and from Trieste

*Vladimir Macek, former leader of the Croat Peasant Party, remained in Croatia under the Pavelic regime, fleeing the country when the Germans were driven out. Macek established contact with Mussolini as early as 1939, and arranged for fascist Italy to pay 20,000,000 dinars to finance his Croat separatist plot. (See "The Ciano Diaries," foreword by Sumner Welles, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1946, pages 46, 48, 50, 60, 87, 88, 91)

several times with messages for him. He approved of and covered up the terroristic activities of his secretary, Ivan Salic. and the priest Josip Simec who, encouraged by the attitude and activities of the defendant Stepinac, created a terrorist organization together with Dr. Pavle Gulin and Josip Crnkovic, which organization served as a center for the various terrorist groups in the country, and helped them."

* * *

The evidence produced by the state prosecutor in support of these charges consisted of files of the Catholic press, confiscated letters and reports and the sworn statements and testimony of numerous witnesses.

On the basis of the evidence Archbishop Stepinac was found guilty of collaboration with the enemy and of conspiracy against the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia.

The manner in which Archbishop Stepinac conducted himself during the trial should be noted. No serious attempt was made to deny the charges. The argument with which Stepinac most frequently contented himself was that he could not be held accountable for misdeeds of the lower clergy, and that in any case he was responsible only to God. With the world press in attendance at the trial, Archbishop Stepinac thus failed to take advantage of an unequalled opportunity to state his case and clear himself, if he felt able to, before mankind.

All officials participating in the trial were Croatians and Roman Catholics. Following the conviction, the Vatican excommunicated all persons who had taken part in or were considered responsible for the prosecution of the Archbishop, on the grounds that no member of the Catholic clergy could be prosecuted without consent of the Vatican.

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