

Serbia

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Jugoslavia

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Robert Cecil  
N.G.M.P. 2

# THE ENEMY IN SERBIA

DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO THE  
BULGARIAN ATROCITIES OF 1915-1918



1919  
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PARIS 1919.

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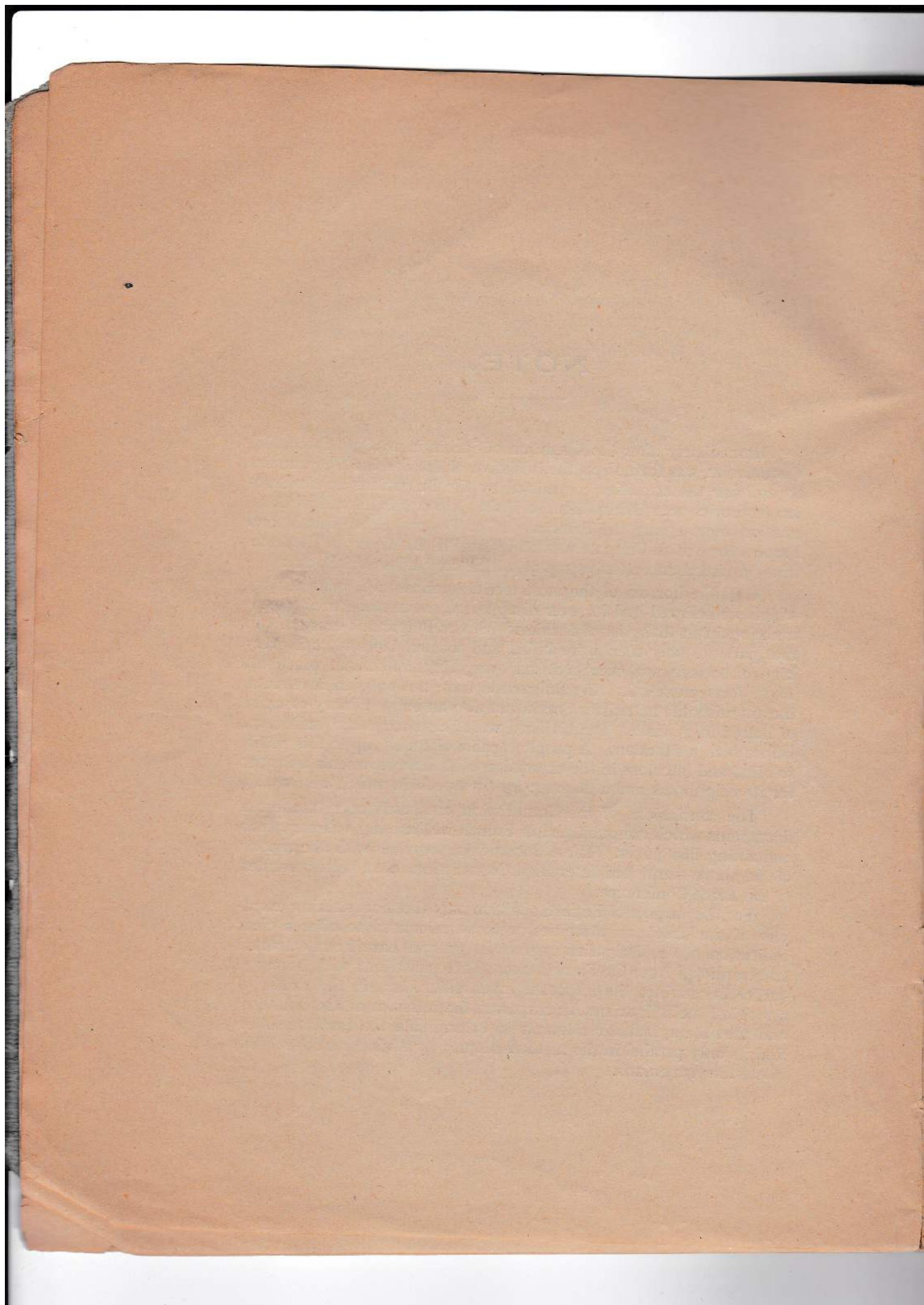
Immediately after the liberation of Serbia in 1918 an Interallied Commission was formed on the initiative of the Serbian Government to examine the atrocities committed by the Bulgarians in the Serbian territories occupied by them in 1915. Upon this Interallied Commission representing the Principle Allied Powers (Great Britain and France, the British Delegate was Lt.-Colonel H. B. Mayne. The Commission issued an extensive report which concludes as follows :

« All the horrors of the most terrible periods of human history which we believed had for ever disappeared, have made their appearance again in that part of Serbia which the Bulgarians crossed. In that part not only men were killed and women violated, but every kind of torture was exercised and every form of sadism practised. These facts proved that the Bulgarians have not only an inveterate, inextinguishable hatred for Serbia but also an extraordinary capacity of hatred in general. The civilized world cannot remain indifferent before such a situation. A people capable of hating up to this point, so blind and ferocious in the expression of its hate represents a danger for its neighbours and a disgrace for the epoch in which we live... »

The conclusions of the Commission are based upon numerous documents which are published in French in three big volumes, each containing 300 pages. These documents, together with the reports of the above mentioned Interallied Commission, have been presented to the Peace Conference.

For the purpose of English addition only the most striking examples of the Bulgarian atrocities or those calculated to offer a clear indication of the Bulgarian regime in general have been extracted and translated from the French text. These selections will, however, suffice to convince the impartial investigator that, in the matter of atrocities, the Bulgarians far surpassed the infamies of the Germans, and that the systematic attempts to exterminate the Serbian nation find its only parallel in the method adopted by Abdul-Hamid to annihilate the Armenians.







N° 1.

*The Delegate of the Serbian Minister for War  
to the Minister for War.*

I beg to forward you the following report.  
The Serbian prisoners of war are placed in two camps :

I. — On November 6th 1918, I visited Rouchtsouk :

a) *Reserve dépôts*

There were in this camp about 305 prisoners and interned civilians, and amongst them very aged people from various parts of our country, but for the most part from Macedonia and Old Serbia.

The lists of prisoners and interned civilians are quite inexact. The total number is unknown, also the exact number of those at present in the camps.

Half the prisoners are under cover, whilst the remainder sleep outside, on the ground, without protection.

Those who are under cover are already in a terrible state of misery and distress. The building where they are placed were built to contain cattle and not men. In one portion of these buildings which, in normal times, could only contain twenty men, a hundred have been placed. On account of this, the interior of the room is in a state of indelible dirtiness.

All the prisoners are nearly naked, without linen or clothing, and teeming with lice. The walls and floor are also covered with lice. Up to date, they have not had a bath, and their clothing has never been disinfected. The food is impossible : piments boiled in water, without meat, which latter is distributed to Bulgarian soldiers. Bread is distributed in insufficient quantities, just sufficient to keep them from dying of hunger.



All prisoners were beaten daily, even after the signature of the armistice. All, irrespective of age, have been obliged to do the most exhausting labour. Murders of prisoners had become quite an usual occurrence.

Prisoners had to find their own clothing and boots.

A representative of the Dutch Minister came several times to distribute money, but the Bulgarians always refused this, stating that they were not prisoners of war, but people come of their own free will to work.

*b) In the Camp Roussensko-Plenitchky Depot*

There are about 470 Serbian prisoners. Many Russians, Roumanians and Greeks. They were better in this camp, being all under cover, but in the same bad hygienic conditions. They also are beaten daily and horribly ill-treated; their food is very bad; they are without linen or clothing and full of lice.

The French have taken under their protection the Roumanian prisoners and attend to them and to their food. Questioned respecting the Serbian prisoners, the French colonel replied that he did not attend to them, having received no instructions on the subject.

The hospital is in a very bad state; badly fed, badly cared for, in fearful state of uncleanness, the prisoners wear the same clothing they wore in camp. This hospital is more like a cemetery.

In the town, as well as in the surrounding villages, are interned many private individuals, as well as whole families from all parts of our country.

Abandoned by everyone, badly ill-treated, they are thrown into military and civilian prisons, without having done anything to merit such treatment.

I have sent the following telegram to General Chretien :

« State of Serbian prisoners and interned civilians very critical. Please have them repatriated urgently. »

The new commander of the Bulgarian division at Rouchstshouk has never visited the camps, having, he states, but recently arrived at his post.

The French colonel informed me that a Belgian, owner of a Sugar Works, had been obliged to give our prisoners, employed in his Works, old sacks from which to make clothing, slippers and puttees, which were worn without linen underneath.



I have personally seen, accompanied by the British Major James Cunningham, our prisoners who were ill, whom the Bulgarians made to drag themselves from one hospital to another, about twenty in number, bare-footed, covered with rags, exhausted like living skeletons.

II. — On November 9th 1918, at Schoumen (Schoumla).

I visited this camp and saw the following :

a) In the Schoumen Depot, I found 79 soldiers, whom the Bulgarians forced to work until the 6th inst in the morning. The building in which they were lodged is in good condition. No officers in the camp : a Bulgarian N. C. O. being in command.

The prisoners are constatly beaten, assassinated and robbed. They state that a fortnight ago, the Bulgarians assassinated and robbed two in the water closet, whilst they were following the laws of nature. In January, at a railway station, they killed a Serbian officer, cutting off his head, and throwing the body of the unfortunate man, pierced with bayonet thrusts, into the street, near the station, in order that our prisoners might see it when passing. The body remained there for two days and was seen by all the soldiers in the camp. I have taken the names of two witnesses : Sima Lepojevitch of Brod, Vlassotinzi district, Vranje province, and Dragoutine Stevtshitch, of Sikirritza, Parachine district, Morava province.

The body of a soldier murdered at the station remained twenty days without burial, in a very advanced state of putrefaction. It was also seen by Mr and Mrs Georgeopoulos, Manager of the Cavalla Customs, who were interned, and by our soldiers.

Many of our countrymen were murdered during the year 1917, their murderers never being troubled.

The food of the prisoners is the same as in other camps, i. e. without meat, except the meat of some carrion.

The prisoner, Diha Izolitch was beaten and robbed of all his money, in all 2300 dinars.

b) *At Schoumen Lower Camp.*

In this camp, the interned civilians are more numerous than soldiers, and mixed with Greeks. The greater number are from Macedonia or Old Serbia and are in a sad state of misery. Forcibly ret-



ained, they are not fed, and have not even water to drink. In this camp, 20 of our soldiers were separated from the other prisoners, under pretext of quarantine. They related the following facts : on October 24th, a German, Manager of a Sugar Works situated about two hours from Schoumen, called at the camp to look for prisoners, preferably those who had already worked for him. These having refused to proceed to the works, where they had already been badly treated, were beaten by order of Captain Marin Petrov.

Sergeant Schteitch, of Markovitz, Kossanitz district, Toplitza province, was murdered at this works in October last, i. e. a few days after the signature of the armistice.

Fifteen of our soldiers, who were interned in the same camp as the above-mentioned twenty soldiers, were conducted to an unknown destination, and have not since been heard of. The general opinion is that they have been assassinated.

c) In the military prison, I saw about 100 prisoners in a lamentable state. They remained three days without food or drink and could hardly remain standing. These unfortunates are obliged to satisfy the laws of nature in the room in which they are imprisoned. The whole are lodged in two rooms, each of which has room for twenty men only.

At my request to release the said prisoners and send them to camp, the Commandant of the Bulgarian Division, contrary to his promise to accede to my request, immediately sent them to Dobritch, where I found them on my arrival.

d) In the civilian prison, there are also many of our soldiers.

e) Twenty Serbian prisoners are forcibly retained as attendants at the Schoumen Hospital. They have been constrained to sign a request stating that they wished to remain in Bulgaria. When giving me this statement, they however declared that they were impatiently awaiting the moment to return to their country.

f) Men and women are further interned in the towns. The Bulgarians had interned : Miss Militza Gregorievitch, teacher of Djiounis, simply because she was a teacher in Macedonia twenty five years ago, and Mrs Stanca Oubavkitch, teacher, of Skoplje. The latter was beaten and inhumanly ill-treated. I demanded that they be authorised to return with the other interned persons to Serbia.



III. — On November 10th and 11th 1918, at Varna.

Visit to the camp of our prisoners of war and interned civilians. Their situation is the same as everywhere else. They are starved, naked and also full of lice. Their food is horrible. They receive no meat. They are given 200 grammes of bread daily. A large number of these prisoners arrived from various parts of the Dobroudja, where they were employed in agriculture. They speak of the nameless atrocities and the bad treatment they received on the part of the military and civil authorities, and also on the part of the Dobroudja peasants who were guarding them. The exact number of these prisoners is unknown, but from a private source, it would appear that there are 8 to 10000 in the quadrilateral Rouchtshouk — Schoumen — Varna — Constanza. Their food was better than that of the prisoners in the towns. The work done was not paid for.

Seeing that Dobritch is a chief town, I sent Captain Dr Petrovitch from Schoumen to Dobritch, whilst Dr Tchevitch remains at Schoumen.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1° The state in which are our prisoners and interned civilians (men, women, children and aged persons) is desperate.

2° Assassinations, tortures, vexations of all natures, are daily and usual. The Bulgarians are working in a systematic manner to exterminate our population.

3° The military and civil authorities do not carry out orders received from Sofia.

4° Our populations is dispersed all over Bulgaria, in villages as well as in towns. It is placed under the supervision of the civil and military authorities, but in fact, no one looks after them. They are at the mercy of all.

5° The Bulgarian civilian and military prisons are overflowing with Serbian civilians, who are exposed to every ill-treatment. The Bulgarians allow them to die of hunger, and inflict corporal punishment on them.

6° The Bulgarians still oblige our prisoners to work for them to-day.



7° Serbians are also employed in the Bulgarian army. Those who escaped and were recaptured, were sent to hard labour.

8° The repatriation of our countrymen is rendered very difficult by the Bulgarians, whilst the trains in the direction of Sofia are crowded with Bulgarians.

9° The Bulgarian authorities, after having obliged our interned civilians (women, children and aged persons) to come to the railway stations, make them wait needlessly on the platform for ten or twenty days before sending them back to their country.

#### SUMMING-UP.

In order that all our countrymen may be reunited at the earliest possible moment, for repatriation, it is indispensable :

1° To appoint in all Bulgarian towns Commissions composed of allied and Serbian officers, in order to exercise a control over the Bulgarian authorities.

2° That the French military authorities uphold our cause to the best of their ability, and help our official commission.

November 15th 1918.

Sofia.

Signed : J.-C. CUNNINGHAM, \*

Major, Argyll & Sutherland H'landers.

Colonel Drag. T. NICOLAIEVITCH.

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#### N° 2.

*To the Interallied Enquiry Commission*

*Uskub.*

In my quality of member-expert of the Commission, the undersigned has inspected the religious buildings of Uskub and of certain villages of the wooded district of Uskub. As a result of this inspection, I beg to make the following report :

The Bulgarian authorities have endeavoured in three different ways to deteriorate the religious buildings in the occupied territory.



1° They destroyed or damaged these buildings with a view to render them useless for religious services.

This is the case with the Greek Church at Uskub. In this church, the whole of the interior is demolished and nothing remains of the furniture. The altar, the icon curtain, the tables, etc., have all been destroyed. The chair is also destroyed and the tiles have been broken and carried away. The church has in this way been profaned and rendered improper for religious services. The material damage must be estimated by experts.

2° The Bulgarians have profaned Mahommedan religious buildings by using them for all manner of profane uses, and by endangering the preservation of these buildings.

The Mosque of Iaia Pacha at Uskub may be taken as example. The Bulgarians first of all used it as a prison, then as a repair shop for automobiles. The damages can only be valued by experts.

3° The Serbian religious buildings, chiefly in the villages, appeared to have been used by the Bulgarians for two objects. Firstly, to destroy all which might awaken the conscience of the Serbian nation; secondly, to bring in elements which would tend to cause the populations of these villages to turn to Bulgarianism.

Thus at Koutchevichte, in the narthex of the church, at the northern side, they painted Saint Jean Ossogovski, after having effaced the former picture which probably represented one of the Serbian kings or saints. In the extra, or anterior, narthex, all the Serbian saints have been painted out. They then painted St Cyril and St Method, and on the northern wall « Boris, Emperor of the Bulgarians ». This has also been done in the churches of the villages of Poboujie, Glouch, Bagnan, Tchourtchere, etc.

To illustrate the acts of the Bulgarian authorities, the undersigned will cite the statement of Dimitri Tchelikitch, grocer at Tchourtchere, and caretaker of the church there.

Tchelikitch declares that the Bulgarian Metropolitan Neophyte sent him a written deed in which he ordered him to receive the painter Dimitri and carry out his orders. The painter Dimitri wished to paint three pictures in the church and demanded for this the sum of 300 levas. Tchelikitch declared that he had not this amount on account of the church funds. The painter then proceeded to Koutchevichte, where he saw the Police Commissioner Kole (Nicolas) pope Michailov, ex-coachman of Uskub and Bulgarian irregular, to whom he stated that he had not been able to arrange matter



with Tchelikitch. This commissioner then called Tchelikitch, and ordered him to tax the village for the necessary sum if the church could not pay. The money was however paid out of the church funds.

In order to propagate Bulgarianism, orders were given to paint in all visible places portraits or landscapes with Bulgarian inscriptions. Thus, over the door of St Archange Monastery, near the village of Koutchevichte, St George and St Michel were painted, with Bulgarian inscriptions, whilst in a special frame was placed the following inscription : restored in 1916, at the cost of Iossif D. Makarov. Below the frame, at the right, Vassil D-D Vassilov, painter. It is the same in the Bagnani Church, portraits of St Gabriel and St George appearing on the wall of the south side, with the inscription « Gift of Nedelko Petrov in 1918, in memory of his house and his child. Dimtche Vassev, painter. »

To complete the explanation of the Bulgarian objects, as regards the Serbian Church and their conduct towards same, the undersigned attaches here with the original statement of the painter Dimitri A. Papradichki. This statement was registered by the Commission sub. 140, December 13th 1918.

I also beg to inform the Commission that Mr Milan Boroievitch, Professor at Skoplie College, will continue the enquiry as per orders received, and will send his report of same.

Dated ad Uskub, December 14th 1918.

*Member-Expert of the Commission,*

(Signed) : Dr Miloie M. VASSITCH.

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### N° 3.

1) Statement by Lazare Doitchinovitch, 27 years of age, farmer, living at Lapotintsi, Jablanitza district.

In the month of March 1917, a revolt broke out in the Jablanitza district. It was caused by the acts of cruelty and the excesses committed by the Bulgarians : the latter called in the military to suppress the revolt. Finding it impossible to resist, the rebels disp-



ersed, but a portion of them was nevertheless captured by the Bulgarians, or surrendered : I was amongst them.

A short time afterwards, I returned to the employment of the Jablanitza Municipality, as postboy and postman.

During the following month of August, the Bulgarians took advantage of this to affirm that I knew the rebels and that I carried letters to them. They questioned me. I replied that I ignored what they asked me. To make me confess, they tortured me. The first time, I was taken to a square, undressed, laid flat on the ground, and whilst a soldier held my head, and another my feet, I received fifty blows with a stick on the back. The blows were very violent. The scene took place before all the inhabitants of the village of Lapotintsi. The torture over, I was able by crawling to regain my house, where I remained a fortnight without being able to remain upright, being obliged to remain constantly on my stomach.

Four weeks after this torture, I was again called up by the Bulgarians. They told me that I had hidden my gun at my house and that they knew that I was still bearing letters to the rebels. This pretext was as false as the former. I denied it. I was again tortured, in the school near the Municipal Buildings.

There, my arms were tied together and brought behind my back, so tightly that the blood poured from my hands and that I felt my chest crack and fainted. When I returned to myself, the Bulgarians asked me whether I had anything to say. I replied in the negative. Upon this, I was cast into prison and kept there three weeks. I was finally released, having said or admitted nothing.

2) Statement by Michaelo Stankowitch, aged 27, farmer, living at Lapotintsi, Jablanitza province.

I was taken prisoner by the Bulgarians in October 1916 and sent to Pirot. From there I managed to escape and regain my village of Lapotintsi where I was not troubled during the year 1916. In March 1917, there was a revolt at Jablanitza and in the neighbourhood. In June I was imprisoned and maintained in a dark cell for 56 days. The Bulgarian Authorities asked me whether I knew the rebels, being persuaded that I did so. I replied that I did not know them and was ignorant of the matter. I was released and regained my village. At the end of three days, a company of Bulgarian infantry, commanded by Lt. Philippoff, arrived in the village. This officer brought together all the inhabitants, men, women, children, and asked them



for information re. the rebels. As he had four names on a paper, of which mine was one — the others being two old men and Lazare Doitchinovitch — he immediately called us before him and asked us the names of the rebels, pretending that we must know them and that we supplied them with bread. We all replied that we did not know them. We were immediately bastinadoed, before all the inhabitants of the village, men, women and children. We were beaten with switches made of three rods joined together. We were naked, laid flat on the ground, face down. One man held our head and another our feet. I received fifty blows, on the back, the seat and the legs. During the torture, a man asked me to confess : I replied that I knew nothing. After the torture, I was taken to Lt Philippoff, who asked me to confess. I still replied that I knew nothing. This officer ordered the torture to be recommenced ; he remained a few steps away and watched the scene. I received a further thirty blows. Maddened by the pain, I cried « I will confess, I will confess, leave me alone. » Brought before the lieutenant, he asked me « Why allow yourself to be killed in this manner, you should have begun by confessing ». When I replied that I had nothing to say and that I had only promised to confess because I was weakened by the pain, he ordered that I should be killed by thrashing. I was again laid on the ground and beaten. I do not know the number of blows I received, or the time it took, as I fainted. Picked up in a fearful state, I was put in an ox-wagon and carried to the village of Bellanovtze, where I was imprisoned two days, then conducted to Gornje-Brianie, headquarters of a Bulgarian battalion. For three weeks I was kept in prison, without care or remedies, fed on a piece of bread every two days and a little water. I received no medical attention. After three weeks I was sent to Cosantitch, where a cavalry unit was stationed. There again I was thrown into prison. The following day, I was called by the Lt-Commander of Cavalry, Kacheff, who told me that he had heard from a certain source that I knew much about the rebels. Without thinking of my sufferings, and on my negative reply, he ordered me to have twenty-five blows, and kept me a fortnight in prison.

When I returned home, I immediately received a visit from a cavalry sergent of the mounted police. I was again beaten on the head with an animal's sinew, under pretext that I had not saluted the sergent. My head was covered with blood.

This violence was the last I had to endure. I may add that



the question of the salute was simply a pretext, as the military police had had orders to watch me.

These two statements were received on December 17th 1918, at Uskub, by MM. Gavrilowitch and Bonnassieux, Delegates of the interallied Commission of Enquiry.

#### N° 4.

We, the undersigned, members of the interallied Commission of Enquiry, proceeded on December 18th 1918, to the Uskub Presbyterian Church at 5 o'clock p. m., and questioned Mgr Myedia, Catholic Bishop of Prizrend, on a visit to Uskub, who made the following statement :

« Mgr Vincent, orthodox archbishop of Uskub, who arrived at Prizrend with the Serbian Army in retreat, called on me. He remained in this town after the departure of the Serbian army, and was found there by the Bulgarian Army. When I learnt, a few days later, that the Bulgarian Military Authorities had decided to send him, on foot, to Ferizowitch, I appealed to them and asked that consideration be shown to the position and advanced age of Mgr Vincent, who could certainly not accomplish on foot the distance of sixty kilometres about, which separate Prizrend from Ferizowitch. I was glad to have succeeded, as a carriage was given him. I am ignorant of the circumstances of the death of Mgr Vincent. »

The revictualling of the town of Prizrend, during the Bulgarian occupation, was very defective ; bread and food were wanting and there was a famine. Many people died of hunger. The exact number of deaths is unknown, but, in my opinion, it exceed a thousand. In the evening, when everyone returned home, one heard everywhere the cries of children and women who called for bread.

This famine was, in my opinion, caused by the enemy, as bread was not wanting in the surrounding villages, but it was strictly forbidden to bring any to Prizrend. These restrictions were based on political and sanitary reasons.

In spite of the Austrian protection of the catholic church, I was frequently unable to carry out my ministry, and I had on several occasions to appeal to King Ferdinand and demand his intervention.

After this audience, we closed and signed the present minutes.

BONNASSIEUX,  
P. GAVRILOVITCH.



N<sup>o</sup> 5.

Statement by Zorka Stergewitch, married name Georgewitch, aged 29, living at Uskub :

Before the Bulgarian occupation, I was at Prizrend with my husband and my daughter aged eighteen months, living with my parents, as I am a native of that town. An order from the Bulgarian authorities having ordered everyone to rejoin his pre-war domicile, I went to Uskub, where I lived. We were left relatively at peace until March 1917, and had only six visits and perquisitions of the police. In March 1917, my husband was called up by the head of the secret police, named Alexandre, son of Koutchouck Petre. This man told my husband that he was to be interned in Bulgaria, but that he could escape if he paid immediately one thousand francs. My husband paid him this sum, and, acting on the advice of the man, did not leave our house for two months, being in hiding there. In February 1918, he was called to the third Police Commissioner's office at Uskub. He was beaten with a stick under pretext that, according to the Bulgarian authorities, he knew of numerous Serbian soldiers remaining in the country and enemies of Bulgaria. He was warned that he had every chance of being shot. The matter was arranged by the payment of 1200 francs demanded by the Chief of Police, and which was made the following day. In order to find this sum, we had to sell our last belongings and valuables, which we had been able to save from pillage or requisition. He was set free. The chief of police is named Stoitché.

In the month of May, my husband was again imprisoned. He was ordered to state the names of pretended citizens of Uskub, which they said he should know, and who were plotting with him against the Bulgarian occupation. On the evening of his imprisonment, he was led to the central police prison, where he found me with my child. I had in fact been taken there in the afternoon for having appealed to people to take up my husband's case. There, we were beaten with sticks by the soldiers. This torture was carried out in the presence of our child, aged at that time four years. Our torturers did not cease to beat us when this little girl, who was terrified and cried, gave such loud shrieks of terror that it was evident that she was on the point of succumbing with emotion at the horror of the spectacle.



The following evening I was allowed to take the child to our house to care for her, but the poor child died the following day, through the emotion and moral torture she had undergone.

For a month and a half, we were left at peace. But in July, the functionary of the Secret Police, M. Tosheff, called up my husband to tell him that heavy charges weighed on him, to such an extent that he could not believe all that the police had told him, on account of his conduct. He assured him that he would try to clear him, but my husband would have to pay him six hundred francs. This was done.

Rather more than a fortnight before the return of our troops to Uskub, I was led by the police to the Head Police Office where I was questioned. I was ordered to state the persons suspected of being Serbian patriots. I did not even understand the questions put to me, or what they required of me. I could only state that the people I saw were my relations or neighbours, known to the police, and who had never had any trouble : my declarations were unawailing. I was abused and disgustingly treated for my denials, and as then beaten on the back, the seat, before the police who had accompanied me and the functionaries who encouraged me to confess. A clerk questioned me whilst I was receiving the blows, which were delivered with extreme violence. I was at the time at six months' pregnancy. I felt atrocious pains. At a given moment, I was told that I was to be put into a sack and be drowned : at the order of the commissioner the sack was brought. The beating continued. I cannot say how many blows I received, or how long the torture lasted ; overcome by the pain, I fainted. Whilst prostrate, by an involuntary reflex, purely mechanical, I satisfied the laws of nature. I was then raised, again beaten and the sack was put over my head. I cried, appealed, stating that I was pregnant, and asking that I be killed rapidly, with my child, rather than be made to suffer for such a length of time. A policeman, or a soldier, pointed his revolver at me, as though he was going to kill me.

I was brought back to prison in a lamentable state. Without leaving me time to rest myself, the police seized me and pushed me before a colonel, in command of the division. There, this officer informed me, after having read the paper handed him by the police, that my case was grave, and that I merited to be executed. This was however condoned on account of my pregnancy.



Without allowing me to rest, I was sent to the fortress, and on the following morning was included in a convoy of 50 Serbian prisoners of war, escorted by 35 Bulgarian soldiers. We were sent in the direction of Koumanovo, by the mountain route, and arrived after a march of two days and a night. I was the only woman amongst these soldiers. It is impossible to state what I suffered during this march, after the torture I had endured in prison. At Koumanovo, we arrived in the morning, but the same evening we were sent to Vrania; I was extenuated, without strength, after two hours' march, and was obliged to fall behind the convoy with three prisoners ill and very fatigued. Three Bulgarian soldiers remained to guard us. After a talk with the prisoners, we proposed to our guards to return to Koumanovo, as we were unable to advance further. They agreed to do this for the sum of five hundred francs, which we contributed between the four of us. I would add that on leaving Uskub, my sister sent me some linen, amongst which I found six hundred francs in bank notes. I was thus able to pay my share for returning to Koumanovo.

In this town, I entered the first Turkish house I found. The soldiers did not oppose this. The Bulgarian army was already in retreat and the town was only guarded by a few irregulars. In the bey's house I was well treated and it was there that I was first able to see the state I was in. My body was black and swollen and I had pain everywhere. Touched by pity, this man had me cared for immediately and had my back covered with fresh sheepskins. This treatment, applied to my back and seat, did me a great deal of good. Before and during the treatment, I passed my days and nights kneeling, not being able to rest myself or lay down, on any part of my body.

Six days afterwards, the Serbian troops entered Koumanovo. The commandant saw me and heard my story. A doctor examined me and gave me a certificate setting forth my condition. My husband, advised immediately, came for me to Koumanovo and took me to Uskub, where I slowly recovered. Nevertheless I am haunted by the thought of the state of the child of which I am pregnant, and of its health. I am in the ninth month of my pregnancy.

This statement was received on December 20th, 1918, at Uskub, by MM. A. Bonnassieux, P. Gavrilovitch, members of the interallied Commission of Enquiry.

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N° 6.

Statement by Nicolas Blagoievitch, aged 18, native of Prichtina.

Two or three days after the entry of the Bulgarians into Prichtina, half a score of Bulgarian soldiers, with an officer, came to our house and demanded my father George, to go, out into the courtyard. When my father had gone out, the Bulgarian officer demanded his name and profession and if he had done military service. My father replied that he was named Georges Blagoievitch, joiner by trade, and in his quality of Serbian, had done military service in the Serbian army, at Belgrade. He added that he was still a Serbian soldier and on that account still wore the Serbian uniform. That he had fought against the Austrians and was only at home because he was ill. The Bulgarian officer then said to him : « Ah well, you will now be in the Bulgarian army, and will serve with them. » My father replied that he could not serve because he was ill, and for this reason he had been allowed to leave the Serbian army. He then added that he was not Bulgarian, but Serbian, and did not wish to serve in the Bulgarian army. The officer then said to him : « You will now be Bulgarian and will serve in the Bulgarian army. » My father replied that he was born in Serbia and had taken the oath to the King of Serbia, but the Bulgarian officer replied : « You must be Bulgarian and Bulgarian soldier, otherwise you will be killed. » My father then begged him not to kill him because he was Serbian and could not serve in the Bulgarian army, but the Bulgarian officer said : « Seize him and bind him. » My mother and I were close to my father, and wished to defend him, but the Bulgarian soldiers prevented us. I have omitted to state that there were four or five Austrian soldiers there also, who on their part intervened with the Bulgarians to leave us in peace. I recollect that one of the Austrians came to me and caressed me, saying to the Bulgarians in the Serbian language : « Leave this man for his child's sake ». The Bulgarian officer replied : « Mind your own business ; it has nothing to do with you ; take him away, you others. » My mother and I, who were there close to my father, went to his rescue, but were pushed away. My father said : « O, my God » whilst my mother began to weep. Four Bulgarian soldiers again took hold of my mother and myself, and gagged our mouths and ears. The others led my father into the courtyard, then into the street. Ten minutes afterwards, these soldiers returned with



the officer, and the latter approached my mother, whose name is Maria, and said to her : « We have killed your husband, now it is your turn. » He ordered the soldiers to take her away also, and left a sergent with me to guard me. After a quarter of an hour, they returned with a cart. They entered the house with the officer and picked up all the goods, then left, taking me with them, by the same route where my father and mother had passed. After having gone about 1000 metres, we reached a spot where the soldiers who had taken away my father were occupied with some work. When we had stopped there, an Austrian soldier said to me : « Do you see, it is there where the Bulgarians have killed your father and mother, and now they are going to bury them. » I looked, and saw my father and mother laid on their backs near a pit, their faces and bodies covered with blood. I specially remarked that my mother had an enormous wound in the throat. I commenced to cry, but two Bulgarian soldiers gagged my mouth with handkerchiefs. The Austrian soldier then took me with him, put me in the carriage and brought me to Koumanovo, where we arrived two days later. From there, he took me to Sofia, then to a town on the Danube, from whence we went by boat to Belgrade. There the soldier handed me to an Austrian officer named Friedrich, who took me to Budapesth, where I remained for three years in an office, cleaning windows and floors until about three weeks ago, when this officer Friedrich said to me : « You can now return to Prichtina. » He then took me into the town and handed me to Serbian soldiers returning from captivity. With these soldiers, I first returned to Belgrade, then to Leskovats, Vranje and Uskub. I was there admitted to the school for preparing for the railway service. I omitted to say that the Austrian officer Friedrich gave me five crowns when I left Budapesth.

This statement was received on December 21th, 1918, at Uskub, by Mr P. Gavrilovitch, member of the interallied Commission of Enquiry, and Mr V. Protitch, secretary of the Commission.

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N<sup>o</sup> 7.

1) Statement by Kama Ristovitch, aged 20, without profession, living with his mother, landlady at Kavadar.

At the commencement of the Bulgarian occupation, at the end of October 1915, I was alone in the house one evening, my mother having gone out to make purchases in town. Two Bulgarian soldiers suddenly entered the house : they were drunk, as much from their victories as from the drink they had had. They drew their knives and approached me, menacing to kill me if I did not accede to their desire. I refused and cried out, but no one came to my rescue. In spite of my struggles, I was thrown down and violated. These two soldiers outraged me in turn. This accomplished, they withdrew, after mocking me. I became pregnant through them and bore a child, nine months later, which lived six months.

I wished to complain, but the inhabitants advised me not to go out, as if I showed myself, I might excite their passions further.

I would add that my mother and I have been robbed of all we possessed, wheat, flour, sheep, clothing, linen, footwear, representing about four thousand francs.

2) Statement by Dhalip Moustaphovitch, farmer, aged 38, living at Drenovo.

I am Mahommeddan, but Serbian by nationality. At the end of the month of October, the Bulgarians penetrated into my house under pretext that I was Serbian. They abused, menaced and then beat me. They then entered the room reserved for my wife, and before my eyes took her and led her outside. They compelled her to follow them into the mountains. She remained with them for three days. On her return, she informed me that she had been violated by them, and had had to submit to them on several occasions. Hearing this, seized with fear, I took my gun and fled to the mountains. After several months, I returned to Drenovo. I was denounced and the Bulgarians interned me in Bulgaria. My house was completely pillaged during my absence and my wife had to beg for a living. I was interned at Sofia, Plovdiv, Krdjali and Djoumouldjina. During the greater part of the time I was employed on the roads. After some time, I was sent back to Drenovo and the Bulgarians employed me at the recruiting quarters, where I worked in the military convoys.



I escaped at the end of six months and was able to remain in hiding until the return of the Serbian to Kavadar. I value my furniture and cattle stolen at four thousand francs.

My sister Chiesa, wife of Achmet Moustaphovitch, was violated as was my wife was. But the Bulgarians, instead of taking her to the mountains, kept her at Kavadar for several days, where they outraged her. They only released her when her strength was spent. Her husband, my brother-in-law, was killed because he could not give my address.

...Whilst in the mountains, I was witness of the following scene : The Bulgarians brought into the forest a naked man on horseback. After placing him against a rock, they stabbed him with bayonets and threw his corpse from the top of a rock into a hollow. I recognised this unfortunate victim ; it was Hranislav Kolabitch, teacher of the village of Dradnia. I knew him well. Passing peasants asked the Bulgarians to allow them to bury this man. They refused. After they had all gone, I approached and recognised Kolabitch, but did not bury him for fear of being surprised.

3) Statement by Kousman Kostevitch, aged 65, farmer, of Rayets.

After the arrival of the Bulgarians, I was under supervision for about two years, being suspected of being Serbophile. I was however prudent and avoided talking and admitting people to my house. I had further three daughters and feared the intrusion of Bulgarians. In November 1917, a Bulgarian, calling himself Serbophile, deceived me and I consented to receive him, believing him to be really Serbian. He was named Dimitrie Stoyanovitch. He brought with him two men and as he said he was recommended by a friend, I received them. A first and second visit passed without incident. At the third, they arrested me and took me to the monastery of Rillo, in Bulgaria. This was one of the worst internment camps. My wife and two of my daughters were interned with me. We were employed on the hardest road labour. At the end of a few days my two daughters, aged twenty and twenty-one, succumbed of fatigue, exhaustion and privation. They were obliged to work hard at exhausting work, and only received insufficient nourishment. They received no attention.

During my internment, my house was completely pillaged. I possessed flour, wheat, domestic animals ; nothing was spared.

These statements were received on January 1st 1919, at Kavadar, by Mr A. Bonnassieux, member of the interallied Commission of Inquiry, assisted by major M. Georgevitch, expert-interpreter.



N° 8.

1) Statement by Temelko Nedowitch, aged 47, farmer, Farisch.

At the beginning of the year 1916, in January, the man Stoyan Yovanowitch of Mzrend, came to the village, accompanied by two Bulgarian officers. He called together the notabilities of the Serbian regime, of whom I was one. He asked each one what were his functions under the Serbian regime, and if they were really Serbian. All replied in the affirmative. Then, as an example, he had me completely stripped, inundated with cold water and imprisoned in a cellar for two hours. Taken from the cellar and before Stoyan, I was again questioned and made the same replies as before. In the evening, we were conducted to Cavadar, where we were imprisoned. At the end of two days, on account of the good reports which people gave about us, we were reconducted to Farisch. There the Bulgarians retained with them my uncle Kostevitch Amed, also the deputy Risto Arso-witch. They took them out of the village and killed them with knives. The following day I found their corpses covered with wounds, and their faces also bore traces of violence. I buried the two bodies. The Bulgarians troubled us no more personally, but pillaged and carried off everything. There is no furniture left in the village. Occasionally they gave requisition slips « raspiska » : sometimes they gave this and returned later to claim it : as a result, no one has been paid.

2) Statement by Alsa Ristova, aged 40, farmeress, of Farisch.

At the commencement of the Bulgarian occupation, Wasil Karageoff, with several Bulgarian soldiers, came to Farisch. They took me, my daughter aged 20 and three other women of the village, of whom one was aged 70. They took us up a mountain near Rouyan. There we were delivered to the soldiers. For eight days we were violated by these men, who treated us like prostitutes. At the end of eight days, we were taken back to Farisch. My daughter only lived a short time after the emotion she had undergone, and her shame. The old woman of 70 also died.

Some time later, the Bulgarians returned. They asked my husband for money. He gave them what he had — two louis d'or. On this, Wasil Karageoff took my daughter — this happened before her death — and violated her before our eyes. We could not intervene, neither my husband nor I, because Wasil was accompanied by Stoyan Yovanowitch and another well-known irregular.



A short time later, the Bulgarians came to the house and took my husband. They took him away, I know not where, and I have never seen him since. Without doubt he has been killed. His name is Rista Arsovitch. I recently learnt that he had been killed.

3) Statement by Kamka Demekemelkwitch, aged 30, farmeress, of Farisch.

I was amongst the women of this village whom the Bulgarians took to Rouyan. For eight days we were used as their playthings. We were considered and treated as prostitutes.

When I returned to Farisch, I found my house completely pillaged and devalised. I am now entirely without ressources.

My husband, taken prisoner by the Austrians, returned shortly afterwards. Since then, we have been left in peace.

These statements were received on January 2nd, 1918, at Farish, by M. A. Bonnassieux, member of the interallied Commission of Inquiry, assisted by Major M. Georgevitch, expert-interpreter.

## N° 9.

We, the undersigned, member of the Interallied Commission of Inquiry, aided by Major Georgevitch, expert and interpreter, duly given powers by the Commission, noted and received the following declarations, in the course of a journey we made to Negotin, Cavadar, Farisch and Veles.

1° Whilst at Cavadar on January 1st 1919, we heard several witnesses, whose declarations have been registered in special minutes annexed to the present.

We visited the cemetery, in the upper part of the town, near the church.

The lower portion of the cemetery has been transformed into an open-air theatre : the ground, having a steep slope, has a semi-circular shape. The ground has been levelled, the tombs taken away and a dozen benches fitted up. These benches are still intact. At the bottom, a platform of earth and stone has been arranged, of rectangular form. This constituted the stage, being very visible.

Above these benches, at the upper part of the cemetery, which takes the form of a flat space, parallel bars for gymnastics still remain. The cemetery is crossed by a central alley leading to the church.

To the right, several tombs are damaged : the headstones are



broken or thrown down or smashed to atoms. The tumuli of stone and earth are destroyed, some totally and as though levelled, other partially. To the left, the same is to be seen.

Further, the Bulgarians have arranged a cemetery for burying their dead. After having levelled the Serbian tombs, they have made an enclosure surrounded by barbed wire. The contrast is very striking between this part of the cemetery, where the tombs are new and in good condition, and the remainder of the cemetery where the tombs are destroyed, partially or totally, owing to the profanations of the Bulgarians.

We have remarked that on several tombs, and notably on that of the pope, interred in the cloister of the church, the final syllable «itch» has been chiselled off. Occasionally it has been replaced by «off», elsewhere it has not been replaced.

In the town, several houses have been destroyed. They were either burnt or thrown down to supply planks, roofs, doors, windows beams built into the clay walls and constituting the frame of same. They have fallen down.

The Sub-Prefect and the notabilities accompanying us, stated that this damage is the work of the Bulgarians. They are recent, and to us do not appear to have been destroyed anterior to the war.

2°. On January 2nd 1919, we took advantage of our very short stay at Negotin, to hear several witnesses. We were unable, owing to lack of time, to draw up proper minutes :

Fatima Sulieman, aged 20. Her father and husband were killed because they could not supply the money demanded by the Bulgarians. She is without resources.

Aicha Sulieman, aged 30. Her husband was killed for the same reason. Her house has been destroyed, her furniture pillaged.

Iore Ibrahim, aged 41. The Bulgarians carried off all the males from his village — Brusnick — husbands, fathers, children, grand-fathers. They have never been seen since. Their fate is unknown. She is therefore unaware of the whereabouts of her husband. The entire village has been pillaged. She has taken refuge in a neighbouring village, where she lives on the mayor's charity.

Veli Effendi, aged 65, priest of Bustrenji.

Was badly outraged, his beard was cut off, the sign of his sacred character. The Bulgarians demanded a ransom of 3000 frs, which he paid.



In his village ten persons have been killed : the greater part of the inhabitants were beaten and ill-treated. All have been held to ransom and robbed of their furniture.

Ismid Ahmet, aged 54, priest and mayor of Bistorije.

Was held to ransom and paid 3000 frs to the Bulgarians. His brother was killed. In his village the harvest, cattle and furniture has been stolen.

Zeim Helmas, aged 70, of Bistriza.

The Bulgarians took from him 2500 Turkish pounds and 30 napoleons. Has been beaten and ill-treated. His cattle and harvest were taken without payment ; his house has been burnt.

Chapan Djerepowitch, priest at Dragovo.

The Bulgarians have pillaged the mosque ; the carpets and treasures valued at 8000 frs have been carried off.

We were shown :

Sulieman Hassanovitch aged 12 and Ismael Demovitch, aged 15. These two children, according to the declarations of the Sub-Prefect and the notabilities of Negotin, lost their reason on account of the ill-treatment and blows caused by the Bulgarians. It is plain that they no longer have their reason.

Helmas Ali, aged 55 ; Saim Ismael, aged 75 of Dragovo, have been completely robbed of their possessions. They have been ill-treated and beaten by the Bulgarians.

About 20 further persons could have been heard, had we had the time.

In general, these witnesses are Serbian Mahommedans, against whom the Bulgarians are very bitter on account of their Serbophilie.

The same day, leaving for Veles, we stopped at Pepelitcha to visit the mosque. The village is turk, the population Serbophile.

The priest showed us the mosque which has been deprived of its carpets. The Bulgarians, a few days before their retreat, took away all the carpets.

3° On January 3rd 1919, at Veles, we heard several witnesses separately.

In the town, we visited the two fountains, that of Sermoli and that of the barracks. The Serbian inscriptions on these monuments are hammered or destroyed with a chisel. They commemorated the Serbian victories of 1912, 1913, 1914.

The very vast and important buildings of the State Tobacco Fac-



tory, and those of the stables, are destroyed. They were burnt by the Bulgarians a few days before their retreat.

In the libraries, schools and private houses, the books printed in Serbian have been seized and destroyed by the Bulgarians.

The mayor of the town, M. Bogdanowitch, who lodges us, showed us, in a room used by Bulgarian officers as a mess, the traces very plain and old of 9 revolver shots fired by the officers during their stay in his house. He declared that a valuable Turkish plate, a family heirloom, disappeared from the room where he lodged a Bavarian Prince. He complained to the Bulgarian Commandant, who replied that the prince's orderly had probably taken it inadvertently.

Drawn up at Uskub, after our return, on January 4th 1919.

BONNASSIEUX.

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### N° 10.

Statement by Zarko Zvetcovitch, aged 25, of the village of Tabanova, farmer.

In 1915, I was a Serbian soldier, and was wounded and taken prisoner by the Bulgarians. After being cured, I was put forcibly into the Macedonian division. General Protogeroff ordered Capt. Cheraptief commanding my company, to co-operate in the suppression of the revolt in Serbia, in all manners, to go from village to village violating, pillaging and burning. In certain villages, after collecting the men by 10's and 14's we killed them with machine-guns. In other villages we burnt the families in their houses : we burnt the woman. In the village of Popovatrj, sub-lt. Shristoff killed an old man of 60 with blows from a stick. In all we destroyed 30 villages.

This statement was received on January 10th 1919, at Koumanovo, by Lt. Colonel H. B. Mayne, member of the interallied Commission of Inquiry, assisted by sub-lt. C.-P. Voltos, officer-interpreter.

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N° 11.

1) Statement by Catherine Babunski, wife of Jean Babunski, voivode, aged 37, of Veles.

After the departure of my husband in October 1915, I was at Bouyanovci, with my five children. The eldest was aged 12 and the youngest 3 months and I fed him from the breast. I took refuge at Prichtina where I was admitted into a Turkish family. I was denounced and perceived that I was followed. In order to live, I was obliged to extract from horse dung the oat grains, which I washed and then converted into bread for my children. A spy stopped me and asked me from whence I came : I replied « I am from Belgrade ». The individual, who knew me replied « No, you are the wife of the famous Babunski ». I admitted it, as it was useless to deny. I was ordered to proceed to Uskub. I had to walk there on foot and walk 60 kilometres with my child in my arms, and the next youngest on my shoulder. I walked two days and one night, followed by four armed men. At Uskub, on my supplication, they gave me a carriage which I paid 70 levas, and I went to Veles. Here I was seized by soldiers and taken before three men who were irregulars, Petar Lesseff their chief, Commandant Tchoukov and the police inspector Bichew. I was insulted, ill-treated, invited to denounce my husband, stripped naked before them and my children. They took from me all my money. I had a sum of 23000 frs, including 18000 belonging to my husband's committee and 5000 of our own. Amongst this sum were 80 Napoleons. After this interview, I was taken into the town, exposed to the cries of the people who spat in my face and cursed me. At the Vardar bridge, they were going to throw me into the Vardar, but a German officer intervened and I was spared. It was a Bulgarian officer who had taken me in his arms and who was going to throw me into the water, when the German stopped him. Taken into a house, with my children still with me, I was imprisoned and an officer told me that I would be hanged the following day. During the night I was taken close to the Vardar, to a place where a scaffold had been erected. The Bulgarian officer said to me « You have two hours to live ». I begged him to allow me to live. Before my eyes, the Bulgarians hung two women, who also begged to live, but the Bulgarians were not to be moved. After their death, I saw their



bodies thrown into the water. The officer again turned to me and said « You have ten minutes to live ». I was so overcome that I fainted. In the morning I was taken back to the prison, but during the day I was taken from my cell and dragged through the town and exposed to the shouts and spitting of the soldiers. Finally I was bound and put into a train, with my children, for Uskub. I was taken before an officer who insulted me, and who asked for the hiding place of my husband. I was struck on the face : I was then put into a cell with twenty five soldiers who endeavoured to violate me, also my daughter aged 12. By tears and supplications, I was able to avoid this shame. After twelve days, I was sent to Nisch, where I was imprisoned in a fortress. I was informed that I was to be shot at the same time as six popes and six professors. These men appealed that I be spared on account of my children. I was taken to the place of execution ; a Bulgarian officer arrived and after having struck and insulted me, informed me that my life was spared. Taken back to prison, I shortly after heard the shots which warned me that the popes and professors had been killed. Finally, a few days later, I was sent to Sofia. En route, one of my children was thrown from the train by a gendarme. This little girl, aged 6, had her backbone broken and died a few days after our arrival at Sofia, after terrible suffering.

I was imprisoned for three months in a cellar, and had only bread and water for food. Vermin covered myself and my children, and we had wounds caused by the bites of lice and parasites. These wounds are hardly healed even now. I fell ill, my children also. I was tended by Serbian doctors and was able to be locked after. After my recovery I was sent to the prisoner's camp at Sofia, where I remained over a year, doing the same work as other prisoners. From Sofia, I was sent to Philippopoli to another camp, where I only remained a week. Finally I was taken to Carlovo, where I worked in the fields, my children tending the cattle. At the end of a year, in February 1918, I was transferred to Belgrade, with my children, where I was when the allies delivered the town.

2) Statement by Nicolas Gotchewitch, aged 58, farmer, of Bogoumile.

At the moment of the Bulgarian invasion, irregulars came to my house and demanded money. I paid 800 francs. They did the same with other inhabitants of the village. Several paid them money, but four were killed in spite of having paid money.



The Bulgarian army arrived twelve to fifteen days after the irregulars, and as the village was considered as being purely Serbian, its destruction was decided upon. First of all, the Bulgarians fired with machine guns on the houses, and then on the flying inhabitants. My son was killed : those inhabitants of the village, who escaped, took refuge at Castici. Then the army arrived and surrounded the village. The people came down and left their houses ; a large number were killed. Personally, hidden in an attic, I raised a slate and saw my wife, one of my daughters-in-law, two daughters, aged 8 and 4 years being killed. Then 23 women were completely stripped and left naked ; they were placed on one side, whilst on the other 10 young tzigane girls, also naked, were placed opposite them. The soldiers then ran to these women and violated them, under the looks and laughs of the officers. After the rape and dances, the soldiers struck them with knives and all were killed. Then 10 young lads of the village were taken to Tscenitiche and were barbarously killed. They had their eyes gouged out, and their bodies covered with knife wounds.

A Turk, named Hassan Hadji Ahmetdof, of Tscenitichte, after the death of my wife and daughters, went to their bodies and smashed their heads with the butt of a rifle.

One of the women, hoping to influence the Bulgarian who was attacking her, begged him to spare her, but the man, far from being touched, slightly recoiled and took his knife and with a violent blow opened her stomach, from which the intestines came out. The poor woman collapsed and died shortly after.

The youngest of my daughters lived in agony for four hours.

After the departure of the Bulgarians, I left my hiding-place and fled to the mountains. As the victims had not been buried by the Bulgarians, I returned at night, with other men, and dug one pit, where all were buried. Since then, the relations of the victims have been able to take the bodies and bury them separately in the parish.

At my home, I found the body of my son, aged 17, killed by bullets. The fingers of his left hand were cut off.

They stole from me 50 sheep, 300 ocques of wheat, 2 oxen ; my straw and oats were taken, and I have not been paid for them.

When the Bulgarians were beaten and took to flight, they intended to intern us. Their defeat saved us.



3) Statement by Stoyan Georgewitch, aged 19, farmer, Bogoumli.

Towards the middle of November 1915, a man named Dimtchef, butcher, of Veles and an irregular, came to Bogoumli. He came to my father and told him to follow him. Hidden in a shed, I saw my father go out and follow the man. Following from afar, I endeavoured to see what took place. I saw Mimtchef tie my father round the waist to a tree. He then gave him a pick to dig a pit : once this was completed, the irregular in spite of the prayers of my father, forced him to lay down in the bottom of the pit. The irregular then buried him alive. When my father raised himself, the executioner struck him with the bayonet attached to his rifle. When my father had ceased to struggle, the irregular filled up the pit.

I saw all, hidden behind a tree in a neighbouring wood. As I was barely 16, I dared not intervene to save my father. I could not have done any good, and should have suffered the same fate.

Some time later, my mother died of suffering and pain. I was left alone with my brother aged 8.

The Bulgarians took 2 oxen, 1 horse, 13 goats, 10 sheep, 1 pig, 1000 ocques of wheat, 15 ocques of cheese, 2000 ocques of hay. As we had no money, they could not steal any, but they pillaged the furniture.

These Statements were received on January 3rd, at Veles, by Mr A. Bonnassieux, member of the interallied Commission of Inquiry, assisted by major M. Georgevitch, expert-interpreter.

## N° 12.

Statement by Maxim Novakovitch, aged 22, shopkeeper of Uskub.

I am of Dalmatian origin, but prior to the war, I set up at Uskub and had Serbian sentiments. My trade succeeded. The war broke out and I volunteered in the Serbian army, but was seriously wounded in the left leg on November 17th 1915. I was taken to the Prichtina Military Hospital. The Bulgarians arrived and I was taken prisoner. I was fed, as were the other patients, very economically. Many died for want of food and not of their wounds. Two and a



half months later, I was taken to Uskub, I was ten a little better, but my foot was still in plaster.

At Uskub, the plaster was taken off and I was told that I could go home.

I went out carefully with my crutchers, but when I reached my shop, near the bridge, I saw that the Bulgarians were pillaging and removing the contents. I protested ; the Bulgarians pretended that the shop was abandoned. This was false, as I still had four assistants.

I went to the Commandant to complain, but instead of giving me satisfaction, I was put into prison. In prison, I found a Serbian Captain, wounded and tended at Prichtina, Iovan Brankovitch, of Pirot. There was also a pope, who was taken out one night and shot. The Bulgarians told us that he was in another prison ; this was false.

Ten days afterwards we were deported to Sofia. I took the train, as I still had to use crutches. From Sofia to Hastrovo, I had to walk on foot, in all 50 kilometers, in spite of my state. I remained two months in that town, in a hut without windows, which were replaced by planks. I did not work and was sufficiently fed. I was transported to Kreidolig. After three weeks rest, I was taken to the Greek frontier. The regime there was very brutal, and the slightest fault was punished by 15 or 25 blows of a stick on the back or legs. Near the village of Pachemacria, in the Rhodope Mountains, we were obliged to make a military road. My gang was composed of 120 prisoners. Captain Titroff, an engineer, was in command. As food, we had half a loaf of bread each and three cabbages per gang. The Bulgarian cooks themselves ate nearly all the cabbages, with the result that our soup was reduced to hot water. Lack of food caused many deaths. Many Serbians died crying : « Bread, bread ». In winter we worked bare-footed in the snow and ice. Our feet swelled. Many fell ill and some died, others were killed by order of the captain. Our complaints were vain, without effect. The atrocious sufferings we endured cannot be described.

When the road was finished, orders were given to go in another direction. Those who could not follow were killed.

Upon this, a telegram arrived, to send into this town men of such trades as Tailors, bootmakers, painters, etc. I applied as a painter and was sent to Sofia.



However, before leaving, I saw a certain number of acts of cruelty. Thus when a Serbian prisoner escaped, the commandant had shot two other prisoners seized as reprisals. Generally those who had good boots were shot for the sake of them.

The Bulgarians reviled us constantly. When they joked they did so ferociously. Thus they would say to a prisoner. « You are not worth a penny », referring to the price of a bullet.

The Grecian, Roumanian, Serbian, Russian prisoners were very harshly treated. The French and English were better treated; they were not sent into the mountains, but employed in the camps.

Captain Titroff merits punishment for his barbarous conduct, his inhuman acts and his cruelty. I can give the names of witness who can confirm my declarations. Stoiko Traitkowitz, brakeman on the railway, Sima Stephanowitch, same occupation, the former is from Nisch, the latter from Vranje, Alexa Iovanowitch, employed at the railway Works at Nisch. Petar Zvetkowitz, Infantry sergeant, Maxim Iovanowitch, restaurant keeper at Donia Mautniza, near Parachin.

At Sofia, I was employed at the Railway Works. We were packed in cattle trucks for lodgings, 25 per waggon, as soon as the sun set, until morning. We could not go out to relieve ourselves. There again, the ill-treatment continued. Our guard. I do not know his name was with us nearly the whole year. He was a wild beast. He had a club, beating the prisoners and knocking them down, then stamping on them. For stealing a beetroot from a wagon, we were beaten until we fainted.

Having been ill, I was taken to the doctor. Generally however these doctors were medical students who did not know how to cure their patients. Thus I saw two men wounded at work, whose wounds were long and wide. The only treatment they received was a beating. The doctor asked them where they had been wounded, they replied that they had been cruelly beaten because they had been to see their families in the district. The doctor then flew at them and struck them in the face with his fist, then put them outside.

I ask myself how it is that I am still alive. Being Dalmatian by birth, i. e. Austrian, I had to conceal my birthplace, in order to escape shooting. I said that I was born at Belgrade. But in March 1918, I was denounced and sent to the central prison. I thought I was going to die, as being sent to the central prison. I thought I warrant, but after a few days I was sent to Belgrade and imprisoned



in the citadel. There I saw prisoners receive parcels. This was the first time I had seen them, as we never received any in Bulgaria. The Austrian food was very little better than the Bulgarian, but at least, thanks to the parcels and a cantine, one could improve one's meals. After a two months' stay at Belgrade, I was sent to Otochatz, in my circumscription. There I was thrown into prison, but the revolution broke out and the insurgents opened the prisons, then the allies came and we were definitely delivered.

Here, I had 200000 frs worth of goods which were stolen and pillaged. The Bulgarians even took a receipt for 18000 frs, realised by my staff during my absence. My branch at Istip was also similarly pillaged. My losses from this fact, are increased by 45000 frs. All my own furniture and clothing has been pillaged, this represents a further 15000 frs. In the depot of the Franco-Serbian bank I had 45000 kilos of opium seeds which have been stolen.

This statement was received on January 11th, 1918, at Uskub, by Mr A. Bonnassieux, member of the interallied Commission of Inquiry, assisted by major M. Georgevitch, expert-interpreter.

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### N° 13.

#### *Report on Bulgarian atrocities in the district of Vrania*

1. — On October 3/16 th 1915 at noon, Bulgarian Cavalry entered the town. It was market-day. No Serbian troops in Vrania; the young men took to arms, killed a Bulgar on the market place and took one prisoner. After this they went up to the positions defending them until 10 o'clock next morning. Meanwhile, the population fled. On the 4th evening, the Bulgars had already pillaged all the stores and houses. Pretexting a search for Comitadjis, they arrested citizens, extorting from them money by threat of death. George Minintchitch, 45 years of age, a father of seven children, and Peter Pogatcharewitch's son, 16 years of age, were killed. The first of these two had his tongue cut, his eyes put out and his arms broken. Then, the Bulgars took 30 citizens as hostages; they shut them in the Vrania Hotel, leaving them a whole week without food. Those who had money paid the sentries and were released, but retaken, they were imprisoned again. Such arrests continued until the citizens who had fled came back to their homes, about October 18th. From this date



up to November the 1-st, the Bulgars did not bother the population.

On november the 1-st, all men from 18 to 50 years of age were called to the Town Hall, where Major Ilkoff, 3rd Btln, 48th Rgt., was on duty. Out of the 400 men who presented themselves, Ilkoff, referring to a list of names he had under his eyes, selected 300 who were sent to Plovdiv and interned. On the evening of this same day, George Antich-Djikitch, 55 years, ex M. P., Rista Djordjevitch, 45 years, shoe manufacturer, Rista Dimitrievitch, 25 years, linen manufacturer and Mileva Skrlitch, 45 years, school-teacher, were killed. The last named, a woman, was captured in bed and sent out of town, where she was killed, with nothing on but her chemise !

Were killed also, two days later, pope Axentie Sobinsky and Vouya Bounouchevatz, 16 years old ; on pretence, for the last named, that a rifle had been found at his home. At the same time, the Bulgars executed a sergeant of the Serbian Forces who had run away. And again, two or three days after, pope Axentie Michitch, whom soldiers had seized in bed, was killed.

From about December 15th people have been arrested in their homes. These arrests always took place in the night, the prisoners being then incarcerated without any food.

About December 20th, pope Popovitch, 55 years, of Vranska Banja, an da butcher, Iraiko Tolimat, 50 years, were taken out of prison and killed.

After Christmas, all men from 18 to 50 years of age were summoned again for internment. A Committee made a selection. Said Committee was composed of Captain Dimkoff, 3rd Btln, 42nd Rgt ; Lieut. Branoff, 42nd Rgt. and two doctors, Sapoundjiev M. D. for the District, and Vasiliev M.D. for the Battalion. The citizens could free themselves with money ; those who had none were interned. Among the poor were blinds, mutes and consumptives. Altogether, about 500 inhabitants of the town were interned. At this time the Bulgars imprisoned also Ljoubitza Jovanovitch, 55 years, who was beaten so badly to be ill two months, and Major Badjevitch's wife.

On december 28th the first troop of the interned ones left on foot for Sofia, via Trn. On arriving at Sourdoulitza the Bulgars selected 17 notables and killed them : Mita Militch, head clerk of the Monopolies ; George Petrovitch, merchant ; Yantche Voutchkovitch, merchant ; Ritoune Pantasievitch, Bank's cashier ; Mita Lochitchkovitch, clerk of the Monopolies ; Douchan Kaltchitch, forwarding agent ; George Zubara, merchant ; Kosta Djordjevitch, tax-collector,



Mika Mladenovitch, merchant ; Mane Tchache's son, apprentice ; Toma Momtchilovitch, tailor ; Milivoye Stamenkovitch, Aritoune Milkovitch, all of Vrania ; Blagoye Ilitch, manufacturer of Vlassotintze ; and three popes from villages near the town : pope Tota, pope Manoil and pope Stamenko Stoikovitch.

On January 23rd 1916, Colonel Petar Kalkandjieff, 42nd Rgt. came and gave orders, on the very evening of his arrival, to intern six more citizens ; four of them were killed at Sourdoulitza : judge Toma Makitch, 54 years, consumptive ; Toma Djourdjevitch, president of the Smederevo Court ; Toma S. Mihailovitch, merchant, and Toma Zaphirovitch, M. P. for Vrania, suffering from heart's disease.

On February 9th, the citizens were summoned for the third time ; but now all men from 18 to 100 years of age. This was the beginning of mass internments, specially of the people living outside Vrania. Part of the town citizens were imprisoned, and Colonel Kalkandjieffs' assistants required money from them to set them free. Said assistants of the famous Colonel were Captain Dimkoff and Lieut. Hranoff, both of the 42nd Rgt. At that time were also arrested Prof. Djoura Hitch, Mialko Kitchitch and Kosta Stamboulia, hairdresser. All three were killed. And 11 priests of Guiljane were also killed on Sarajina Place. The inhabitants heard their cries ; in the morning blood and the popes' headgear were found on the Place.

In March 1917, the Bulgars began recruiting : 500/600 young men. All the 18 years old ones were sent to the Pernik Mines, as working recruits, where a good many died. In June, the Bulgars interned Luke Petrovitch and two midwives, Mileva Borisavlevitch and Dnouchka Soldatovitch, the latter with her 3 years old child. In April 1918, they interned Mihailo Rochevitch with her daughter, Draga Mikitch and Mitza, schoolteacher. A fortnight before leaving, the Bulgars still interned Ljoubitza Yovanovitch and her two daughters.

During the occupation, the Bulgars pillaged and ransomed the people who were, besides, always beaten and ill-used. Three Bulgarian Mayors ruled : Mihailo Popoff of Sofia ; Ivan Markoff of Prilep and Nesletnikoff, of Roustchouk. These men robbed all they could ; for instance, they took wheat which they afterwards sold to the inhabitants, pocketing the price. Commandeering took place all the time ; but the vouchers were not handed to the owners of the goods. They were issued to the Mayor, who cashed them and kept the money. In



1917 and 1918 the Bulgars did not pay for the articles commandeered and no receipt was given. The schools were turned into Bulgarian schools ; all Serbian books were burned. It was formally prohibited to make use of the Serbian language ; Bulgarian being the only language allowed. The churches were turned into Schismatic temples ; the people's name were modified into « off » and « eff » ! By threat, the people were required to declare they were Bulgars ; only two priests and four Town Hall servants signed this statement ; nobody else in Vrania.

When leaving the Bulgars did strike the people, among others Luka Petrovitch. They took all the cattle. The Germans carried away the furniture from the houses, and damaged them. They lodged their horses in parlours and many rooms were soiled with human excrements. Oucheftze, a village, was completely unpeopled, the Bulgars killing women, children and old men.

Deposition of Stoyan Spassitch, 35 years, mayor of Vrania : deposition confirmed by Dimitrie Mikitch, 42 years, Louka Petrovitch, 25 years, Tasso Staitch, 58 years and Olga Kouchakovitch, 28 years, the last named, of Belgrade, took refuge in Vrania.

II. — I have among my papers some Bulgarian documents referring to what happened in Vrania and surroundings. Here follows the accurate translation of contents :

District of Vrania

N° 199

19. II. 1916

Vrania

For delivery : The original to the Vardar Auditor ;  
A copy to the Head of the Vrania Department.

I beg to inform you that in Korboewatz, village in the district I am in charge of, the bodies of two priests were found thrown alongside the river. One of the bodies has been identified by the wife to be the late pope of the above-named village, Manassi Popoff. The other one could not be identified. I beg of you to give me the necessary instructions for the burial of the bodies.

For the Head of the District : Iv. Tritchkoff.

For the Secretary : Astcherieff.

The Head Clerk : Dimitroff.



District of Vrania,

N° 175

13. 11. 1916

Vrania

For delivery to the Head of the  
Vrania Department.

I beg to report that the German Military authorities have shot, yesterday at noon, the following persons : Yova Dimitch, Ivan Djoulitchitch and Dima Nikolitch. Dima Markovitch was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. All four are of Kriva Fea, village in the district I have the honour to rule.

The Head of the District : Z. A. Bojadjieff.

The Secretary : Iv. Tritchkoff.

Department of Vrania

N° 2046

15. 11. 1916

Vrania

For delivery to the Heads of each  
of the Vrania Districts.

In conformity with instructions received from the Head of the Morava Military Inspection, letter n° 2579 January 11th, you are invited to report on the property, real estate, claims, grants and other rights belonging to President Pachitch and the others Serbian secretaries of State ; also where they are located.

This information is wanted, the confiscation to the State's benefit of all this property being contemplated.

For the Head of the Department : A. Krsteff.

The Secretary : Iv. Trichkoff.

Vrania District

N° 242

26. 11. 1916

Vrania

For delivery to the Head of the  
Vrania Department.

I beg to report that on the 24th of this month, seven priests, one officer and two civilians, all of them Serbs, were brought from the rear-front Command to Guiljané. In the same night these men were sent, under escort in command of second lieut. Coen, North of the town, near the Citadel, where they have been shot by two platoons



of Bulgarian soldiers. The shooting frightened the inhabitants ; they trembled all night.

The Head of the District : Z. A. Bojadjieff.

The Secretary : Iv. Trichkoff.

Parish of Ratai

N° 714

12. XI. 1916

Ratai Village

For delivery to the Head of the  
Vrania District,  
Vrania.

I beg to report as follow ; In pursuance to orders received from the Officer in command of the Vrania rear-front forces, 27th October, N° 3538, a man called Spasse Stocheff was brought from Zrni Lougue, village resorting to the Ratai Parish, to Vrania on October 29th 1916, where he was placed under arrest.

Said Spasse came to the Parish Hall and asked for the portraits of the Emperors to be shown him. The Parish President having told him they were the pictures of H. M. the Czar Ferdinand, H. M. Boris, heir to the Crown, etc... he answered these were not our Kings or Emperors, and that the true rulers King Peter and his sons would come some day ; then would Serbia come back to life. Spasse is a revolutionnist.

The President of the Committee of 3 members : M. St. Stocheff.

The Secretary : Iv. Manasieff.

These Bulgarian documents are very interesting. The second one proves not only that the Bulgars were ferocious in and around Vrania but that the Germans also did rage there. The letter does not tell why Dinitch, Djoulitch and Nikolitch were executed, nor why Markovitch was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. But judging from all we know about the behaviour of Bulgars and Germans in Serbian land, we suppose that these men were suspects because of their loyalty to Serbia. It did cost them freedom and live.

The third document shows the Bulgars in one of their pet characters : thieves of personal property. What kind of Law can they invoke when they confiscate the property of Serbian Secretaries of State ? According to which Law can this property — although property of State Secretaries — be considered State property, the



only property the confiscation of which is consented to the victor by International Law ?

Such a document is one more proof of how the Bulgars utterly despise any Law and any convention established by mutual agreement by and between civilized countries.

The fourth letter confirms the deposition of my Vrania witness relating the execution of Guiljané priests in Vrania, on Sarajina Place. Said witnesses speak of 11 priests ; the letter mentions 7 priests, 1 officer and 2 civilians. The mistake made by the witnesses re. the number of priests can be easily explained. They saw seven popes and had a glimpse of three other persons. Having found, on the next day, the pope's headgear, they came to the conclusion that all victims were priests. Another explanation is that having seen the prisoners and escort in the dark hours of the afternoon — it is soon dark in February — they took all of them for priests.

The letter mentions 10 victims ; the witnesses speak of 11. Error of reckoning. Let us admit the veracity of the Bulgarian letter as to the number, and say 10 instead of 11. But the fact remains that the letter proves, by an authorized Bulgarian document, the truth of Guiljané people being slaughtered.

The last document gives a typical example of the kind of « crimes » for which many Serbs lost their lives under Bulgarian domination.

III. — Moreover a letter from the Head of the Department to the Officer in command of the Morava Military inspection furnishes us with interesting details on the internment of people from Vrania and near villages. The text of this very important document is as follows:

Department of Vrania

N° 273

2. II. 1916

For delivery to the Officer in

Command of the Morava Military Inspection,  
Nich.

General,

As soon as I arrived at Vrania, I took possession of my department and immediately gave all my attention to the many complaints, written and oral, of the population, relating to groundless internments. With deep regret I saw what happened facing me. A little later, I received your order n° 2, of January 5th 1916, saying that



many mistakes had been made in the internments, and reminding the Heads of Departments and the Provosts to avoid them in future ; for instance, invalids, sick people and cripples must not be interned ; they are then nothing but a burden to the Bulgarian Exchequer. In spite of this order, and against it, internments without real motives have continued, and complaints of this are streaming in. I have written on January 16th 1916, n° 107, to the Rear-front forces Command on the subject, and I enclose you copy of the letter in proof of it.

In order to convince you that this is not idle talk, here follow more names and dates, to be added to those in my wire to you n° 185 of January 16th 1916. They are mentioned here as supplementary proof so that you may order the enquiry I asked for.

1°) Lazar Taxidar Yakimoff, 60 years, has been taken away, although old and nearly blind, because out of 36 tons of wine commandeered from his cellars, he begged for a small quantity to be left him for personal use. He did it very politely, too.

2°) Trifoune Avramoff, 60 years, taken away nightly. Old and nearly blind.

3°) Georgi Nikitoff, a cripple. Lost one leg in the Balkanic Wars.

4°) Toma Mikitch, 55 years, consumptive, in the last stage of the disease. Was pulled out of bed and taken away nightly.

5°) Djouro Ilieff, 70 years, old and senile.

6°) Pope Anto, of Jabsko village, 82 years, was consecrated by the Bishop of Uskub a Bulgar, in the times of Turkish domination.

7°) Ephreme Ivanoff, 70 years, on the retired list. Because of bad health, he was a charge to his fellow-citizens.

8°) Milan Pavloff, 65 years, retired major, in bad health also.

9°) Trifoune Mitroff, more than 50 years old, nearly blind. Ill and pulled out of bed, he had to be put to bed again on arriving at Sourdoulitza.

10°) Traiko Nikoloff, 52 years, left hand palsied. Was taken away although four little children were left penniless.

11°) Vassa Mladenoff, about 53 years, left at home an idiot of 90 years, — his sister, — and three little children 3 to 11 years old. He was in possession of documents issued by the Parish establishing his truthfulness and probity ; he had been warehouseman at the Bulgarian Skins Depot of Vrania.



12°) The brother of Naumoff Bulgarian M. P. was interned because he wanted a receipt for wine commandeered from his cellar. Being 70 years of age, this wine was all he could sell to live on.

13°) Ten persons, with regular identity papers issued by their Parish were interned, although they never served in the Serbian Army, nor were they guilty of the least offense. One of them was under 17 years of age.

14°) Against your orders, Presidents of three members Committees, Members and Secretaries of same were interned without the smallest enquiry, only because of anonymous accusations. Thus were interned : 1° President Ivan Stoikoff and the Secretary (birnik), Danail Antonoff of the Parish of Bouchrenska, Department of Ptchinja ; 2° Vladimir Traikoff, Secretary (birnik) Parish of Tchoukowska ; 3° Toma Stankoff, Parish Councillor, Koumarevo village ; 4° Christe Georgieff, President of the three members committee, Parish of Teseviche, etc... We never shall have here durable Bulgarian authorities because the Parish Committees and secretaries (birnik) are too often changed and this without knowledge nor consent of the competent administrative authorities. Still in these momentous times, Bulgarian State officers are responsible for order, commandeering, road maintenance, etc...

15°) Djikitch X. Antitch, rich and well known tradesman, millionaire, a loyal gentleman, was taken nightly to the Rear-Front Command where he was robbed of all he had on, about 6 to 7000 levas in paper money. He is now missing. Under Serbian rule he was exiled from Prizrend because bulgarophile. He set free a Bulgarian officer, Lieut. Ivan Markoff, 41st Rgt., the Serbs had taken, shooting the sentry guarding him.

16°) Toma Zaphiroff had received his identification papers from the hands of Major Ilkoff himself, and a commission of Bulgarian doctors had declared him a doomed invalid. But he was in peace three months only. Major Ilkoff called at Tomas' house and said often to his wife : « You are rich, Madam, and so long as I remain here, you have nothing to fear ! »

17°) Major Ilkoff ordered a Russian M. D. Dr Milovanoff, to be interned. On the day after the Doctor had left for internment, a midwife called and said to the Doctor's wife : « Madam, if you want your husband to come back, go and see Major Ilkoff ; grant him all his wishes, for he rules here like an Emperor and can do all he wants



to. » The Doctor's wife, although poor and with a four months infant, answered : « I went into exile to Siberia, with my husband ; I would rather take poison than submit to the Major's wishes.

18°) In Vrania lived the wife of Major Badjevitch-Nikolitch, a Serb with her moter, Ljoubitza Ivanovitch-Ganetovitza who had two or three pretty daughters. Major Ilkoff wanted Madame Badjevitch for himself, so he gave orders to her mother to get the bridal bed ready for him. Both women refused ; because of this refusal they were brought before the Officer in Command of the Rear-Front forces, and the mother heavily beaten. The Major's wife escaped the beating : she fell unconscious and was brought back to her senses with water. The mother has an attestation from a Bulgarian doctor testifying she was beaten, and how brutally.

19°) It may be interesting for you to know that Major Ilkoff had three suites of rooms at the same time ; in one of them the above-mentioned prisoners and the suspects were incarcerated for weeks. For instance, the Ex-President of the Department of Smederevo, Judge Toma Guernjevitch has been kept there, and taken away on the very evening Major Ilkoff left his office of Rear-Front forces commander to a successor. Talking with Ilkoff I asked him once : « Why, Major, did you keep this man a week in your rooms, since he ought to have been interned as Serbian State Officer and Judge, the more so since he is under 50 years of age and in perfect health ! » He answered me : « I examined him ». I leave it to you, General, to find out the real meaning of this answer, and beg of you to take it in the sense of all the proofs I submit.

20°) The priest Ivoiko Zvetkoff, 85 years, consecrated by the Bulgarian Bishop of Kiustendil, was pulled from his bed to be interned, in spite of his age. He had a soldier on each side helping him ; he could hardly stand ; his hair was white and old age had bent him. Many people came out to follow him, bidding him good-bye. All kissed his hand, crying and asking the soldiers : « Why do you do it ? The Turks did not harm us so much and, besides, what could the old priest do against you ? » The soldiers shrugged their shoulders but did not answer.

It seems to me, General, that the above 20 exact and typical cases are sufficient to explain why I wanted groundless internments to be avoided. I say « avoid them » ; far from criticizing your supreme orders, I do not say : « Stop interning altogether ». But such unmotived internments are detrimental to Bulgaria's fame and



to the valourous Bulgarian Army. As a safeguard, the ill-treated ones apply to German authorities who send these future Bulgarian subjects to the Austrian territories of Serbia. And this cannot be kept from you, General. You are an old Bulgarian patriot, a valourous military chief and a general Bulgaria is proud of ; I hope therefore you will accede to my request for an inquiry, which will ascertain officially the above facts and do the right thing by everybody. Proofs of my statements shall be brought by witnesses who will help you in the arduous task of ruling over people. They are, for instance : Dr Pavel Veltcheff, rank of Lt. Colonel ; Dr Petkevitch, rank of Colonel ; Dr Bacheff, rank of Major ; Dr Markoff, rank of Captain, and a few officers of the 1st Rgt of the Rear-front forces, for instance Lt. Colonel Athanasoff, Captain Mihailoff, etc...

It is certain that the enquiry I ask for will bring out many other facts ; all I have stated is but a very small fraction of what happened ; these new facts will, I am sure, corroborate still more my statements and bring them to full value. I am not expecting any rebuke for all this. I am acting to the example set by yourself, General : you are one of those who work hard for the State's benefit. Once more I say, all the above is nothing but the truth. And the contents of your Order N° 2 shows that you want to bring to an end all this system of misdoings and violations.

Believe me, General, etc...

The Head of the Department : DIMITROFF.

Vrania

February 1st 1916.

The above letter is written by the same Bulgarian prefect I spoke of in my report on the Sourdoulitza events. Said letter, addressed to the Officer in Command of the Morava Military Inspection is again a formidable indictment set up by a Bulgar, showing the behaviour of his countrymen. And all this corroborates the depositions of my Vrania witnesses.

These witnesses stated : « Among the interned ones were blinds, deafs and consumptives ». The Bulgarian prefect Dimitroff reminds the General that, by his order n° 2 of January 5th 1916, the latter recommended the non-internment of invalids, sick people and cripples, because they were, when interned, a burden to Bulgaria. And the Prefect ascertains that this order was not obeyed ; on speci-



fyng, he mentions the following cases of internment : Taxidar Yaki-moff, nearly blind ; Trifoune Avramoff, nearly blind ; Georgi Niki-teff, an invalid ; Toma Mikitch, consumptive ; Djoure Ilieff, senile, etc... He ascertains also the brutality of the Bulgars when taking away their victims ; Toma Mikitch, in the last stage of consumption away their victims ; Toma Mikitch, in the judge, mentioned by witnesses, who was killed at Sourdoulitza.

Case 15 is rather unlikely : it is astounding that the Bulgars did find in Vrania, in real Serbian country, a man who, for the benefit of a Bulgarian officer, killed a Serbian soldier and was not punished for it. And the prefect of Ferdinand of Coburg, who wanted all surnames to be bulgarized, wrote himself that man's perfect Serbian name : Djikitch-Antich ! Moreover this Djikitch is an ex. M.P. so that the Prefect's relation is still more improbable. Has not the story been invented to avoid ill-treatments from the Bulgars ? It did not serve its purpose since Djikitch was killed in Vrania.

The above letter mentions also the fate of the unfortunate M. P. Zaphirovitch, related in my report on the Sourdoulitza events.

Dimitroff confirms what my witnesses said re. the Badjevitch and Yovanovitch cases, with the only difference that Madame Yovanovitch is called Ivanovitch, the Bulgarian equivalent. He also tells us the motive of the inhuman treatment. This is a new crime for which Major Ilkoff is answerable.

The Prefect mentions, as one of Ilkoff's victims, the Judge of Smederevo, whom he calls Guernevitch and ex-President of the Department. As a matter of fact and according to the Vrania witnesses, his name was Toma Djourdjevitch and his title President of the Smederevo Court.

The remainder of the Prefect's letter calls forth no explanation. Such as it is, the letter is a terrible indictment written by a Bulgar, condemning the behaviour of his hellow-Bulgars, in occupied Serbian territories. Nevertheless the lines relating the transportation, by German authorities, of Serbian people into the regions occupied by Austro-Hungarian troops is worth commenting. My personal enquiry proves that German policy in territories under Bulgarian occupation was to make the people believe they were protected against the Bulgars by the German authorities. Perhaps something like an alibi was contemplated by so doing. But as soon as the Germans ruled effectively the country after Bulgaria's surrender, their manners changed completely.



IV. — Besides pillaging and ill-treating the population, the Bulgarian soldiers and Civil Authorities were guilty everywhere of theft and money-pressing. My enquiry on what happened in Vrania, which has been corroborated by Bulgarian documents, brings out as certain that :

1° 30 inhabitants of Vrania, including women, were slaughtered by the Bulgars. The slaughter took place in Vrania and in Sourdoulitza ;

2° 10 people, including 7 popes, brought from Guiljané, were killed in Vrania ;

3° the Bulgars unpeopled the villages around Vrania, killing women, children and old men ;

4° hundreds of inhabitants of Vrania — and for certain more than 500 — have been taken away for internment. Some of them were killed in Sourdoulitza. The fate of some others is unknown. Around Vrania, the inhabitants were interned in a body ;

5° Among the interned were sick people pulled from bed, cripples, nearly blind men, etc...

6° the officers responsible for what took place in Vrania are : Colonel Kalkandjieff, in Command of the 42nd Rgt ; Captain Dimkoff, 3rd Btl'n of same Rgt ; Lt Hranoff, same Rgt ; Dr Sapoundjieff, M. D. for Vrania District, and Dr Vasilieff, M. D. for the battalion ;

7° 500 or 600 young fellows of Vrania were recruited as working recruits and sent to the Pernik mines ;

8° the three Bulgarian mayors of Vrania took advantage of their office to enrich themselves at the expense of the population ;

9° in 1917 and 1918, and for a longer period perhaps, the Bulgars paid nothing for all they commandeered ;

10° an attempt, which failed, was made to have a statement signed by the people certifying they were Bulgars ;

11° when leaving, and this contrary to the stipulations of their surrender, the Bulgars ill-treated the population and took with them all the cattle ;

12° the Germans pillaged and damaged the houses ; they killed men.

Belgrade, December 25/12th, 1918.

Dr R. A. REISS,

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N° 14.

*Report on Bulgarian atrocities at Sourdoulitza*

Declarations of Alexa Yankowitch aged 69, Axentie Tomitch aged 65, Mihailo Momtchilovitch aged 45, Yovan Markovitch aged 53, Kosta Yonkovitch aged 40, Marinko Stankovitch aged 66, all of Sourdoulitza. Their declarations were duly signed by them.

Three citizens of Sourdoulitza were killed by the Bulgarians : Sima Montchilovitch aged 26, forester, Jivko Arandjelovitch aged 18 and Mika Stoyanovitch aged 25, functionary. They were killed on December 8th 1915. The Bulgarians called up all men of 18 to 50 and all were imprisoned in the Town Hall. In the evening, the Bulgarians selected from amongst them five men, including the three victims. Two of them succeeded in escaping. The three others were bound and taken into the wood. Two were killed by blows from rifle butts. Sima Momtchilovitch was tortured all through the night until morning. His arms and legs were broken and his ears cut off. The Bulgarian soldiers themselves related in the village that this victim had been thus tortured.

Two or three thousand people of the neighbourhood, or brought from farther off, were killed at Sourdoulitza. The witnesses were unable to count them. There were too many. On December 7th 1915, seven teachers were killed on the road near the town and the Bulgarians made the inhabitants of Sourdoulitza bury them. The latter remarked that these unfortunate people had been shot, after having been tortured. On December 10th, 18 persons brought from Uskub were killed at Vrla Reka. A week later, still at the same place, 18 men from Prilep and a child of 13 were killed. In order that the inhabitants might not see what was happening at this place, the Bulgarians forbid them to use the Vrla Reka road. On December 23rd 1915, the Bulgarians brought from Prizren a lawyer, native of Kniagevatz, with his daughter of 16 or 17 years of age. They were killed during the night. On December 7th 1915, 140 people coming from Leskovatz were killed in the valley of Douboka Dollina. They were killed by groups of 10, bayoneted. The tziganes of the town were obliged to bury them. However, some of the victims of these butcheries remained unburied and their bodies were eaten by dogs. Sentries were permanently posted in front of Douboka Dollina and forbid the entry to everyone. At the commencement



of January, it was the turn of 12 men of Vrania, shortly followed by six others. During the month of January, they brought in groups of about 300 persons from Prokouplie, Kourchoumlia, Lebane, Pristina, Leskovatz, Nich, etc. Occasionally there were fewer men, but the groups always consisted of at least 120 persons. Such groups arrived every day from January to March. The men thus brought to Sourdoulitza were not all killed; a commission decided their fate. This commission was composed of : Nestor Simonoff, Sub-Lt in the 42nd Regiment, in command of the Communications, Todor Vitanoff, sergeant of the 10th Company of the 42nd regiment, Pejioff, stretcher bearer also of the 42nd regiment. The president of the commission was Simonoff. The soldier-murderers belonged to the 42nd regiment and the commandant of their company was Sub-Lt Stoyan Youroukoff, at the same time commandant of the town of Sourdoulitza.

Butcheries were carried out at Vrla Reka, Doubrava Stoikova Chouma, Douboka Dollina, Kalifer and Raditcheva Bara. 40 hostages were killed at Vlachki Dol. In the Vrla Reka were found the vestments of the pope. The witness Stankovitch could see from his inn, situated in the centre of the town in a kind of square, all which passed, and particularly the arrival of the hostages. The Bulgarians forbid him to watch from his windows during these arrivals and to light his lamp at night. In fact, it was always during the night, after 10 o'clock, that the massacres took place and that the procession of the condemned passed before the inn of Stankovitch.

Having killed enough, the soldiers finally refused to continue these massacres. The commission then requested the Bulgarian General Headquarters to send them Macedonian irregulars to continue the work. A short time afterwards, there arrived some irregulars commanded by Traiko Popoff of Uskub. They had the special task of killing the victims and only went out during the night. The soldiers strangled in the village of Polom a man, Toma, before his wife and children.

70 men of the village were interned, 200 young men of the district were recruited as soldier-workmen. At the moment of their departure, the Bulgarians wished to take everyone with them, but the Bulgarian prefect prevented this, explaining that it was forbidden by the terms of the capitulation. All the inhabitants of the town, men and women, were robbed and beaten.

The first president of the parish was Tassa Stankoff of Trn.



After him came Krsta Menkoff of Kioustendil. The latter wrung money from people and for doing so was even punished by six months imprisonment. The third president was Ivan Vassiloff, who bore himself better than the former. Finally, the last president was Nenko Jarkoff. We was not very bad, but however took money from the inhabitants. The parish official was Stoyan Georgieff, a man very bad and harsh with the population. He had the parish wood cut and sold for his benefit. He took without payment from the inhabitants all which pleased him.

All foodstuffs, wood, cereals, etc., were requisitioned. Occasionally, they gave requisition forms, generally the things were taken without these forms. The latter were not paid. Thus the Bulgarians have paid nothing for what they took.

The use of the Serbian language was forbidden. People at whose houses were found Serbian caps or Serbian books were beaten and interned. The Serbian books were burnt. The church was transformed into a schismatic church. In the month of January 1917, the town was surrounded by soldiers, and the chief of police obliged the inhabitants to sign at the school a declaration stating that they were Bulgarians. The chief of police at that moment was Naiden Konstantinoff of Kioustendil. The Bulgarians destroyed, for the sake of the wood, the houses of Ilia Djoritch, Ritoune Ristitch, Stoyan Dimitrievitch, Rista Djoritch, widow of Todor Ristitch and Zanka Rista Krstitch. Men, women and children were obliged to work on the roads. Even the wives of functionaries were also obliged to work without payment or food.

Declarations of Osman Douritch aged 65, and Moustapha Hamedovitch, aged 65, both tziganes of Sourdoulitza. These two witnesses declared that the Bulgarians obliged the tziganes to bury the murdered, but they pretend that the tziganes who did this work, were carried off by the Bulgarian troops. This latter assertion does not appear to be exact, as the tziganes, who accompanied me during my researches at Douboka Dollina, amongst others the two witnesses, appeared to know the places perfectly well where the Bulgarians had buried their victims. This reservation is easily explained by the fear these men had to be implicated in the crimes of those who had obliged them to do this work.

Declarations of Stoyan Spassitch aged 35, mayor of the town of Vrania ; Dimitrie Mikitch aged 42, Louka Petrovitch aged 25, Tasso



Staitch aged 58, all of Vrania, and of Olga Kouchakovitch aged 28, of Belgrade, having taken refuge at Vrania.

On December 28th 1915, the first convoy of interned civilians left on foot via Trn to Sofia. When the people reached Sourdoulitza, the Bulgarians selected 17 notabilities and killed them. These victims, including 13 from Vrania, are Mita Militch, head of the monopoly department, Georges Petrovitch, merchant, Yantche Voutchkovitch merchant, Titoune Pantasievitch, bank cashier, Mita Lochitchkovitch, monopoly clerk, Douchan Kaitechitch, packer, Georges Zoubara merchant, Blagoye Ilitch, manufacturer of Vlassotintze, Kosta Djorgevitch, tax collector, the son of Mane Tchache, apprentice, Toma Momtchilovitch, tailor, Milivoye Stamenkovitch, Aritoune Milkovitch, as well as three popes of the Vrania district : pope Tota, pope Manoilo and pope Stamenko Stoikovitch. On January 28th 1916, arrived colonel Petar Kalkandjieff, commander of the 42nd regiment, who gave orders on the same evening to intern a further six citizens, of whom four were killed at Sourdoulitza. These were Toma Mikitch, aged 54, juge and consumptive, Toma Djourtchevitch president of the Smederevo Court, Toma S. Mihailovitch, merchant, and Toma Zaphirovitch, deputy of Vrania, who had heart disease.

Christodor Zvetanovitch, aged 30 years, of Leskovatz, declared :

I was taken with 80 others to Sourdoulitza on December 6th 1915. During the journey we were given nothing to eat and were cruelly beaten without interruption. At Sourdoulitza we were taken to a ravine near the main road (this is the Douboka Dollina). We were bound and the soldiers struck us with bayonets. I received two blows but succeeded in freeing myself and escaping. I saw many of my comrades who lay dead on the ground.

I examined the body of the witness and saw the marks of the two bayonets wounds. Further, I remarked that Zvetanovitch must have had a severe nervous shock following the horrors he had seen. He cannot think of it without crying.

Accompanied by artillery lieutenant Jarko Popovitch, of the artillery staff of the Morava division, by my Sourdoulitza witnesses as well as by several tziganes of the same district, I proceeded to the Douboko Dollina. This is a not very deep ravine, but of considerable length, which is crossed by a stream when it has rained heavily. I remarked everywhere the presence of earth freshly turned, forming flat mounds. These mounds are nearly everywhere covered by veg-



etation and thus hidden. It is however sufficient to raise the leaves and use a spade to judge of the nature of the soil. I had one of the numerous mounds opened by the tziganes. After having taken out the bones of at least five corpses, including a pope (from the remains of vestments), and after having brought to light remains of peasants' clothing, I remarked that this tomb also contained a quantity of bones of other bodies. I further observed that large stones covered the top of the tomb, which stones still bore traces of blood, as though the murderers had stoned the victims laid in the pit. The tziganes then asserted that the victims, when buried, were not all dead and had been stoned in the pit. The access to the Douboko Dollina was strictly forbidden to all inhabitants of the neighbourhood. A sentry was posted, with fixed bayonet, permanently at the entrance to the ravine.

The information I collected re. the events at Sourdoulitza are corroborated by a secret letter from Ivan Dimitroff, chief of the Vrania district, to the Minister of Home Affairs and of Health at Sofia. This letter is dated March 23rd 1916, bearing the number 903, of which a copy was handed to the Serbian authorities by a young girl of Vrania employed as typist at the prefecture of this town.

After having very strongly criticised the conduct of the Bulgarian military authorities in his district, this prefect, who appears to be an honest man exasperated by the cruelty of his countrymen, states, with regard to the events at Sourdoulitza, the following :

« It can be judged by all the official documents cited that I have acted against illegal internments, not only against that of Zaphiroff, but also against many others, as was my duty to do. I would add further that Colonel Kalkandjieff and Major Ilkoff have in many cases prevented me from exercising my official duty in the province placed under my care. I have however always acted in a conciliatory manner. I can prove that I demanded twice, through a « feldwebel » and a sergeant-major that the mistake of interning Zaphiroff be not committed and that we should wait longer, as Zaphiroff was ill, very ill of muscular rheumatism, a very grave illness noted, by the order of Ilkoff himself, by the medical commission and by Dr Markoff, medical captain at the 2/3 hospital. Markoff gave Zaphiroff a legal certificate. It must not be forgotten that Zaphiroff had as lodgers in his house Colonel Kalkandieff and Major Ilkoff, and that the present head of the province lives in his house. On January 23rd of this year, Zaphiroff was taken to Sourdoulitza, a place well known to the



people of Vrania and Leskovatz, without his wife being allowed to prepare the necessary medicine and clothing. At Sourdoulitza, although he had a special letter from me for the police agent Georgieff of that town, he was left to rest himself a little on the road and then dragged to his death. That same evening, Colonel Kalkandieff refused to receive my secretary. He was enjoying himself with Major Ilkoff. Both were celebrating the illegal act of interning Zaphiroff. The life of the latter was however only protracted by injections, and his death was expected at any moment.

Up to to-day, I was ashamed to mention the fact that the « feldwebel » in reply to my demand to protect Zaphiroff, unsheathed his sabre and menaced me by brandishing it over my head and over that of the old man dragged from his bed. This is what the General Koutincheff qualifies as a « task well understood and energetically executed ».

I am perfectly convinced that — although the motives of those who ordered internments were patriotic and noble — these internments are carried out irregularly, and the interned are killed, in order to hide the fact that they were irregularly interned ; and that the wives and daughters of the interned are violated and their possessions stolen. To sum up, I declare that the wrongs of Kalkandieff, Ilkoff and those of the following : Captain Dimkoff, Lieut. Hranoff, candidate-officer Antonoff, candidate-officer Zoureff, feldwebel Alexo Popoff of Constantinople, soldier Have Manoloff Bitparzarsky, detective Georgi Hopoff, etc., that all their wrongs, I repeat, are fatal for Bulgaria and that it will require at least 10 years to repair all the evil that these men have done to Bulgaria, to the name of Bulgaria and to the population here. These same wrongs are committed at Nich, of which I have already made reports to the General Headquarters, to the President of the Government and to yourself, in demanding a rapid and impartial enquiry. I hold at your disposal an enquiry on the atrocities committed, the assassinations, pillages and extortions, enquiry respecting the names, facts and dates.

I would also inform you of the typical fact which I heard at Leskovatz, fact demonstrated by the events of Vlassotintze and here, that the millionaire Blagoye Ilitch Moundjisky who had many factories at Vranska-Bania, at Leskovatz and at Vlassotintze, has been killed. Ilitch, who was very rich, took no part in politics. He always carried on him 100 to 120000 levas besides his watch,



his rings, his snuff box and other valuables. All these were taken from him in the Sourdoulitza ravine, of which place the people here have already made songs, and will, alas, make still more. And this same man, before being killed, offered to give half a million to the Bulgarian Red Cross to save his life. But the soldiers preferred to take the 100 or 120000 leva which they knew positively that he carried on him. Thus, there are amongst our men some who, without considering the interests of Bulgaria or of its brave army, enrich themselves by millions and millions. Amongst these there is also a certain Sub-Lt Youroukoff, the present commandant of Sourdoulitza.

Colonel Kalkandieff himself said to the functionary Karadjoff the following words, which are typical « Yes, I take, I steal ! Look around this room, there are many divans and on each there is a rug. Well, it is my brigadier, colonel Kiriloff, who has taken them ». These words of Kalkandieff, spoken in the colonel's lodging, were repeated to me by Karadjoff, in my house, in the presence of Lt-Col. Dr Voltcheff, and I repeated them to Col. Kyriloff himself. From this you will be able to judge of the situation here. I can prove, by witnesses that two soldiers, amongst those who took part in the terrible scenes at Sourdoulitza, lost their reason, and that two others died of hysteria. Knowing this atmosphere, well, indeed very well, I have on several occasions done all I could to alter it, to save the interests of the country and to change the situation, in accordance with superior orders, in order to render same compatible with the interests of the country.

I shall remember during my whole life the words which I heard from the lips of feldwebel Popoff, on the evening of January 23rd of this year, before the whole family of the late Zaphiroff and before his brother : « I have already had many heads like yours cut off. I will have yours cut off also. »

The same prefect, in a very interesting letter, addressed to the general-inspector of the Morava circumscription at Nich, dated February 2nd 1916, refers to another interned person — in his opinion illegally interned — who was also brought to Sourdoulitza. He states, in citing 20 examples of illegal internments : « Trifoun Mitoff, over 50 years of age, nearly blind, and ill. Taken from his bed whilst ill, had to be put to bed again on his arrival at Sourdoulitza. »

What is stated by the Bulgarian prefect Dimitroff respecting the events at Sourdoulitza, and in general, the conduct of his country-



men, is a terrible accusation against these latter. It also entirely confirms the declarations of my witnesses and my own observations. It cites the same names as those I collected on site. He speaks in his letter of the police agent Georgieff of Sourdoulitza, whilst my witnesses state that the chief of police of their town was Naiden Konstantinoff. Dimitroff qualifies Georgieff simply as « police agent ». He may therefore have been a subordinate of Konstantinoff, or even, as the Bulgarians often changed their functionaries, he may have been at Sourdoulitza before or after this latter.

The prefect also names, accusing them to be the chief authors of the Bulgarian crimes in the Vrania district, Colonel Kalkandjieff and Major Ilkoff. My personal enquiry confirms the perfect justness of this accusation. In the whole region of Vrania and Leskovatz, I come across these two names. Both belong to the noted 42nd regiment, the terror of this part of Serbia. Kalkandjieff commanded the regiment and Ilkoff the third battalion. In further reports, I shall have occasion to again refer to the crimes of these two men. At present, it is certain that they are amongst the Bulgarians who have the most crimes on their conscience. Dimitroff also speaks of Dimkoff and Hranoff. Both are known to me by my enquiry on site and will be referred to in my report on Vrania and district. Dimkoff, captain of the 3rd battalion of the 42nd regiment, and Hranoff, Lieutenant in the same regiment, formed part, with Dr Vasilieff, of the internment commission sitting at Vrania. It is to this commission that are due the innumerable internments in this part of the kingdom.

Dimitroff gives details concerning the arrest and death of the deputy Zaphirovitch, of whom my Vrania witnesses also speak. He states that he suffered from muscular rheumatism, whilst the Vrania people state that he had heart disease. Both parties may be right, as it is known that heart trouble accompanies or in most cases follows, muscular rheumatism. The Bulgarian also refers to the manufacturer Ilitch, named by my witnesses, and adds that this man wished to buy his life by giving half a million to the Red Cross. His remark that the soldiers preferred the 100 or 120000 levas which the manufacturer carried on him, which sum they put in their pockets, to the royal gift to a philanthropic institution, is absolutely crushing for the moral of the Bulgarian troops.

Thus from my personal enquiry, corroborated by documents of Bulgarian origin, there results :



- 1° That the Bulgarians killed many people of Sourdoulitza. The witness place their number at 2000 or 3000.
- 2° That the Sourdoulitza victims were from the whole district. Only three were from the town itself.
- 3° That the murders took place at the places called : Vrla Reka, Doubrava, Stoikava Chouma, Douboka Dollina, Kalifer, Raditcheva Bara and Vlachki Dol.
- 4° That the murdered were not always dead when buried. The survivors were stoned in the grave itself.
- 5° The executions were directed and ordered on site by the commander of the town, the sub-lt. Stoyan Youroukoff and the special commission composed of Sub-Lt Nestor Simonoff, sergeant Todor Vitanoff and stretcher-bearer Pejioff, all four belonging to the 42nd regiment.
- 6° Colonel Petar Kalkandieff, Major Ilkoff, both of the 42nd regiment, doctors Sapoundjieff and Vasilieff, sent the men to be killed from Vrania to Sourdoulitza. Captain Dimkoff and Lt. Hranoff collaborated in this work of extermination.
- 7° Men gravely ill were killed at Sourdoulitza.
- 8° 70 men of Sourdoulitza were interned.
- 9° 200 young men of the district were enrolled in the Bulgarian army as soldier-workmen.
- 10° All was requisitioned, and the requisitions were not paid.
- 11° Bulgarian functionaries and the military enriched themselves at the expense of the Serbian population.
- 12° Serbian books were destroyed.
- 13° The Serbian Church was transformed into a schismatic church.
- 14° The Bulgarians destroyed private property.
- 15° The inhabitants were obliged to furnish work for the enemy, without payment.

Belgrade, December 7/20 1918.

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N° 15

*Particulars of Bulgarian atrocities*

I saw Serbian prisoners for the first time between Strumitza and Petrich. The date was December 26rd 1915. It was exceedingly cold and these soldiers were working on the roads. I was unable to speak to them, but they appeared to be very miserable and badly treated. Afterwards I saw others all along the road to Sofia. All appeared to be very miserable. After leaving the hospital at Sofia I was put into the central depot with a hundred Serbian officers. The food consisted of a piece of bread and soup (twice) every day. The soup was very bad and generally without meat. The lodgings were bad.

On February 8th — i. e. three days later — I left for Tatar Pazardjik with 8 Serbian officers. We were made to travel worse than cattle worth anything. We remained at Pazardjik for five weeks and were badly housed, and had we not had money we should have been almost starved.

After five weeks we left for Phillipopole — 36 kilometers away — carriages were refused us. Fortunately we, the officers, were able to hire a few carriages. Before continuing, I must say that the treatment of the Serbian soldiers and civilian prisoners (men and women) at Pazardjik was extraordinarily bad and brutal. I have never seen — before or since — such bad treatments as those of the Pazardjik depot. The commandant of the town was a ferocious barbarian, i. e. a true Bulgarian officer.

At Phillipopole allied officers were not treated too badly : the treatment was really good, considering that we were amongst savages. The treatment of the Serbian soldiers was bad from all points of view, but I cannot recollect any real atrocities.

At the end of the month of July I escaped, but was recaptured near Pashmakli. In the town of Shiroko Laka we were imprisoned in a mosque with about 130 Serbians who worked on the roads. The conditions there were terrible. It was the first time in my life that I saw real misery. We were shut up like sardines all night, without even being able to go out to the lavatory. The greater part of the Serbians were ill and more or less without clothing. I am certain that not one of the 130 is living to-day. The commandant was a captain of Engineers, as well as being a brute of the worst kind. At



Pashmakli, Chepelare and all along the route to Phillipopole I saw Serbians who suffered as at Shiroka Laka. It was during this journey that I realised the Bulgarian system « Kill all the Serbians, but make them work well beforehand ».

In the month of September, I arrived at the Gorno Panitcherevo camp, where the worst atrocities in modern history took place. During the first week, I saw 27 Serbian soldiers (or interned civilians) beaten by order of Lt Samardjieff. They were beaten before a Bulgarian battalion because three of their comrades had escaped. Their backs were like raw meat. During the winter there was no fire in the hutments and many died of cold. For some time the Serbians' ration was 300 grammes of bread of bad quality — and frequently mouldy — and soup containing salt, pepper and 20 (twenty) grammes of potatoes per day.

These soldiers were either invalids, lame or amputated, who could not work, but they were however made to work by being beaten with sticks.

In the month of January, typhoid commenced. Immediately this was known, more prisoners were sent to the camp. The Serbian soldiers and interned civilians were so feeble and starved that they were useless as labourers. There was no doctor in the camp, the old doctor Oukoumanovitch having also died of typhus. The plan adopted by the commandant was the following. He had the 5th hutment surrounded by barbed wire. All Serbians who were ill (no matter the nature of the illness) were thrown there. Each day, « soup », bread and water were put there, and the corpses withdrawn, about twenty per diem. After about two months, a dentist and a Roumanian chemist were sent there as a punishment, i. e. to kill them also. With them, I visited the 5th hutment. I saw there a spectacle which no artist could ever paint nor any author describe. The Serbians there in were nearly all mad with illness and hunger, and chattered like monkeys. They lay in their own excrements, possibly several weeks old. It was so horrible that, although I am a medical student and used to disgusting sights, I had to leave after 20 minutes.

It was at the beginning of April, I believe, that young fresh interned civilians began to arrive from Serbia. About 4000 came to the camp in all. After their arrival, the real atrocities commenced. They were 650 in hutments 30 meters long by 10 meters wide. All day long one could hear blows from sticks, blows frequently given



on the face ! During the night there were fusillades. In two nights they shot 14 Serbians and Roumanians — 6 killed and 8 wounded.

During the month of May the camp became nothing better than a typhus hospital, a hospital with plenty of doctors, but practically no medicine or things which are of first necessity for patients. I should require a thousand sheets of paper to relate all the atrocities, and for this reason I will end my recital by a typical example.

On July 7th or 8th 1917, between midnight and two in the morning, they shot a young Serbian boy of 15 or 16 whilst he was passing urine. He received two bullets, one in the arm, the other in the stomach. These two shots were followed (as per orders given to the guard) by a fusillade which sounded the alarm and brought other soldiers from the barracks 500 meters away. These soldiers from the barracks were to surround the camp to succour the ordinary guard in case of revolt. With these soldiers, came Major Samardjieff and two other Bulgarian officers. All three looked at the young Serbian, and the Major refused to allow one of the doctors attend to him. It was 3 or 4 hours before the Serbian died.

After I left Panitcherevo, I did not see many Serbians. Those I saw were naturally in a miserable state, without clothes and proper food.

28. XI. 18.

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NOTE : This report was drawn up by Mr Cowan in French.

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## N° 16

### REPORT ON BULGARIAN ATROCITIES IN SERBIA

I base the following statements on evidence collected in four ways. Firstly, by what I saw, such as the ruins of houses and sometimes of whole villages, scars on the bodies of men, women and children, and the exhumation of corpses. Secondly, by sworn evidence. Thirdly, by the interrogation of the people whose stories I verified as much as possible by the first two methods and by the corroborative testimony of other witnesses. And forthly, by the perusal of certain original Bulgarian documents, which have come into our hands.



Professors of the University of Belgrade, Mileta Novakovitch and Kosta Kumanudi and I made a tour through Eastern Serbia in December and January 1918-1919, with the object of examining into the question of atrocities committed by the Bulgarians during their occupation. We visited Kumanovo, Vrania, Sourdoulitza, Lescovats, Procouplic, Kourshounlia, Nish, Tchupria, and Pojarevatz, besides villages en route. Everywhere we found evidence of the wanton destruction of private property. Everywhere we heard the same stories of beating, robbery and murder, and in some places we heard of crimes and tortures unspeakable. Especially to be noted was the organised attempt to bulgarise the country, to accomplish which the Bulgars employed methods ranging from the erasing of every Serbian inscription, the destruction of all Serbian literature and cruel punishments for the use of the Serbian language, to the burning of Serbian school-mistresses in their schools, and the wholesale murder of Serbian priests, teachers, functionaries, and other educated or rich men who might encourage in the rest of the population the maintenance of their national spirit.

To enter into the very many individual cases of outrage and cruelty that came to my knowledge, would be wearying in the extreme. I therefore set forth only a few of the most striking cases, and give a general statement of what the Bulgarians did to the civilian population of Serbia during their occupation. If further details are required, I shall be happy to give them.

Kumanovo has suffered extensive pillage and a good many houses have been destroyed. The cases of two women especially attracted my attention. One, a schoolmistress called Paraskeva Radovitch, resisted violation and was so beaten that she became mentally deranged. My colleagues and I believe it is impossible that she was not violated. The other woman, Elisabeth Ristitch, was the wife of a schoolmaster. She was kept in the hotel for weeks by the Bulgarians and is now insane.

At Vrania, which has been very much destroyed and pillaged, we interviewed among others the families of the four principal men of the town : Toma Djurdjevitch, Toma Djikitch, Toma Mikitch, and Toma Zafirovitch. All four of these gentlemen were taken from their homes at nightfall in the winter of 1915-16 by a Bulgarian sergeant and four soldiers, under pretext of internment. Since then, their families have had no news of or from them, except that, among other corpses found outside Vrania, Djurdjevitch's daughter



recognized one by its clothing, as being that of her father; and that the other three men were recognized by the villagers of Sourdoulitza, and are known to have been murdered there. Djurdjevitch twice bought himself off by heavy money payments, but when he had nothing left, no mercy was shown. In these cases there was no question of a trial of any sort, nor even of any accusation being levelled at the victims. Yet all paid the extreme penalty. For extermination of leading Serbs was considered essential to the Bulgarisation of the occupied country. Others were treated in the same way.

The rank and file of the population suffered also. The case of Katarina Stochitch is illustrative. She is a woman of fifty-five, and says, that she was asked for 6.000 dinars, but as she could give only 1600, the Bulgars stripped and thrashed her. Later they wanted her to give information about some Serbian Commitaji, and because she could not or would not give it, they beat her again (naked of course), pulled on the hairs on her sexual parts, broke her left leg just above the ankle, and covered her with their excreta. She was also put in prison for six months. I myself saw her left leg, the bone of which has not set straight.

On the morning of Monday, December 16th, we were taken outside of Vrania to the North, where in some fields we disinterred human remains in two places. In all we found the remains of seven priests and three others. According to the Prefect and to general report these ten men had been brought to Vrania from the neighboring parishes, were shot in cold blood and buried in the fields where we disinterred their corpses. As further proof of this murder. I can say that I saw the original of a Bulgarian document about this matter.

Some two kilometers further North we disinterred the remains, of six other men, at least two, and possibly three of whom were priests, the remainder being civilians. Of the six skulls found, three had been broken, one behind, badly, the other two on the side. In all of the three places of disinterment the bodies had been thrown in pell-mell with no arrangement of any kind.

At Vladichin Hahn, we obtained the following details from the Sub-Prefect's formal report. Namely, that a woman, Miloyka Petkovtich, had her breasts cut off before witnesses; that two unknown priests were found dead nearby, together with five unknown civilians also dead; that 47 inhabitants of the commune, six of whom were women, had been murdered; that one man before being killed



had had his tongue cut off ; that 60 men had been stripped naked and had received from 25 to 250 blows from whips ; that certain men had been branded ; that 27 women and girls received thrashings ranging from 25 to 150 blows, that two of these women after being beaten were interned in Bulgaria and have not since returned ; and that a young girl — Stoika Kinitch — was shot because she refused to be violated.

The village is much damaged and all Serbian inscriptions had been erased.

#### SOURDOULITZA

At Sourdoulitza we interviewed the only uninterned men of the village, about 15 in all ; a résumé of what they told us I give below, together with information I collected from other sources.

Any Serb who was educated up to a certain point, or who had any kind of leadership among his fellows, was sent here as though en route for internment in Bulgaria, as this is the last Serbian village on the road across the border. When they arrived, they were robbed of all money or anything of value, even to boots and clothes very often, and were then taken out in the evening and murdered. At first they were shot and left lying for several days to terrorize the villagers ; after which gypsies were employed to bury them. But this led to requests from the villagers to rebury their friends ; as, for example, the woman who found out where her daughter was buried and begged to be allowed to give the corpse proper burial. So, in order to avoid giving any indication of where the murders took place, they gave up shooting, and butchered their victims with knives and bayonets, burying secretly. Moreover, they disinterred those corpses already buried and reburied them elsewhere. The country round that village must be one vast cemetery, and is aptly called « the slaughter house of Serbia », for during November-December-January and February 1915-16, every day from 200 to 400 Serbs were led off en route for Bulgaria, a large portion of each day's quota being murdered. The villagers told me that every night they heard cries and groans coming from the woods around the village. Those four months were the worst, but the same sort of things was going on all the time the Bulgars were there, the last murder being committed on July 14, 1918.

For example, 86 civilians were sent from Lescovats. They marched all the way, with their arms bound, and were constantly



beaten. Only 80 of them got as far as Sourdoulitza, the remaining six having been murdered en route. After their arrival they were taken off into the fields and woods near the village in parties of 10, tied two and two. This was after shooting had been given up, and they were butchered with knives and bayonets.

Seventy six of the eighty who got to Sourdoulitza were murdered in this way, the other four escaped. One of the four, Djoka Tassitch, a student of philosophy, I interviewed when we got to Lescovats. He showed me his scars and told me the story of his escape. His declaration under oath is in the archives of this Commission.

Another group of 42 civilians was sent from Lescovats to Sourdoulitza, but they never arrived, as they were all murdered on the way.

The people here also told us that Toma Zafirovitch, Toma Mikitch, and Toma Djurdjevitch, the three men I mentioned as having been sent from Vranya to Sourdoulitza, were recognized by them and are known to have been murdered here.

The village of Sourdoulitza had been extensively gutted. The Bulgars, here as everywhere, asked in each house for money; if money was not forthcoming in sufficient amounts, the house was burned. The people laughed at me when I asked if any of the women had been beaten or maltreated, and told me that they had all suffered everything that women could suffer.

In order to gain further evidence of the murders committed in this neighborhood, we ordered the disinterment of some of the corpses. I had particularly requested that no digging should be done before our arrival in order to obviate all possibility of a « plant », and when we were taken to some fields to the S. E. of the village, there was absolutely nothing to indicate that anything had been buried, or that the ground had been disturbed in any way. Three places were pointed out to us as the graves of some of the victims, but, I repeat, that in no way did they differ from their surroundings. In the first of the three places we found the remains of a priest and of an arch-priest, both in a fair state of preservation. Professor Novakovitch found a large calibre rifle bullet (about 45-70, I should say) near the middle of the body of the arch-priest (and it was pointed out that he came from the village of Gilliané in Macedonia, because he wore low shoes characteristic of that place). The priest's lower jaw had been forced down considerably out of place.

In the second place we found in all five corpses and a foot.



They were in two layers, had been thrown in pellmell and consisted of the remains of a priest, an officer below the rank of Major, an N. C. O., a soldier, and a child. They were fairly well preserved, especially the body of the priest which was at the bottom, and the priest's soutane and officer's uniform were easily recognisable. The corpses were photographed.

In the third place we found a single corpse dressed as a peasant, but the people assured us that it had been an educated man, as his hands had been white and fine as those of a man who had never done manual labour.

After this, we went along the road leading out of the village to the North for about a kilometer, till we came to a narrow gulch running Eastwards. We saw that the ground was undisturbed, except in one place where D' Reiss had exhumed a corpse on his recent visit, and we gave orders for the digging to begin. Excavations were made in five places, and in four of them we found human remains. In two of these places we found whole corpses, nine in one, and seven in another. In both places the dead had been thrown in pell-mell and we noticed bayonet or knife marks on the clothing of many. In the other two places we found only skulls (13 in all) and arm and leg bones, with only a few rags of clothing. This is explained by the fact that at first the victims had either been left unburied or buried inefficiently, and the dogs came and worried the corpses, carrying heads and hands and arms, etc., through the country and fighting over them in the village streets. These fragments the Bulgars collected and buried where we found them.

Incidentally, it was from one of the parties of ten led to execution in this valley that the student of Philosophy whom I interviewed in Lescovats made his escape. Altogether we disinterred at Sour-douliza the remains of 37 Serbs, all of whom we have every reason to believe were murdered in cold blood by the Bulgarians. In several of the skulls we found gold filled and gold capped teeth, which carries out the statements of the community that they were well-to-do men. And the statement that the Bulgars robbed their victims of even their shoes is carried out by the fact that we found only two corpses with any foot gear other than socks — one being the arch-priest and the other being one of the corpses, found in the little gulch, which had one boot left. We were all glad, I think, to leave Sour-doulitza.

On the way to Lescovats we stopped at a little village called Ve-



iika Grabovnitza, where we found the first evidence of the swing torture. Two holes were cut in the roof through which cords ran to the beams above. A Serb would be hung by these cords passed under his arms; and naked, would be swung from one side of the room to the other, the Bulgars giving him fresh momentum as the end of each swing by blows from sticks an inch or more thick, the broken halves of one of which we saw.

We interviewed the inhabitants, nearly all of whom had been beaten, including a man of 90 and a woman of 70, and all complained of being forced to buy themselves immunity from the swing torture. The village was much damaged.

The Mayor told us that a woman was murdered here by a Bulgar soldier, because she resisted violation.

At Lescovats we interviewed many people all of whom had stories of beatings, extortion, robbery and murder to tell. One old man of 70 had his teeth knocked out and was beaten, another of 60 was branded all over his lower chest stomach, arms and back and was threatened with hanging as a means of extortion. A woman of 40, Natalie Tsvetkovitch, was stripped and beaten all over her body and hung until she lost consciousness. We saw the scars of the beatings.

On Christmas day of 1917 in the village of Mala Grabovnitza, the Bulgars entered the house of Blagoyé Reikovitch and began beating his son's wife. Her child, then 3 days old, fell from her arms to the ground, and because the old man protested, he was so beaten that he is now partly crippled.

The cases I heard here of brutality are so numerous and so universally found elsewhere that I will not put them down.

On the high ground above Lescovats to the North West, we found many bones which were said to be human. As I am not a student of anatomy, I cannot say that they were all human, but, scattered about among the brushwood and in the open grass land, I certainly saw a great many human skulls, parts of human skulls, and human jaw bones.

These are accounted for by the fact that here, as at Sourdoulitza, from distant parts of the country there were brought many Serbs, whom the Bulgars led out at dark and murdered. They were not buried, but left lying for the dogs and foxes to worry, and for the numerous birds of prey to feed upon. Many skulls have been buried by the peasants whenever they happened to find them. One farmer



claimed to have picked up over fifty skulls on his property alone. It is to be noted that no battle was fought on this ground.

We also disinterred two corpses of civilians who had been shot before a forced audience of the citizens of Lescovats. Photographs were taken both of the skulls and other human bones picked up in the fields, and of the two disinterred corpses.

The next day we went out to a badly damaged village called Lebané and heard there these same stories we heard everywhere. One boy of 17, Nicola Stankovitch, had had an extraordinary escape. He was taken in a group of seven youths to a vineyard outside Lescovats, where they were lined up and shot. By a strange chance he alone was not touched. But he fell down with the others and shammed dead. The Bulgars came up to finish off the wounded, and gave Stankovitch 13 knife and bayonet wounds on the back and side of the neck, arm and stomach, the scars of which he showed us. They left him for dead, but he crawled away during the night, and so escaped.

In Lebané we first heard of the hanging torture. This means that a man, or woman, was first stripped naked, and then hung from the ceiling by his hands and feet, which were tied together behind his back. They were left hanging thus with the body bent in a curve face downwards, until they fainted, when they were let down, only to be re-hung on coming to their senses.

The priest of Lebané, who has escaped murder by dressing as a peasant, complained that his library of over 3,000 books, which must have meant much to him, was thrown, volume by volume, into the river.

I left my colleagues after lunch and went up into the surrounding hills, where the villages I had time to visit showed plainly who had been there. I was away from Lebané for only about two hours, and had neither time nor interpreter to question the villagers; but I saw the ruins of 33 houses, 15 barns or stables, 14 granaries, and 7 other buildings. All destroyed wantonly, without the excuse of military questions.

In one little hamlet there remained standing one house and half a house. The other two and a half houses and all out-buildings had been burned to the ground. In the village of Shumané I was told that 35 of their people had been murdered by the Bulgars. Oh this I have no proof, but that there has been much wanton destruction, and that there is now much poverty, I am convinced.



Professor Kumanudi and Professor Novakovitch, during their examination of the inhabitants of Lebané, came across the following :

Petar Zvetkovitch, the priest or Precopchelitza — a neighboring village — was taken by the Bulgars who first cut him all over with knives and then cut off his head. They showed this head for two days, and then threw it away. But later, the murdered man's dog found the head and brought it back to his master's widow.

At Medvedja, women were hung up to the ceiling naked, as in the hanging torture, and were then beaten on the stomach.

At Gaitan, 20 women enceinte were murdered, and a woman just delivered of child was also killed. The next morning the child was found sucking the dead breast.

At Gaitan also, an old man of 70, called Zlatko, was tortured in the following manner : The Bulgars placed a piece of wood under his penis and beat upon the penis with sticks. Zlatko died in agony from the effects.

On our way back to Lescovats we stopped near an old church and, while Professor Kumanudi interviewed some peasants, Professor Novakovitch, who throughout our trip in this respect, as in every other, has been courtesy itself, interpreted for me while I interviewed the priest Traiko Popovitch, an old gentleman with long hair and beard, who was interned in Bulgaria, at the beginning of the war, leaving behind him two daughters. He returned after the signing of the armistice to find that one daughter, called Nastasia, had been beaten to death by the Bulgars, and that the other — Cossara — a school-mistress, had been shut up in her schoolhouse and burned alive. Incidentally he added that he had had two houses, but that they had both been burned. He bade us God speed and turning, walked off through the tress to his church.

We interviewed some more people on our return to Lescovats. Most of them told the same stories we had heard so often before, but one man called Novakovitch — not my Colleague — gave sworn testimony to the following effect.

Namely, that he was present in Uskub as a witness, in February 1918, at the trial of colonel Kalkandjiew, of the Bulgarian Army, who was accused by the relatives of a Jew, called Haimkari, of having murdered the said Haimkari. His defence was « I have killed 60 priests, 200 fuctionaries, and more than 3000 citizens, without distinguishing between Serb, Jew, Bohemian (Gipsy) or Turk, because I have full authority from my government to kill all who may be



indicated to me as hurtful or prejudicial towards Bulgaria ». On the strength of this statement, the Bulgarian Tribunal acquitted him.

The town of Lescovats itself had received better treatment than that which we saw elsewhere. Many houses had been pillaged, of course, and much furniture, linen, silver, etc., stolen, but I saw no houses that had been burned. The machinery in the eight factories had been to a great extent ruined or carried off, but the buildings were intact.

At Poukovats, the people told us that in their canton, 47 men had been murdered, and that two women had their throats cut because they could not give the money for which they were asked.

At Procouplie, a certain number of houses had been destroyed, and by interviewing the people we collected many statements of the usual ill treatment which, for the most part, it would be but tiresome repetition to put down here. Three of these statements, however, are so striking that I give them below.

Militza Sarkovitch, of Berilye, told us that in the beginning of 1918, her daughters were taken to prison one Saturday night, and so beaten that they died shortly afterwards.

At the village of Belevode, in the same region, a woman called Milatitch and her two daughters, were covered with petrol and set on fire, the mother and one daughter being burned to death. The other daughter who told the story, escaped with her life, but showed the scars of the burning which are horrible.

At the village of Petrovatz, near Procouplie, a Bulgarian officer called Ferdinand Mioura, with the aid of four of his soldiers, seized the daughter of Stania Boskovitch, and having stripped and beaten her on the stomach, caused his dog to violate her.

The 25th regiment of Bulgarian Infantry is bitterly complained of all through this district.

From Procouplie we went to Koureshumlia, and from there we made excursions to the surrounding villages. At Ratcha, Stoiana Andjelkovitch said that the Bulgars first undressed her, and then put a piece of prepared wood in her vagina and lit it. She is a young mother, 30 years old, and added that her family were forced to watch the whole proceeding and to spit upon her sexual parts. She was photographed.

Everybody had the same stories to tell of the beating, torture and raping of women and of the beating, torture, and murder of men, as we had heard everywhere else. Many houses have been des-



troyed in this village and everything of any use has been carried off. I rode through some of the neighboring hamlets and saw altogether the ruins of 20 houses and of 26 other buildings destroyed by fire. I should judge that fully 50 per cent of the buildings in the places I visited had been destroyed, but as all the district round Koursoumlia has suffered in much the same way, I will give as an example what I found in the village of Banya, which lies to the South West of Koursoumlia.

I went there on Christmas day, 1918, with an interpreter, and a photographer, and spent the day in examining the people. In the village itself there remains one room only. Everything else, hotel, villas, houses, baths, etc., have all been destroyed by fire. About a kliometer away, round a bend in the valley, was the only house I saw that had been left standing. It contained two beds, two families and two blankets. I was told that they were the only two blankets left in the village. We lunched there, and remembering the lavishness of Serbian hospitality, it is a commentary on the poverty of the place when I say that all the village could offer us was a little Rakia (prune brandy).

In December 1917, one evening, the Bulgars opened fire on this house with a machine gun. They entered and threw the children (six in all) from one corner to another, thrashed the old grandmother, Pana Stankovitch, on the naked stomach, took a younger woman, (Leposava Stankovitch) into the woods, and thrashed her. On three days this young woman was beaten four times a day on the naked stomach with knotted whips previously wetted, besides having her breasts pounded with gun butts. She showed me the scars on her body. Her breasts in particular were in a dreadful condition being all covered with scars. She still suffers much pain. One of the children, a pretty little girl of 13, had been beaten over and over again.

Returning to the village proper, I interviewed in the one room that remains, as many of the inhabitants as I could in the limited time I had at my disposal.

Saveta Mitrovitch, a widow with a 6 year old child, stated that on December 18th, 1917, she was trashed four times; that on December 20th, 1917, she was trashed six times and two days later she was trashed so often and so much that she was left unconscious. Of course, she was always tripped naked to be beaten. Her stomach is



badly swollen and covered with scars, and she has difficulty in walking.

Velika Dragoutinovich, an elderly married woman, saw her 17 year old son hung before her eyes ; on three separate occasions she was beaten with gun butts, and was once wounded by a bayonet thrust. She showed me her scars. But that was not all. On another occasion she was stripped and the Bulgars pierced her tongue with a bayonet, holding her head back so that she choked in her own blood. This was repeated a second time with this difference that, after being stripped, she was put on her back on the ground, the Bulgars standing on her breasts with their nailed boots and holding her head in such a position that she choked again. Later she was put in prison for 7 weeks and then interned in Bulgaria. There she was so beaten and ill-treated that now she is always ill and cannot work. When she returned, she found that her house had been burned.

Styka Militch, an old woman of 70, was stripped naked and terribly beaten from the top of her stomach to mid thigh, also on her back. I saw her scars. She added that it was impossible to name what the Bulgars had done to her. Her house also was destroyed.

Yelka Petrovitch, 25 years old, and a widow with one child, was beaten three times, and lost consciousness each time. She was a pretty woman and said that she was often kicked and beaten because she defended herself from violation. Her three brothers-in-law and her grandfather-in-law were all hung before her eyes because they could not tell the whereabouts of Kosta Petchanatz, the leader of the Serb Insurrection of 1917. Incidentally, everybody I spoke to here said that they had been beaten or otherwise maltreated for the same reason ; and all agreed that the leaders in Bulgarian brutality were Tané Voyvoda and Kroum Voyvoda.

Ricynie Atchenitch, a young widow with a 3 year old daughter, saw her grandfather and grandmother murdered before her eyes, and because she asked why this had been done, she was stripped naked and brutally beaten. In all she was thrashed more than twenty times (corroborated by the mayor and others, who said also that she had been violated), and her breasts were pounded with gun butts. When I saw her, her hands were trembling badly ; she could scarcely stand, and she was evidently in great pain. Moreover she has had no medical attention, because there is neither doctor nor chemist in the whole arrondissement ; her clothes are in rags, her house and all that she had is utterly destroyed ; and I do not see how she and the many



others in like conditions are to survive this winter. All the women in this village have suffered in much the same way as these I mention.

Givadin Alexitch, a man of 60 years, showed me scars on his stomach, made by bayonet thrusts. He was one of the 57 men, women and children whom the Bulgars stripped, tied together, and beat all one day with whips, and sticks, and gun butts. They were left out all night on the ground without any covering. This was in December 1917.

Blagoye Vidakovitch, a boy of 14, was at home when the Bulgars came in, murdered his father and shot him twice, once in the thigh and once in the foot. He could not tell me how often he had been beaten. His brother was taken away to be interned, but has since never been heard of ; his home is burned to the ground.

Jika Krushitch, 48 years old, with two children of 10 and 8 years, said he had been shot in the leg because when asked what he was, he had answered « I am a Serb ». He is still lame. He stated also that his wife and every woman in the village had been violated but dare not say so. To this the Mayor and the other men of the village agree. His house also was burned.

Milorad Miletitch, 40 years old, with wife and three children, was so horribly beaten on the stomach that he cannot work and can scarcely walk. In June 1917, before the insurrection, his house was burned and his wife first beaten insensible, and then violated. He himself was condemned to death, but managed to escape to the woods.

Radoslav Yvitch, 55 years old, was badly beaten on the stomach which is still swollen and much marked ; his wife was beaten and violated ; his daughter-in-law-to-be, who tried to escape to the woods, was caught and first beaten and then violated.

Raka Janjevitch, who was an invalid, was horribly beaten on the stomach ; his wife was beaten and violated ; and his 2 year old boy was beaten and stoned.

And so the story continued all day. Each had much the same sort of thing to relate, and this village of Banya is only one of many, where the same crimes were committed by the Bulgarian Army of occupation.

At Kourshoumlia we found the same thing over again, except that branding on the stomach with red hot shovels was more prevalent than, for example, at Banya. I saw men with eyes knocked out, with dreadful scars all over their bodies, with crippled limbs,



one with a broken back, another who with a broken shoulder had been thrown into a baker's oven where the heat was so great that he is now blind. I saw many who are unable to work and I talked with a woman who had been beaten on the stomach while she was enceinte. Her child was 4 months prematurely born, but is still alive. Another woman's arm was broken, after which she was thrown on her fire. And a mother brought me her daughter who had been so beaten and violated that she is now insane.

At Velika Plana, we found that everybody had some tale of brutality to tell. It was just Banya, Ratcha and Kourshumlia over again. Here we heard of two men who were violated, one, an old man of sixty. We have his sworn testimony and the sworn testimony of two witnesses. Another old man of 75 was beaten and has dogs set upon him. His wife was beaten also, his two sons were murdered and his house is burned. A soldier came back here after the wars to see his wife and family, but found that his wife had been shut up in his house and burned alive, and that his 18 year old daughter had been beaten and violated. He has five children to support and nothing in the world. Another man was murdered by being cut to pieces with a knife; his wife was beaten and violated and is left with four children. All five are nervous wrecks.

A young woman showed me her 8months baby which had a large hollow or dent on one side of its head, caused by a blow from a Bulgar's gun butt. A 14 year old boy was shot in the leg, just for the fun of the thing. Another woman here was stretched out naked on the ground by four Bulgars, and beaten on the stomach while she was enceinte, until she had a miscarriage. She has been ill ever since. A Serb soldier was released from a Bulgarian hospital and allowed to come back here to his home. When he arrived, the Bulgars here cut his throat. An old woman of 70 and an old man of 72 were both beaten, naked of course. A girl of 18 was raped and then burned to death.

Here also we came across the case of an old woman, Julka Nikolitch, who greeted a Bulgarian officer with the words « Dobar dan », which is the Serbian form of greeting. But because she had not said « Dober den », which is the Bulgarian form, she was stripped and beaten on the stomach, bayoneted and kicked on the head.

At Alexandrovo, 41 houses and 37 other buildings were destroyed. 53 houses remain. In one of the 41 destroyed houses, 27 civilians were shut up. The building was then set on fire and



they all perished. The Bulgarian lieutenant Asen Velkov, with the help of sergeant Ilia Stoychev, beat to death an old man of 70. Both Bulgarians were of the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Squadron. Also at Alexandrovo a little girl of 8 years was raped and died from the effects.

The Archbishop of Nish told us that 23 of his priests were taken away in one night, that all but two were murdered in cold blood, and that the corpses were burned. The two who escaped have given evidence of what they saw. Altogether, 158 priests in the Archbishopric of Nish were murdered. The Prefect of Nish told us that hundreds of civilians had been murdered in the old Turkish Fort above the town and buried in the moat. We disinterred corpses in the indicated places and I have no doubt that many were buried elsewhere and will never be found except by chance.

At Pojarevatz, we interviewed a Bulgarian officer who was held there as a prisoner. He confessed to extortion and beatings, and told us that his brother officers had all been guilty of the same things and worse. As an example, he told us that a captain of his regiment finding that one of his men had syphilis, gave orders that this syphilitic should go about in the villages and violate all the Serbian girls he could. In consequence, the country round Pojarevatz is full of this disease. The rest of his evidence will be treated of in the report of the whole Commission.

I think I have told enough to show that unquestionably the Bulgarians did commit atrocities of the most foul and inhuman nature. Barbarous treatment of the civilian population male and female, old and young ; torture ; pillage ; extortion ; robbery ; murder and sadism have all appeared in the testimony we have received.

It should be particularly noticed that nowhere was there ever even a pretence of a trial. The Bulgarians killed and tortured without mercy whomever and whenever it pleased them so to do. And they did not do these things in hot blood. They did them in a systematic way and continued to do them during three years. I do not claim that every particular crime was committed by order. But I do say that undoubtedly there was organized wholesale murder, and that the reign of horror as such, was inspired by the Bulgarian leaders and endorsed by the nation as a whole, with the avowed purpose of Bulgarizing the country by the extermination of the inhabitants. Yet their victims were all old men, men unfit for the army, or women and children.



This Commission has an enormous mass of information on the subject, and in our full report we take up the question in more detail. But even so, we know and can know only a little part of the horror that Serbia knew during the Bulgarian occupation.

The 25th Regiment of Bulgarian Infantry ; the Commitaji leaders Tané, Krsta, Gavriilo, Kristo, Cazandjia and others ; colonel Kalkandjiev and major Ilkov are particularly complained of.

With all respect to these who sit in judgement, I suggest that a nation guilty of such appalling crimes should be most heavily punished. For in the community of nations as in a community of persons, the only safeguard against crime is the punishment of crime ; and Law has no meaning unless it is upheld.

William A. DRAYTON,  
*Union Club, New-York.*

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N<sup>o</sup>. 17

To : Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Base Depot, Salonika.  
From : Lieut. J. C. A. Owen, R. A. F.

Sir,

Referring to your communication of Nov. 2nd I beg to make the following statement on the ill-treatment of Serbian Prisoners of War at Philippopolis, Bulgaria.

During the month of March or April 1917 I, with other British officers, witnessed the flogging of a Serbian soldier or interned civilian who was put on his stomach and received a terrible beating at the hands of a Bulgarian soldier, this was all done under the personal supervision of the Commandant of the Camp at Philippopolis (Lieut Nicoloff), while the Serbian was being flogged, he very naturally flinched from the effect of the blow, in doing so he raised his hand and the Commandant Nicoloff promptly kicked him in the head, this he did repeatedly.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient Servant,

(Signed) : C. A. OWEN,  
Lieut. R. A. F.



N° 18

REPORT ON TREATMENT OF SERBIAN PRISONERS OF WAR  
IN BULGARIA

I. Statement by Capt. C. K. Blandy, R. A. F.  
Complaint.

When I arrived at Philipopolis, lieut. Nicoloff was the Camp commandant. One day in early March I was walking with lieut. Owen R. A. F., and hearing a man crying looked up and saw a Serbian being flogged by a Bulgar soldier, while the commandant, lieut. Nicoloff was looking on. When the Serbian cried out, as he did several times, I saw lieut. Nicoloff kick the man in the face. We were, of course, powerless to do anything.

2. Statement by lieut. R. W. Frazier.

*Comparison of general treatment of allied prisoners*

The French and English received the same treatment. The Serbians were famished ragged wrecks, and were an example of what the British soldiers would have been, without food, clothing and money from home. I have seen them licking tins thrown away on British rubbish heaps.

3. Statement by lieut. S. T. Beare, Fl. lieut. R. N.

*Comparison of general treatment of allied prisoners*

The French and English received the same treatment. The Serbians were forced to live under such terrible conditions that a great number, at any rate, could not possibly survive. Everything pointed to a systematic « killing off » of these unfortunate creatures. The Roumanians were in much the same plight.

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N° 19

November 3rd, 1918.

To : The Commanding officer, Royal Air Force Base Depot,  
Salonika.

*Submitted*

With reference to Base Depot note of the 2nd inst.

I have not seen myself the actual administration of ill treatment to the Serbian prisoners, although I have been told of very many cases from other officers, who, I understand, are reporting these instances. I beg, however, to make the following report as to what I actually saw.

The general condition of the Serbian prisoners was really terrible especially in the winter. These men had no blankets, and a great number no boots at all. The remainder had various types of bandages and sandals. Large numbers of them would crawl round our Camp, picking up odd scraps of food and eat it, no matter where it had been laying or in what condition it was in. Further I have seen some of them actually licking the empty tins which we had thrown away.

Large numbers of Serbians were buried about 100 yards from our own barrack. Some of these men were buried in rough wooden coffins, but the majority in nothing at all. On enquiry as to the cause of death one was told « Typhus », but from the external appearances of the bodies it seemed to me nothing but sheer starvation. Often one saw Serbian prisoners just drop down in the Camp and die, always from the same cause. I have mentioned this to Bulgarian officers, but they expressed no concern whatever.

The impression one had, from what we could see was certainly, that no real effort was being made on the part of the Bulgarians to stop these large number of deaths. The prisoners of war were supposed to receive the same rations as the Bulgarian soldiers in Camp, but as far as I know very few deaths took place amongst these men.

There were also about 60 to 70 Serbian women, until about the last two months, in the same hut as some of the men.

Lt. E. P. Hyde R. F. C. who was our doctor at Philippopolis told me of a case he was treating. A woman had arrived at the Camp



with her back so badly bruised from being beaten with a stick, that she could not bear anyone placing a hand even lightly on her back.

(Signed) : R. G. BERKERLEY,  
Lieutenant R. N. V. R.  
attad R. A. F.

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**N° 20**

Salonika Aircraft Park, R. A. F. 2/11/18.

**REPORT ON ILL-TREATMENT OF SERBIANS BY BULGARS**

Sir,

While I was undergoing imprisonment in the Prisoners of War Depot at Philippopolis I heard and later saw the Camp commandant flogging Serbians in the next room to my own. On enquiring the reason why these Serbians were flogged I was told it was because they were Serbians.

There were at one time seven occupants of the room which was only two and a half metres by two and a half metres with a broken window and a roof which kept out no rain.

The above incidents occurred several times between August 4th and August 24th of this year.

At the beginnig of October 1918 about two hundred (200) Serbians arrived at the depot and as there was no room in any of the barracks these Serbians were left out in the open, and owing to rain, and the bad state their clothes and health were in, a number died during the night. — I saw seven (7) bodies carried away but heard that fifteen (15) died.

During my stay at Philippopolis, I noticed a flogging taking place in the barrack square, close to the Bulgar Guard house. The victim in this case was I heard a Serbian woman, but owing to a number of Bulgarian Guards standing round I did not see the victim. Shortly after I noticed one of the Serbian women going from the crowd towards the Women's barrack. — I believe she was the victim of five (5) strokes.

I have the honour to be, Sir, our obedient Servant,

Signed : Harold A. TRACEY,  
lieut. R. A. F.



N° 21

TREATMENT OF SERBIANS IN BULGARIA

From my experience whilst a prisoner of war in Bulgaria, the treatment meted out to the Serbians was most inhuman. They were underclothed and underfed. Several times whilst I was incarcerated in different prisons on my way up to Philippopolis, I made complaints to the commandant of these Camps, should he be able to speak French, and the answer I usually received was that « they were only Serbians ». On one occasion in Sofia, the commandant, a 2 lieutenant, said to me « You are English, they are Serbians, speak for yourself ». In Philippopolis Camp I have seen hundreds of these Serbians in a most pitiable condition, not only men but women and children. I have in my possession a photo taken with my camera of a Serbian who died of starvation in the Philippopolis Camp and was left lying outside the cemetery which was about 50 yards from the barrack occupied by the English officers.

The photograph shows very distinctly what he died of. When dead they were given no burial service. I saw large groups of Serbians arrive in the Camp in rags and bits of cloth tied round their feet whilst the snow was still on the ground. The death roll in the Camp during the typhus outbreak during the winter appeared very large from the amount of funerals taking place outside our barrack.

(Signed) A. Leslie MOORE lieutenant.,  
56th Rifles F. F. attached R. A. F.

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N° 22

REPORT ON TREATMENT OF SERBIAN PRISONERS IN BULGARIA

When in Philippopolis prisoner's camp I saw many Serbian prisoners of war and the condition they were in was deplorable. The vast majority were in rags and were walking about in bare feet in the snow in winter, as well as in summer. They all looked half starved and very many were sick and almost living skeletons. They received a loaf of bread a day which was mostly maize and quite small, beyond



this they received practically nothing. They were given no clothes, their barracks were often fearfully overcrowded, and many of them were so hungry that they used to walk round the camp picking up refuse and eating it, especially in the winter of 1916-17. Working parties of Serbs arriving from hill stations in winter were often in a ghastly state. They were so weak they could hardly walk.

Many Serbs in this condition were flogged by the Bulgars, the usual punishment being 25 strokes which in many cases was apt to endanger their lives and in some cases must have been the cause of their deaths. I saw some of these floggings.

During one of these floggings which was witnessed by two English officers, the commandant lieutenant Nikoloff went up to the Serb as he was lying on the ground being flogged, and kicked the man's head. During the summer (1918) large numbers of Serbs died in our Camp and other parts of Philippopolis, and many were buried in a graveyard about 100 yards from the British Officers barrack. At one time rough wooden coffins were used but later lieutenant Nikoloff, who was commandant early in 1918, gave orders to the men burying Serbians to save the coffins, and they were thrown into shallow graves without anything at all. I saw the commandant talking to them and they afterwards said he had given them those orders. One Serb, a photograph of whom on a stretcher is attached, was being buried, and I asked the Serbs digging the grave what he died of. They replied starvation and added that many of their friends had died of it and that they expected to die too. When I gave them some loaves of bread the five of them scrambled for it like wolves. This photograph was unfortunately the only one of its kind I was able to get. No priest was present at their burial, and in many cases the graves were so shallow that the dogs partially unearthed them in the night.

After peace was declared many Serbs were concentrated at our camp, and the barracks became so full, that large numbers of half starved creatures were kept outside without any covering all night in the rain, and during one night nine died, and one man died on the steps of the commandant's house.

I also saw a Bulgar sergeant threaten a Serb, who was almost a skeleton and could hardly stand, with a stick and drive him away from a water tap when he wanted a drink.

Actually instances of brutality I very rarely saw but the general condition of the Serbs was terrible and one could not help seeing it,



the one real reason being undoubtedly short rations and lack of clothing.

In spite of this the Bulgar commandant lieutenant Nikoloff frequently informed us that Philippopolis was the best prison camp in Bulgaria.

The Serbian women prisoners in the Camp were in the same state as the men, and although I was never able to witness the occurrence I was informed by Serbians that some of them were flogged in our Camp.

(Signer) Edward S. COOPER,  
Flight lieutenant, R. N.

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## N<sup>o</sup> 23

### TREATMENT OF SERBIANS IN BULGARIA

November 1918.

From what I saw of treatment of Serbians in Bulgaria I must say that they were practically always treated in a cruel and inhuman manner.

The men were underfed and underclothed in our camp, and I have seen the men licking out empty tins thrown away by our men.

I have also seen them eating grass snakes and frogs, as well as nettles and dandelions.

If there was any shortage of soup or bread, it was the Serbians who suffered.

I saw a woman come into the camp in a cart too weak to stand. Her child was trying to get milk from her but she was unable to give it any, and was crying.

At the small depot at Sofia, where I was put on my way up to the camp at Philippopolis, I saw a Serbian lying on a rough string stretcher. This man had been hit somewhere and was paralysed in the legs. He was left for 24 hours in the sun without food, and whenever he groaned too loudly, a Bulgar would go up to him and swear at him, and shake him roughly. I saw several cases of death from starvation at Philippopolis, and the burial was most uncivilized, there being no service or priest of any kind. There were many cases of flogging of both women and men, although I have never been actually present at one of these, but I have been told by soldiers of the guard in the camp when they were taking place.



I saw a Bulgarian woman and her small baby made to stand in the barrack square all day in the sun as a punishment.

*Signé* : J. E. A. O'DWYER, Captain,  
1st. Sherwood Foresters attd. R. A. F.  
2nd Nov. 1918.

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N° 24

Salonika Aircraft Park,  
Salonika, 3/11/18.

Adjutant, R. A. F. Base Depot.  
Salonika.

Sir,

Re. treatment of Serbian Prisoners, I have the honour to report as follows :

Owing to the fact that for the major portion of the time I spent in Bulgaria I was away from the official English depot. I was continually in contact with Serbian officers and men.

1. In the depot of Philippopolis on or about the month of March 1917, I saw a Serbian soldier beaten in the most inhuman manner possible.

The procedure was as follows :

The prisoner was laid flat on the ground, a Bulgar soldier who stood over him with a heavy stick struck him a violent blow on the small of the back, the Camp Commandant who stood by then asked the Serb a question. The Serb who could not or would not give an answer to the question, then had his head violently kicked by the Commandant.

This procedure was carried on, a blow, a question, then a violent kick : being powerless to interfere in any way, I finally left the prisoner who had already received at least 15 blows and kicks was still being beaten, and I could hear his cries even when I arrived at my barrack 100 yards away.

The Commandant was named Ivan Nicoloff, and at the time of this incident he was wearing a pair of heavy knee boots.

Mr..... Dentist Civil Prisoner.

This gentleman who acted in a medical capacity for the Bulgars,



related to me the following treatment which he received at Philipopolis.

I was very friendly with this prisoner, and although I was in the depot at the time I did not personally see him being flogged, but I had the story from him, and again from several English soldiers who saw the incident, and both stories corroborated.

For a trivial reason he was marched out by orders of the Commandant the same Ivan Nicoloff and beaten until he lost consciousness.

On another occasion for no reason whatever the Commandant struck him a violent blow on the face.

Captain BRANKOVITCH, Serbian artillery Officer.

After my first attempt to escape I was sent to Kirdj Ali (Thrace), there I met Capt. Brankovitch. He was living alone in an underground room, with earthen floor, no bedding of any description had been given him. He had already been there over 12 months and had not seen or spoken with another Serbian Officer.

As food he had given him 300 grammes of bread, and twice per day a little thin soup. His « crime » consisted of the fact that he insisted he was a Serb.

The Bulgars said that as he came from Pirot (Morava), he was a Bulgar, and if he would change his name to Brankoff and say he was a Bulgar, he would be free and receive preferential treatment, as he insisted that he was Serb he was kept in this dreadful place.

I myself lived for 9 months with this Officer, and on my release he was still there.

As I have to write from memory I find it extremely difficult to remember isolated cases of ill treatment of Serbs because my own memory has been affected, but I can say in general that I have seen Serbs struck and otherwise ill treated very many times.

I have spoken to scores of Serbs both Officers and men, and have heard the most awful stories of their treatment but as I did not personally see these things, much as I believe them, I cannot write about them. But this I can say that all the Serbian Prisoners were in a state of semi-starvation and had for clothing only what they stood up in.

To my mind the most pitiful picture possible is to see a large party of Serbian prisoners on the march from one place to another.

In every case is the man emaciated, ragged and without boots, and with a wild apprehensive look.



Now that the Serbian Officials are in touch with their prisoners, I think the sight of these poor people will be a definite answer as to how they were treated.

The bad treatment even continued after peace was declared.

One day after peace was declared a party of Serbs perhaps 300 arrived at Philippopolis.

It was raining very heavily at the time, but in spite of this they were left out all day and night in the heavy rain, without cover of any sort, with the result that on the following morning 6 were dead, I myself saw 2 carried away.

I spoke to several of the Serbs (in Serb) who told me that they had had nothing whatever to eat that day.

That afternoon when rations were given out I stood by.

Several loaves 500 grammes ones were brought forward and cut into 5 pieces, a fifth of a loaf 10 grammes was given to each prisoner, 2 large tubs of cheese (cereney) were brought forward also, but I did not see any issued, and after the prisoners had gone I looked in the tubs and saw the cheese still there.

I have seen several Serbs badly beaten and know of at least two cases where the man has died the same day, one of whom I saw buried in the depot graveyard at Philippopolis.

This is about all that I can remember with any certainty.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

Sgd/Sydney SMITH Lieut. R. A. F.

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**N° 25**

November 3rd 1918.

**REPORT ON TREATMENT ON SERBIAN PRISONERS OF WAR  
IN BULGARIA.**

From : Lieut. H. F. GAYNOR, R. A. F.      PHILIPPOLIS.

1. The general treatment was altogether inhuman and there were innumerable cases of flogging.
2. The accommodation was extremely bad and insufficient.
3. The food was so totally insufficient that the Serbian prisoners came round the English barracks and were glad to pick up and lick



the tins which had contained food. They even rushed eagerly and consumed the contents of tins of food which had been thrown away owing to the contents having turned completely bad in transit from England.

4. There were many cases of ill-treatment. One of the most marked occurred after the armistice had been declared. A large body of Serbs were brought to Philippopolis Camp and were left in the open in pouring rain for at least 36 hours, in their ragged clothes. Several died in a few yards, and in view of, our barrack. I am not aware of the exact number of deaths, but they said that fifteen of their number died during the period.

The Commandant of the Camp carried a riding crop with which to hit the Serbs when visiting their quarters.

*Signed* : H. F. GAYNOR, Lieut.

Royal Air Force.

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## N° 26

Salonika, 8-21 december 1918.

The Serbian Consul General, Salonika.

Sir,

I would like to bring to your notice, several facts of Bulgarian atrocities which i witnessed myself during a forced stay in Sofia during two years and several months.

I arrived from America on the 19th July 1915 to help the Serbian Red Cross. At the time of the Serbian evacuation I was in Prizrend where I was taken prisoner by the Bulgarians on the 24th Nov. 1915 and where I saw many horrors and atrocities perpetrated by Germans and Bulgarians. Bulgarian soldiers have been knocking out closed doors, burning houses to the ground, robbing everything they could lay their hands on, and where there were women, they were subject to unspeakable indignities, not even children of the tender age of 12 or 14 years being spared. Many were the women, that were outraged, many citizens killed and and their houses turned into stables.



I presented myself at the Bulgarian 9th Red Cross Division where I was put under guard of two soldiers and had to work like that 33 days. Every fourth day I received a quarter of a loaf of bread without anything else to eat, which weakened me so, that I thought would die soon. In order to get out of this I asked Lady Paget, also a prisoner of war, to intercede for me at the American Legation in Sofia. I was sent there arriving on the 1st of January 1916. At the Railway Station I found some Red Cross Ladies and Sisters whom I asked to direct me to the American Legation, but they treated me rather strangely, asking my guards who I was and where I came from, — when told that I came originally from the Serbian Red Cross, they ordered the men to take me to Head Quarters, where I was put into a dark and cold room. The following day their Commander Teneff asked me what I had come to Serbia for. I answered him to help the Serbian Red Cross and asked him to take me to the American Legation, at which he replied that he did not know and did not recognise any American Legation, that on the contrary, he would like to send me as a prisoner to Asia. So I remained under great sufferings for seven days in prison and at last they sent me to the prisoners camp. There an occasion presented itself to communicate with the American Legation, and with difficulty I was taken out of the camp, sick and utterly exhausted to such an extent that I was scarcely able to speak and tell what I had gone through. Eventually I was sent to M. Guéchoff the President of the Bulgarian Red Cross, and there I have been working for over two years.

During the short time of my life I have visited many countries and seen many things, but never anything as terrible as the Bulgarian Nation. While working under M. Guéchoff at the 3rd Military Red Cross Hospital for over two years, I witnessed many brutalities and cruelties perpetrated by the Bulgarians on the poor downtrodden Serbian Nation, for instance on the 18th May 1916 I went by order of Dr Sofronieff, Director of the Hospital, with two sisters to the Railway Station to wait for wounded — a closed carriage arrived with about 200 Serbians soldiers and civilians, but only three of them alive — all the remainder killed with terrible bayonet wound from which even the three live ones had several to show. I approached one of them with a terrible gash on the right side of the chest, and asked him in a whisper, who had been killing all these poor people in the waggon — the poor fellow hearing me speak Serbian, answered me, but with difficulty and scarcely audibly that the Bulgarians have taken all able



bodied men and sent them to Nish, on arrival there they had been locked up in a waggon by order of the Commandant, and after leaving Nish for Sofia had simply been bayonnetted to death on the road. Asking him where they all came from, he answered, some from Vrania, Leskowac, Pirot, Kurshumlje, Prokoplje and all other places that were under Bulgarian occupation. The poor fellow was scarcely able to continue, speaking still he told me yet : « Sister, I am going to die here: I feel I cannot live any longer. I am a native of Vrania, my name is Iovan Radosavlewitch, I pray you, Sister, to tell the whole world and especially the Serbians, that we all have been killed right out here simply because we are Serbians. » These were his last words, I changed his dressings, but on being put into the Sanitary Cart he died. There remained two more, wounded also but slightly less — these the Bulgarians took to the Hospital for treatment. At once Bulgarian officers and soldiers protested that Serbian soldiers should not be together with them, as a matter of fact no Serbian ought to have any Medical aid at all. So the two poor fellows were taken the fourth day to the prisoner camp without having had their atrocious wound healed. What has become of them I don't know, neither could I find out, where those dead in the waggons were put. That transport with these dead bodies had been escorted by 30 Bulgarian soldiers who also did the killing.

Through all these horrors I remained at Sofia where I saw more and similar atrocities. On the 17th April 1917 I happened to see a train arriving with about a 1000 civilians, — men, women and children. All those poor people were taken by the Bulgarians to a big solitary house about 10 kilom. from Sofia Station in the open field, where the all were massacred. That house always served for the same purpose. A second train which arrived the same day with interned civilians, women, children, and soldiers was sent further on to Asia where the prisoners were distributed in different towns. On the 28th April 1917 I was Orderly Sister on duty at the Station about 10 a. m. when two trains arrived with Serbian children of from 3 to 15 years of age among them a few women. The first train load of about 600 boys was taken by the Bulgarians to the above mentioned solitary house and there coolly massacred ; the second train was sent further on, but I do not know what has become of those poor children.

On the 15th July 1917 there arrived at the 3rd Military Hospital in Sofia where I was doing duty a Serbian churchman — a Bishop.



As soon as the Bulgarian officers and soldiers found out that it was a Serbian Bishop, they threw him immediately out of a second story window. He was still alive after his fall but unable to speak, could not therefore tell me his name and where came from. From there he was carried to the 4th Military Hospital where the poor man died after 3 days. The Bulgarians searched him and finding 30.000 dinars on him simply took them away for their own use.

Yours faithfully,

Elisabeth SHOOSTER.

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N° 27

REPORT ON BULGARIAN ATROCITIES IN THE REGION  
OF PROKURPLIE

We the undersigned, Pierre Dufaux and Jean Martin certify that we proceeded to Prokuplie on January 6th 1919. We were brought into the presence of 17 men, woman and young people of the neighbouring villages, most of them from Dobrotitche, whose declarations were translated by M. Yanitsch, professor of Theology.

From the concurring declarations of these 17 persons, it appears that during the first part of the Bulgarian occupation, the Serbian population was subjected to all manner of vexations on the part of the Bulgarians. As soon as the revolt broke out it was repressed with horrible cruelty, without distinction of age or sex ; women and children were tortured when they were unable to state where the men persued by the Bulgarians were hiding.

An old woman told us that she had three sons, of whom two were killed, the third, aged 13, had his heat cut.

The Mayor of Dobrotitche stated that the Bulgarians ordered the Serbians of the village to unite to fight their own countrymen, and demanded, from his village, a contribution of 10000 frs. One of the men present stated that the Bulgarians had stolen 4600 frs from him. Two children were beaten because they could not say where Serbian soldiers were hiding. The cruelties were done in this village by officers and men of the 25th Bulgarian regiment.

Mme Vassila Micatchevitch of Dobrotitche saw her child carried



off by the Bulgarians. This child, aged 12, was massacred, and the Bulgarian soldiers returned to tell the mother that, before killing him, they had torn out his eyes and teeth.

Another woman found massacred the body of her child of 15, who had been carried off by the Bulgarians.

Mme Julka Angelina Ivesitch, whose mother was burnt alive, was herself horribly ill-treated. A Bulgarian soldier sat on her chest whilst another having heated a shovel in the fire, burnt all the lower part of her stomach and her thighs to the knee. Seized by the nose, she was also thrown violently against the wall and lost consciousness. All her possessions were taken by the Bulgarians.

Mme Perunica Viditch, of the same place, made a similar declaration as regards the burns and the barbarous method employed by the soldiers. She added that the pretext given was the taking part by her husband (who has been killed) in the revolt. In order to obtain from her information, the Bulgarians said her three times that she was going to die, and fired blank shots at her. They then laid her in a grave and filled in the earth. Since ravens are black, she said, the world has never seen such barbarity. As names of Bulgarian officers, she remembers the christian name of one, Ivan, and the family name of another, Itskof.

After these declarations, we saw with our eyes, on the bodies of several men present, remains of wounds from several bayonet thrusts. Also on the bodies of these two latter women, the very deep marks of burns which have completely deformed the lower parts of their bodies : stomach, lower stomach and interior side of thighs.

These marks coincide exactly with the declarations previously made by the victims.

In faith of which we have signed :

Uskub, january 13th, 1919.

Pierre M. R. DUBAUX,

*Representative of the « Suisse » (Geneva, Switzerland).*

Jean MARTIN,

*Representative of the « Journal de Genève » (Geneva, Switzerland).*

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N° 28

PROTOCOL OF POLICE INQUIRY DRAWN UP ON JANUARY  
7TH 1919 IN THE VILLAGE OF LIOUBOTIN

*Respecting the assassination of Serbian soldiers prisoners of war,  
committed in the village of Lioubotin, sub-prefecture of Istip,  
prefecture of Bregalnitz, about October 20th 1915*

The inquiry was held on the site of the crime, in the presence of the undersigned citizens, inquisitors and witnesses named : Sova, widow of the late Mita Pavlovitch, Pana Mitkovitch, Mitar Georgevitch, Pana Ristitch, Yovan Ristitch and Yovan Nicolitch, all of the village of Lioubotin.

Was present, during the investigation and the exhumation of the bodies, the substitute of the doctor legist, the medical major of Reserve, D' Voislave Kouiondjitch, who examined the corpses and skeletons and pronounced his expert opinion upon them.

The undersigned functionaries and inquisitors have, on site, remarked and verified the following :

The place where was committed the assassination of the Serbian soldiers, prisoners of war, taken from the Istip Military Hospital about October 20th 1915, is situated in the suburbs of the village of Lioubotin, on the site named « Stoudena voda ». It is situated at 7 to 800 meters in a straight line from the village, and above the village road, which leaves the village at the north-west, in the direction of Istip. This road on leaving the village, crosses a valley of which the south side is the steeper and narrower, falling towards the Lacavitza river and forming the stream which passes to the west of the village. The valley below the road is wooded, and the upper portion at the north side is oval and flatten, and cut up into fields with few trees and brushwood, which are used as landmarks. Following this stream further to the north of the road, this valley becomes longer and more and more narrow, taking the form of small valleys and creating a ravine which was formed by tropical rains.

Near the summit of the ravine, from where it commences, about 150 meters from the village road, is the place where were killed the Serbian soldiers whose bodies were buried.

At the first glance, the ravine which hides the crime is almost unnoticeable, as it was level with the field belonging to Kiazim



Domazette Mihemed, of Istip, and which lies around this plant-covered hill. The upper part of the hill is marked on the general superficies of the ground by a hollow 2 to 3 meters long in the ground and a hole made by water  $3/4$  meter deep. On the lower side of the hill, judging from the ground falling towards the south, one sees immediately five posts deeply embedded in the ground, to protect the hill from the water which rushes down the ravine with great force in the wet season. The hill is 25 meters long, and 2 to 4 meters wide in parts. In the hole near the posts, we found a broken bone from a man's hand, several ribs and many remnants of uniform cloth of grey colour, half rotten, as worn by the Serbian soldiers in 1915. Near the hill, we found the lower jaw of a man, with the teeth in good condition, as well as several bones from hands and legs, all white and clean, washed by the rain. A hundred meters further off, we found a pelvis bone.

The witnesses present showed the hill where were the mortal remains of the Serbian soldiers assassinated, and where they were buried by the witnesses present, by order of the executor of the crime. The witnesses declared that the soldiers were massacred and buried at the right hand side and north of the hill, that they were not obliged to dig a trench specially for them having a more or less deep ravine. The corpses were thrown in anyhow, sometimes two or three rows being superposed. After having thrown in the bodies, the ravine was levelled. Later, the rains washed away the earth which covered them, and the dogs of the village, when tearing the flesh from the bones, have spread the bones in various places. The peasants, filled with pity, have on two occasions covered the corpses with earth and posts.

We commenced to remove the earth at the lower side of the hill from 0,50 to 0,75 deep. We immediately came across skeletons with skulls and remains of their military uniforms. We photographed in the first place the position of the first skeletons, then the corpse of a man in a fair state of preservation, but nevertheless decomposed.

This having been done, we took out the skeletons and the remains buried with them. In the first rows, the bodies and skeletons were separated, dismembered and mixed with the earth, without flesh. We found broken bones which showed signs of violence. In the lower rows, we found skeletons more regularly arranged and in groups. Right at the bottom of the pit, we found bodies which had retained the shape of human beings. We exhumed a body with



the hands in front of the face, in military uniform, puttees round the legs and white woollen socks, with hair on the head and a black beard not shaved. The thorax of this body was broken at the left hand side, above the right breast. The bones were covered with blood.

In the same place, we found four skulls with military caps, as worn by Serbian soldiers.

After complete exhumation, we found 87 (eight seven) corpses and human skeletons, of which we could not establish the identity.

Amongst these bodies and skeletons, we found :

1° Four corpses which have retained the form of human bodies, with all their membres attached. The flesh was transformed into a white and dense mass. They were dressed in uniform. We could not establish their identity.

2° Eight mens' trunks in the same state, without head, arms or legs.

3° Eighty three skulls separated from the skeletons, of which 25 had retained their hair.

All these skeletons, except those in 1 and 2, were dismembered.

The number of skeletons found were counted from the number of skulls found. From the number of skulls found in the pit we estimated that there were in all eighty corpses of assassinated Serbian soldiers. We can with certitude assert that there were many more corpses in the pit than those we were able to count, when we take into consideration the bones found outside the pit and that, from the peasants' statements, many were dispersed by the dogs of the village.

Amongst the skulls exhumed, three were found in the upper part, and at the bottom of the pit, under the remainder of the body, and from this we can state with conviction that they were buried under their bodies, which proves that they were cut and thrown into the common grave.

We also found in the common grave :

a) Large quantities of Serbian military uniforms in a decayed state, but which have retained the colour and the form of the material of which the uniform was made, as well as the facings. Several amongst these are of grey colour, like the Serbian uniform, and there were also some of blue colour, as worn by the Serbian gendarmerie in 1915. We also found, as the Serbian soldiers wore, as well as part of the national costume such as woollen belts, the samaos which the Serbian soldiers wore under their uniform coloured woollen socks, doublets etc. We also found three boots known as « tzokules ».



b) We found 13 one-franc pieces — Serbian dinars — with the effigy of King Peter the First, coined in 1915, and two nickel 70 centime pieces, with the Serbian crown.

c) We found 8 military mess-tins in white metal and an aluminium plate, as used in Serbian military hospitals.

d) We found numerous small military effects such as metal buttons, pencils, small mirrors, an oxydised bronze medal of which the design is worn out.

e) We found four caps of Serbian military uniforms, of which one was covered with blood at the part near the neck.

f) A white-metal ring and a rubber bracelet. It is said that these two objects were thrown in by a countrywoman who was present at the massacre of the soldiers, and who, in order not to be haunted by these atrocities, threw them from her hand into the pit.

g) We found in the pit three round stones of three to four kilos weight. As there is no stone near the pit, we remarked that they had been brought there.

The pit was completely dug over. It was 25 meters long, 2, 3, or 4 meters wide, and 1m50 to 2 meters deep.

The skeletons were again placed in a fresh tomb and after the religious service, it was marked with a cross and surrounded by a hedge.

The effects found and detailed under b, c, d and f were taken to the inquirer's office. The doctor legist gave competent opinions.

#### IV

From the witnesses' statements and the confession of the executors of the crime, we have come to the following conclusion :

The Serbian soldiers who were taken from the military hospital at Istip about October 20th 1915, were brought to the village of Lioubotin Town Hall, in an old house belonging to the witness Jovan Ristitch, road from Istip to Radoviste, two hours' march from Istip. The soldiers were brought to Lioubotin by night and imprisoned in the Lioubotin Town Hall, in an old house belonging to the witness Jovan Ristitch, and in another where the gendarmes were quartered. All these buildings are close together and the superficies of same is 95.50 sq. meters and able to contain 100 to 150 soldiers with their guards.

According to the declaration of the witness Pana Ristitch, in the house in which he lives, were lodged two Serbian gendarmes under the supervision of the executor of the crime, who were also killed, amongst the last, at the place of execution.



From the houses, the Serbian soldiers were taken bound to the place of execution, across the fields and by a path which runs parallel to the road (referred to in II) to the pit.

The soldiers were killed in the field at the right hand side of the pit, and their corpses thrown into the ravine and around. The execution commenced in the night and the burial towards dawn and was completed very late in the day.

As the place of execution is not far from the village, we consider that in the village the cracking of the rifles could be heard. Further, the executors of this crime, who accompanied the soldiers, also killed three Serbian soldiers who could not walk, being very ill. The corpses of these three soldiers were not buried until a long time afterwards. One of the corpses was never buried. It lay at the spot named « Bressie » three quarters of an hour from Istip and decomposed there. The skeleton has not been found. The two other corpses were seen for a long time at the side of the road, near « Seimeno Grobiste ». One was very superficially buried at the side of the road, at the spot known as « Grabie ». Searches in the hill which was shown as being the tomb of this corpse, resulted in neither skeleton or remains being found. We are of opinion that the dogs took this corpse from the earth and carried the bones far into the neighbourhood.

According to the declaration of the witness Pane Michkovitch, the executors of the crime took from one of the gendarmes the money he was carrying, his savings, and it is probable that they did the same with the other victims. Further, they also took some clothing, which they wore.

The identity of the murdered soldiers, also the number of soldiers taken from the hospital and sent to Lioubotin to the place of execution have not yet been fixed, but there is in existence the original registers of the Istip military hospital for this period, from which we shall endeavour to establish the identity of the murdered soldiers. According to these registers, there remained in the Istip military hospital, after October 14th 1915, one hundred and eighteen Serbian soldiers ill, who were taken from the hospital under pretext that they were to be sent into Bulgaria to be interned, and were sent by Radovitch to the place of execution at Lioubotin. The massacre at Lioubotin therefore falls after October 14th 1915, as in these original registers it can be seen that the soldiers came to the hospital on October 13th 1915, and that the Serbian soldier named Pavle (Paul) Voniado-



vitch born at Oudrechna Nevessigne district, in Bosnia, died on October 14th 1915.

The date of the execution is undoubtedly between October 14th and 26th 1915, during the period when the war became stabilised and when the Bulgarian civil and military authorities were introduced.

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## N° 29

### REPORT OF THE PREFECTURE OF BREGALNITZA

N° 457, January 13th, 1919, *re. an Inquiry made at the Istip Cemetery, on the graves of the Serbian soldiers killed by the Bulgarians during the retreat of the Serbian Army in 1915.*

We visited to-day the Serbian Military Cemetery at Istip, situated beyond the barracks and, from information received from Housseine Yachar and other men who buried the Serbian soldiers killed and massacred by the Bulgarians in 1915, we remarked :

I. — *On the Hill where the old Turkish Powder Factory stood.*

At 100 meters to the north of the old Turkish Powder Factory, near a redoubt, are buried the bodies of six Serbian soldiers, of which four are laid side by side and the others upon these four. Three of the bodies had fractured skulls. They were hardly covered by 10 centimeters of earth.

II. — *In the square below the civil and military cemetery near the brook.*

50 to 60 meters lower down this brook, near the hill to the left, we found 26 naked bodies. One body only was covered with the remains of a cloak or waterproof such as Serbian officers wore. Near this body, we found a note-book, ten pencils, two razors, one hair-clipper and a purse containing 40 dinars. Further along, we found two snuff-boxes in white metal, of which the lids bore the photographs of the Prince Regent of Serbia, two mess tins and a water bottle. On the leg of one body was a laced boot. Two heads were separated from their bodies by 1m50 and 2 meters distance. Several skulls were smashed and we found broken bones on several bodies. One body had a broken tibia.

All these bodies were covered with 10 to 15 centimeters of earth.



III. — *On the right bank of the stream, near the fountain.*

At 25 meters to the right of the brook, we found seven bodies near the cemetery. All were naked and piled upon one another because the grave was very small. Amongst these bodies two were found with their legs bent. Near one body we found two metal buttons similar to those worn by Serbian gendarms on their old uniforms. Four skulls were fractured.

IV

Twenty meters beyond grave described in III, in a straight line, on the right bank of the stream, we exhumed twelve bodies, of which five had fractured skulls. We found here many remains of great-coats, tunics and waistcoats belonging to Serbian soldiers. Near one body, we found a tunic such as Serbian gendarmes used to wear, old uniform with steel buttons.

From Housseine, the tzigan's, evidence, who buried the bodies those bodies found here and in those of par. III, were killed in the stream, over the grave, and their heads were fractured by rifle-butts because they were Serbian soldiers.

V. — *On the same side of the stream, but lower down.*

100 meters beyond grave II, the ex-commandant of the Bregalnitza division exhumed seven bodies and immediately reburied them in the same place. However, on Housseine's indications, we found a meter further on, another grave from which we took five further bodies of Serbian soldiers. On the five skulls, three were fractured. According to the evidence of the said Housseine Yachar, there were buried in this grave five Serbian soldiers who were all bound, and he removed the ropes when he buried them. All these soldiers were killed by Bulgarian irregulars.

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N° 30

*Statement made by Sova, widow of Mite Pavlovitch, of Liubotin, aged 32.*

I live Liubotin, with my children, on my husband's estate. During Bulgarian occupation, I remained in the village and can give the following information on the slaughter.

Serbian soldiers, captured in the surroundings of Istip, Radovichte, St Nikola and on Ovtchie-Polie, were brought to Istip sick, tired out and hungry. Three weeks after the Bulgarian invasion, the new



authorities were already organized and some day, at 9 p. m., 150 Serbian soldiers were taken from Istip to Liubotin and shut up in the Town Hall and also in Yovan Ristitch's and Pava Ristitch's houses. in Liubotin also. The escort was formed of 8 Bulgarians, 4 soldiers and 4 Comitadjis, all of them in Bulgarian uniform. The names of the Comitadjis are : Ilia Ristev of Chotour, Rista Kotsef of Liubotin, George Ristev of Doliane and Ilia N... of Versakov. A little later in the night another comitadji, named Nika Ivanov, of Bolvan, arrived. The escort was in command of George Ristov, who during the Bulgarian occupation acted as policeman. And Rista Kotsev used to enter the houses gathering strings and boasting of having found the real way « to exterminate all the Serbian race ».

Said Serbian soldiers were tied up, taken out of the village and every one of them was stabbed. The slaughter lasted all night : poniards, bayonets, knives were used. The blades struck anywhere, in the head, the breast, the stomach. Brought to the ground by the first blows from some of the executioners, the victims were ended by the others. The « tender-hearted » men were used as sentries. One of the executioners distinguished himself : Rista Kotsev, 45 years of age. The victims actually asked him to be quick about his job, such a torture was it to them to see the comrades being killed in this bloody way, and so slowly, since the executioners took a rest from time to time, smoking and making fun. The inhabitants of the village were compelled to undress and unshoe the dead soldiers, and to dig the graves : at the same time the executioners went on their perverse work.

The bodies were sunk into a big hole, about a mile N. W. of Liubotin. But the depth was not sufficient, and the dogs got out man limbs and bones. A heavy smell of decayed flesh invaded the neighbourhood for a long time. I know all this because my fields are not far from the spot.

I do not know if, among the slaughtered soldiers, some of them came from the Istip hospital. But I know that about that time, other Serbian soldiers were killed in Istip too. I do not know the names of the Bulgarian officers or authorities who ordered the slaughter, but I can state that, at the time, Bulgarian authorities were already appointed and in office. The killing took place three weeks after the enemy took possession of the town.

Above statement was officially made before the Sub-Prefect of Istip on December 8th 1918.



N° 31

Deposition (Extract) by M. Hartoun Gazarian, M. D., born in Aleppo, Syria, physician in charge of the Bregalnitsa Department Permanent Hospital. The Doctor is an Armenian and remained in Istip after the Serbian troops had left the place, waiting for the Bulgarian authorities.

..... At that time about two hundred Serbian soldiers, sick or wounded, arrived at my hospital. I tended them immediately.

As soon as the Bulgarian authorities arrived, I was ordered to remain in the hospital until the arrival of the Bulgarian physicians.

On their arrival, under the direction of Dr. Alkalai, the hospital was given over to them, and wounded Bulgarian soldiers came from Krivolak. One day, arriving in the morning at the hospital — it was about the 13th of October — I did not find a single Serb in it. I asked where they had been sent to, and was told that they had been removed to Strumitza and from there they would probably go to Bulgaria. But the population was whispering that they had been murdered on the way.

All the time I remained in Istip, Bulgarian authorities behaved very severely and inhumanly with the population, especially with the Serbs, Kutso-Vallachians and Hebrews, everything being commandeered away from them without payment nor voucher or receipt.

The said Authorities were particularly ferocious with the peasants and other rural elements, suspected of sympathy for the Serbs. A good many murders took place, influential people such as the mayors, etc... being the victims in most cases.

I have been several times requested by the Bulgarian Authorities to make a post-mortem examination of people who were officially supposed to be naturally dead — among these were peasants, mayors, and well known people. In every case I found that they had been murdered but, of course, official statements could not be made.

By way of example, I will mention here the case of both the president of Radowichte Parish and his brother. In January 1916, I was requested to hold a post-mortem examination in the case. A military judge was present. The corpses were so putrid that an identification was impossible. The heads, and also some of the limbs were missing.

The parents of the victims stated that they had been assassinated



by a Bulgarian Comitadji of Radowichte, the name of whom I do not remember.

The Bulgarian Judge said in my presence that he thought it barbarous to commit such excesses ; in spite of it, he never did anything against the criminals.

In Leopolsi, Sokolari parish, Kotchani district, I held another post-mortem examination in the case of the brother of the Parish President who had been interned in Bulgaria and assassinated. I have been told that the Grdovtsi Parish President had been murdered too.

A good many such murders took place — but they always were concealed to me, because being a born Armenian, I was supposed to be friendly to the Entente and to Russia.

On the whole, the impression I have from the time I stayed under Bulgarian direction is most painful. Everyone who willy nilly did not consent to call himself a Bulgarian was a mark for all kinds of persecutions or worse, and lived under a perpetual menace of being sent to camp.

The above deposition was written at SERBIA'S HOME OFFICE, SALONICA, on October 24th, 1918.

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## N° 32

### *Report of the Mayor of the Parish of Chichava, dated november 2nd 1918, on the murder of 33 Serbs*

On March 1st 1917, a detachment of Bulgarian soldiers and police arrived at the villages of Chichava and Lomnitza, and surrounded these localities, ordering the men — having fixed bayonets — to proceed immediately to the place named « Batchevitchte ». After having assembled all the men of these two villages, they gave orders to the women and children to leave these villages with their furniture, and proceed immediately to the town of Vlassotintze.

This was done, and the women and children, in carts requisitioned in the villages and at Vlassotintze, left for Vlassotintze, accompanied by Bulgarian soldiers. Major Avramof, with the remainder of the soldiers and the Police Commissioner Beltcho Barnekof, proceeded to « Batchevichte ». They immediately began to divide the assembled men into two parties. On one side they placed males aged



under 14 and over 60, and on the other those between 14 and 60, ordering the first party to rejoin the women leaving for Vlassotintze, and the second to remain and await further orders. They were informed that they would be interned in Bulgaria.

The first party was hardly a few hundred meters away when Major Avramof rejoined them and ordered the men to hand over all the money they had on them menacing to kill any who hid the amount they possessed. He thus took from.

Stanko Ilitch of Chichava, 200 dinars.

Theodor Stamenkovitch, of Chichava, 240 dinars.

Petar Stoianovitch, of Chichava, 980 dinars.

Georgie Milenkovitch, of Chichava, 60 dinars.

Filipe Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 808 dinars.

Mita Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 172 dinars.

Simon Miljkovitch, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Petar Yovitch, of Chichava, 40 dinars.

Crista Yovitch, of Chichava, 95 dinars.

Procope Michitch, of Lomnitza, 100 dinars.

Gortcha Michitch, of Lomnitza, 2 dinars.

Yovon Stoikovitch, of Lomnitza, 50 dinars.

After having taken all this money, Major Avramof retraced his steps and returned to the group awaiting at Batchevichte. In the same manner, he ordered these to hand over all sums they had on them and hide nothing under menace of death. In this way, he extorted from :

Georges Stoianovitch, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Petar Stanoievitch, of Chichava, 250 dinars.

Miloutine Stankovitch, of Chichava, 200 dinars.

Petar Stoikovitch, of Chichava, 1500 dinars.

Stoiadin Stanoievitch, of Chichava, 40 dinars.

Tassa Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Alexandre Dimitrievitch, of Chichava, 23 dinars.

Michailo Stoianovitch, of Chichava, 30 dinars.

Crista Stoianovitch, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Arsa Stoianovitch, of Chichava, 16 dinars.

Mirko Stamencovitch, of Chichava, 350 dinars.

Dragoutine Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 20 dinars.

Dobrivoie Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 10 dinars.

Thomas Mitrovitch, of Chichava, 150 dinars.

Ouroche Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, 10 dinars.



Traiko Stoianovitch, and his son Milorade, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Stoiane Krstitch, of Chichava, 100 dinars.

Bojidar Stanoievitch, of Chichava, 20 dinars.

Vassilie Milenkovitch, and his son Ouroche, of Lomnitza, 120 dinars.

Dragoutine Mladenovitch, of Lomnitza, 1,000 dinars.

Svetozar Stoilkovitch, of Lomnitza, 340 dinars.

Michailo Yankovitch, of Lomnitza, 300 dinars.

George Michitch, of Lomnitza, 624 dinars.

Gavril Stoilkovitch, of Lomnitza, 100 dinars.

Dragoutine P. Stanovitch, of Lomnitza, 1,500 dinars.

Yovan Svetkovitch, of Lomnitza, 700 dinars.

Petar Stankovitch, of Lomnitza, 700 dinars.

Dimitrie Zdravkovitch, of Lomnitza, 723 dinars.

Michailo Stamenkovitch, de Lomnitza, 813 dinars.

The pillage finished, they gave the order to go forward. They went in front and the men followed them along the Vlassotintze road. After having advanced a few hundred paces, they ordered the men to leave the road and then led them a further few hundred meters, along the side of a stream. When away from the road, they ordered the peasants to take off their belts, and the straps which did duty as belts, and bound them with same. When all were bound, they fired on the peasants and killed them all.

At this place were killed.

1. Petar Stanoievitch, of Chichava, aged 16.
2. Alexander Dimitrievitch, of Chichava, aged 16.
3. Marco Stamencovitch, of Chichava, aged 15.
4. Dobrivoye Stoykovitch, of Chichava, aged 16.
5. Ouroche Stoylkovitch, of Chichava, aged 16.
6. Bojidar Stanoievitch, of Chichava, aged 14.
7. George Stoiadinovitch, of Chichava, aged 54.
8. and his son Bojidare, of Chichava, aged 18.
9. Traiko Stoianovitch, of Chichava, aged 56.
10. and his son Milorade, of Chichava, aged 17.
11. Vassilie Milenkovitch, of Chichava, aged 56.
12. and his son Ouroche, of Chichava, aged 16.
13. George Stoianovitch, of Chichava, aged 56.
14. Miloutine Stankovitch, of Chichava, aged 21.
15. Petar Stoikovitch, of Chichava, aged 45.



16. Stoiadine Stanoievitch, of Chichava, aged 25.
17. Tassa Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, aged 45.
18. Michailo Stoianovitch, of Chichava, aged 57.
19. Crista Stoianovitch, of Chichava, aged 54.
20. Arsa Stoianovitch, of Chichava, aged 52.
21. Dragoutine Stoilkovitch, of Chichava, aged 35.
22. Toma Mitrovitch, of Chichava, aged 40.
23. Stoian Crstitch, of Chichava, aged 48.
24. Dragoutine Mladenovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 35.
25. Svetozar Stoilkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 16.
26. Michailo Yankovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 56.
27. George Michitch, of Lomnitza, aged 53.
28. Gavriilo Stoilkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 48.
29. Michail Stamenkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 58.
30. Yovan Zsvetkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 58.
31. Petar Stankovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 52.
32. Yovan Svetkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 58.
33. Dimitrie Zdravkovitch, of Lomnitza, aged 56.

After having killed and pillaged the peasants of these two villages the Bulgarians set fire to the villages and burnt two hundred and thirty-two houses and other buildings at Chichava and Lomnitza.

On leaving, the Bulgarian soldiers carried off one hundred and eighty oxen and kine and a large number of ewes, sheep, goats and pigs. The houses which were saved from the fire were completely pillaged by the soldiers. Everything was carried off, even the doors and windows.

The men guilty of this massacre, pillage and burning, are the following :

Major Avramof, native of Vidine ; Sub-Prefect Stefan Ivanof Baitochef, native of Letchevtze village, sub-prefecture of Tchoustendil ; Police Commissioner Nicolas Baikouchef of Trn ; Mayor of Parish of Chichava and his Secretary Theodore Stoitchef of Kostrochovtze (sub-prefecture of Trn) and a certain Miltcha, in the pay of the Vlassotintze secret police.

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N° 33

ASSASSINATION OF SERBIAN PRIESTS by BULGARIANS

*List of the Members of the Clergy assassinated by Bulgarians*

I. — *Killed on the Bulgarians' arrival*

1. USKUB Department

1. — Vitchentic, Metropolit of Uskub Department, Uskub District.

2. — Tsvetko Nechitch, Uskub District.

Both were found by the Bulgarians in Prizrend and taken to Ferizovitch for a few days. Later on, they were conveyed further, to the spot where they were killed, the corpses burnt. According to some, this spot is on Kachanik road, according to others, on Gnilane road. But several people say, instead, that it was the Turkish Cemetery in Ferizovitch. One thing is certain they were killed at the request of Neofite, the Uskub Bulgarian Bishop.

3. — Yovan Tassitch, member of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, Uskub District.

In November 1915, one night, he was taken from home. It is said that he was killed near the railway bridge and his body thrown into the Vardar river.

4. — Archimandrite Guerman, Uskub District Uskub Department.

5. — Abbot Melentie, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

6. — Atanassie Petrovitch, member of the Prizrend Ecclesiastic Tribunal, Prizrend District.

7. — Necha Atsitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

8. — Petar Spassitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

9. — Traiko Kovatchevich, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

10. — Tsveliko Popovitch Uskub District, Uskub Department.

11. — Panko Yovanovitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

12. — Andjelko Nechitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

13. — Petar Dimitrievitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

14. — Rista Yovtchevitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

15. — Abbot Ibrissant, Uskub District, Uskub Department.

16. — Monk Sava Roitch, Uskub District, Uskub Department.



All were arrested in Uskub, escorted towards Bulgaria, but killed on the way. The principal detachment was seen passing Kumanovo. From there nobody knows where the people were led to. They were arrested and sent away when Neofite, the Bulgarian Bishop, arrived in Uskub, and at the latter's request.

17. — Ignate Georgevitch, Velesse District, Uskub Department. Having undressed him naked and torn his beard, Bulgarian soldiers killed him in his yard on October 30th. 1915.

18. — Serafime Markovitch, Velesse District, Uskub Department.

In November 1915, stabbed by the Bulgarian Comitadji Uskub first tore his beard, put out his eyes. Nearly dead, they hung him in gallows where he died suffering horribly and shouting : Long life to the Serbian Nation / Afterwards, they took him from the gallows and left his body for the dogs to feed on.

2. — *Bregalnitsa Department*

19. — Yevtimie Tchavdarovitch, Ovtcha-Polis District, Bregalnitsa Department.

Had been curate of Gorgna Douchnitsa Parish, District and Department of Nich and afterwards, of another Parish. He was killed by Bulgarians on his way to the internment camp.

3. — *Monastir Department*

20. — Traiko Mirtchevitch, Prilep District, Monastir Department.

Had his throat cut in Nikola Yoyanovitch's pasture-ground, at a spot called « Samokovo », where peasants, men and women, were killed also.

21. — Kosta Yankovitch, Krouchevo District, Monastir Department.

Had his throat cut by comitadjis. Same fate had his daughter-in-law and grandson John. Buried near the closet in the yard of his house.

22. — Tassa Stankovitch, Curate of Kitchel, Kitchevo District, Monastir Department. Killed in his village on December 12th. 1915.

23. — Dimitrie Velkovitch, Curate in the neighbourhood of Monastir. Stabbed with bayonets, and killed.

4. — *Ochrida Department*

24. — Sretchko Djouritch, curate.



Killed by soldiers at the Bulgarians arrival.

5. — *Tetovo Department*

25. — Despote Prolitch, curate.

Interned in Bulgaria where he was killed.

26. — Rista Popovitch, curate.

Killed in his yeard.

27. — Toma Arsitch, curate.

Slaughtered with his wife.

28. — Rista Andreiewitch, curate.

Not respecting his old age (70 years), Bulgarian Soldiers and Comitadjis rode on him as if he were a horse, taking his beard for bridle. After torturing him for days, they dropped him in a well which they afterwards filled.

29. — Tassa Kognevitch, curate of Krapa Parish.

30. — Yovan Tsvetkovitch, curate of Tsrechgnevo Paris.

Both were tortured in December 1915, at the request of Stoian Blajev, Sub-prefect of the District, and in his presence. Their limbs were buried near the building of the District's Sub-prefect Offices.

6. — *Department of Prizrend*

31. — Kosta Yovanovitch.

Freedom was granted him in Ferizovitch, and he was allowed to go back home to Ratcha, Kragujevatz Department (territory occupied by the Austrians). But he was killed near Vranie, on his way there.

32. — Canon Danilo.

Bulgarian soldiers, helped by Albanese, killed him in the monastery with another priest and 50 soldiers and refugees found in the same monastery.

7. — *Department of Prichtina*

33. — Yovan Andjelkovitch, curate of Nerodimlié Parish, Gratchanitsa District, Prichtina Department.

Though very old, he was killed on November 15th 1915 by a Bulgarian military priest because, on being asked about his nationality, he answered he was a Serb.

34. — Dena Debelikovitch, curate of Lipliane Parish, Gratchanitsa District, Prichtina Department.



35. — Stanko Dimitrievitch, Gratchanitsa District, Prichtina Department.

On November 24th 1915, about evening, he was called by Bulgarian soldiers saying he was wanted to administer the last sacraments to an unknown man, and killed by them.

36. — Canon Kirile. — Killed by Bulgarian authorities on his way to Bulgaria.

37. — Kosta Popovitch, curate, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

38. — Kosta V. Popovitch, curate of Petrovate Parish, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

39. — Yossif Popovitch, curate of Petrovate Parish, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

40. — Djordje Popovitch, curate in Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

41. — Yanitchie Popovitch, curate of Kirmilane Parish, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

42. — Djordje Popovitch, curate of Domorovato Parish, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

43. — Petar Popovitch, curate of Ropotovato Parish, Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

44. — Todore Roujitch, curate in Guilane District, Prichtina Department.

8. — *Kumanovo Department*

All killed in Vranie vineyards, beginning of January 1916.

45. — Abbot Vladimir Popovitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

46. — Canon Arsenie Nikolitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

47. — Yovan Popovitch, curate, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

All three killed on December 24th 1915 near Sukvista village, not far from the monastery. The corpses were sprinkled with kerosene and burnt.

48. — Mladen Zdravkovitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

49. — Milan Popovitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

50. — Traiko Deikorovitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.



51. — Toma Stankovitch, Prechevo District, Kumanovo Department.

Assassinated on December 10th 1915 near Buianovats village, on Davidovats road. One of them, Zdravkovitch, was compelled to drag the vehicle to the spot where he was murdered. Another, Stoianovitch, had his tongue pulled out before being killed. The two last named were also tortured before death.

52. — Todore Palamarevitch. — Brought away for internment, he was killed on the way near Vranie.

9. — *Vranie department*

53. — Axentie Michitch.

54. — Axentie Stoianovitch.

55. — Stoian Yovanovitch.

Taken away from home on December 12th 1915 and killed on the way.

56. — Manassie Popovitch.

57. — Mihailo Mladenovitch.

Killed on December 10th 1915 and thrown into Kornevats river.

58. — Manassie Popovitch.

59. — Kosta Popovitch.

60. — Sava Popovitch.

61. — Stamenko Stoikovitch.

Killer near the Morava River, not far from Vraniska Bania and thrown into said river.

62. — Milan Tsvetkovitch.

Killed in November 1915 on the Nich — Pirote road.

63. — Rista Popovitch.

64. — Ilia Popovitch.

65. — Manoilo Popovitch.

66. — Kosta Popovitch.

Killed near Surdulitza on December 27th 1915.

67. — Miloie Petkovitch.

Taken from his home and killed on the way somewhere.

68. — Dimitrie Atanassievitch.

Killed on the Nich — Pirote road.

69. — Stevan Komnenovitch.

70. — Petar Velikovitch.

71. — Trendafil Kotstich.

72. — Mihailo Ignatovitch.



Arrested in Leskovats and taken away from the town on November 17th 1915. Killed not far from Surdulitza, near Vrla-Reka.

73. — Zdravko Popovitch, curate of Babitsa Parish, Leskovats District, Vranie Department.

Taken from his home in November 1915 and killed.

74. — Yovan Djikitch, curate of Turekovats Parish, Leskovats District, Vranie Department.

Killed on the Djepe road on January 9th 1916.

75. — Onufrie Popovitch, Vlassotintsi District, Vranie Department.

Sent to Pirote and killed 1 1/2 miles from Vlassotintsi, in the night 6/7th December 1915.

76. — Todore Popovitch, Curate of Vlassotintsi Parish, Vlassotintsi District, Vranie Department.

77. — Dimitrie Zdrvakovitch, curate of Kuchevik Parish, Vlassotintsi District, Vranie Department.

Killed on the way to Pirote.

78. — Svetezar Milenkovitch, curate of Konopnitza Parish, Vlassotintsi District, Vranie Department.

Taken away from his refuge in Nich, had to join the Aleksinats group of priests and was killed near Yelachnitsa on November 18th 1915 (see n° 91 to 99).

#### 10. — *Toplitsa Department*

79. — Kosta Prvulovitch.

Killed on the Gorgnane — Leskovats road.

80. — Rista Popovitch.

Killed on the Ratcha — Nich road, on December 10th 1915.

#### 11. — *Nich Department*

81. — Dobrossave Markovitch, Nich District and Department.

82. — Luka Marianovitch, Nich District and Department.

83. — Yovan Z. Popovitch, Nich District and Department.

84. — Yanko Yankovitch, Nich District and Department.

85. — Stoian Stamenkovitch, Nich District and Department.

86. — Marko Yankovitch, Nich District and Department.

Arrested in Nich, after the arrival of the Bulgarian Bishop Vaarlam. After being imprisoned for a few days in the Nich fortress, they left on Nov. 11th 1915, about 9 a. m., under escort, for Bela-Palanka, where they arrived at 10.30 p. m. and slept in a public house. Next morning, they were supposed to go on to Pirote, but soon after



midnight, the escort awakened them, and they marched on to about 1 1/2 miles where they had to step into the fields right of the road, near Kremenitza village; in the Yankina Padina defile, at a spot named Golemi Kamen, they were killed about 2 a. m.

87. — Dragoutine Pechitch.

88. — Milan Milkovitch.

89. — Svetozar Ilitch.

90. — Canon Kiriak.

91. — Yossif Popovitch. — At the time of the occupation, was at home. Taken away, he was murdered with the Leskovats Group of Priests (see n<sup>os</sup> 69-77).

92. — Avram Milovanovitch.

93. — Mileta Stefanovitch.

94. — Djordje Z. Yovanovitch.

95. — Dimitrie Stankovitch.

96. — Milan Djordjevitch.

97. — Douchane Popovitch.

98. — Ilia Koitch.

99. — Tsvetko Bogdanovitch.

100. — Mladen Dinitch.

This group was taken from Nikoline Grad prison on Nov. 18th. 1915 and assassinated near Yelachintsa village, not far from Nich-Pirote road.

Among the proofs of this murder, the Savings-Bank book of Svetozar Milenkovitch of Konopnitsa Parish, Vlassotinats District, who was in this group (see n<sup>o</sup> 78), was found on the spot.

101. — Yerome Yevtitch.

Killed on the Nich-Pirote road, very likely near Yelachnitsa.

102. — Djordje Tchemerikitch.

Being in Prizrend, where he was born, at the time of the Bulgarian occupation, he left his home, but was killed somewhere on his way (Guilane — Vranie — Surdulitza).

103. — Svetolik Antonievitch.

Being at his father-in-law's, in Leskovats, was taken away and killed with the Leskovats group of priests (see n<sup>os</sup> 69-77).

12. — *Department of Kruchevats*

104. — Sava Petkovitch, curate of Tchitchevats Parish, Rajagne District, Kruchevats Department.



105. — Miloutine Milenkovitch, Rasilia District, Kruchevats Department.

Being both in Nich, were arrested and taken away with the Nich group of priests (see n<sup>os</sup> 81-90).

13. — *Department of Pirote*

106. — Alexa Yovanovitch Zanga, curate of Pirote Parish, Pirote District.

He also was taken away with the Nich group of priests — but being very old, he could not follow to Bela-Palanka and fell from exhaustion. He was beaten for this; put into a chariot the next day, November 12th 1915, alighted near Kremenitsa where he was killed and thrown into the Nichava river. (The body of a priest was found on the shore of this river near Bela-Palanka).

107. — Djordje Pechitch, curate of Smrdan-Bagna Parish, Nichava District, Pirote Department.

108. — Dragomir Yovanovitch, curate of Sukovats Parish, Nichava District, Pirote Department.

Both priests retreated to Nich with the Army, and surrendered there. Later on, they were put under arrest and killed with the group.

109. Stanko Kostitch.

110. — Yordan Nentchitch, curate of Pirote Parish.

111. — Ilia Popovitch.

112. — Duchan Popovitch.

Nich Priests. (see n<sup>os</sup> 81 to 90)

113. — Djordje Yovanovitch, Archimandrite, curate of Rasnitsa Parish — killed on the way from Nich to Pirote, most likely near Yelachnitsa.

114. — Yanitchie Guguchevitch — killed in the monastery and thrown into Nichava river.

115. — Milan Popovitch, priest, Nichava District, Pirote Department, — killed on the way from Nich to Pirote.

116. — Canon Serafine, Nichava District, Pirote Department, — killed in Surdulitza, on December 24th 1915, where he had been escorted to with a group of refugees.

14. — *Toplitsa Department*

117. — Djordje Petrovitch, priest, member of the Ecclesiastic Tribunal, Zaietchar District.

118. — Sima Yovanovitch.



119. — Vladimir Rachitch, curate of Vrajogrntsi Parish.

All three killed in Kralievitsa.

120. — Milenko Gaitch, Curate of Veliki-Izvor Parish.

121. — Jivoine Tassitch, Curate of Kralievo-Selo Parish.

Killed on their way to Bulgaria, very near Veliki-Izvor Village, at the spot named « Chotunovo », on November 12th 1915, and buried in a ditch.

122. — Radissav Pechitch, Curate of Grliani Parish.

123. — Petar Savitch, Curate of Slatina Parish.

124. — Lazar Popovitch.

Killed somewhere on the Zaietchar — Veliki-Izvor road, on December 1st 1915.

125. — Lazar Petrovitch.

126. — Milia Bissitch.

128. — Dobrossav Milenkovitch.

129. — Voislav Markovitch.

130. — Kosta Kostitch.

131. — Vassilie Sindjel, principal of the Holy Trinity Monastery.

tery.

Killed on their way from Knajevats to Zaietchar on December 13th 1915.

132. — Djordje Jivkovitch, curate of Vrbitsa Parish.

133. — Petar Dimitrievitch, curate of Vrbitsa District.

134. — Canon Djordje, principal of Suvodole Monastery.

Killed on December 28th 1915 and thrown into the latrines of Vrbitsa School.

#### 15. — *Kraina Department*

135. — Bogossav Stekitch, curate of Roglievo Parish, Negotinski District, Krainski Department.

Captured in Nich, was taken away and killed with the Nich group of priests (See n<sup>os</sup> 81 to 90).

136. — Pavle Yovanovitch, curate of Velika-Yassika Parish, Negotinsky District, Krainski Department.

Killed in the neighbourhood of Zaietchar.

137. — Mihailo Chunditch, curate of Plavgani Parish.

138. — Yordan Miletitch.

Returning from Prichtina where they had fled to, they were killed on the way.



II. — *Assassinations committed during the occupation in 1917 & 1918*

1. — *Kruchevats Department*

139. — Mladen Popovitch, curate of Ribare Parish.

On November 25th 1917, was atrociously tortured by Bulgarian soldiers and comitadjis in Ribare village. His beard with chin skin was pulled out and put on a wall. He was obliged to look at it. After many tortures, was killed.

140. — Avram Yovanovitch.

2. — *Nich Department*

141. — Petar Marinkovitch, curate of Trgnani Parish.

142. — Yovan Antitch, curate of Greiatch Parish.

Taken away on November 28th 1917 from the Morava Department Sub-Prefect's Mansion, in Jitkovats, he was killed in the same night and his corpse thrown into the Morava river near Aleksinats road.

143. — Miloche Milovanovitch.

Although very old, was taken in March away from home to a forest where soldiers tortured him, cutting his tongue and ears, breaking one of his arms. Afterwards, they killed him with bayonets.

144. — Strachimir Boulitch.

In March 1917, imprisoned in the house where the Soko-Bagna Town Major had his offices, he was beaten, had his hands tied up and, taken out of town, was tortured and killed, his body left to the dogs to be torn up.

Crimes n<sup>os</sup> 143 & 144 were committed on orders received from Major Tenedjiev.

3. — *Toplitsa Department*

145. — Vassilie Antitch, curate of Rondelie Parish, Prokuplie District, Toplitsa Department.

In March 1917, was taken from his house, had to cross the river Toplitsa and was savagely stabbed with bayonets; the right arm was severed and the corpse had eight wounds.

146. — Krsta Popovitch, curate of Kurchumlia Parish, Kossakuplie District, Toplitsa Department.

Killed by bomb during a fight of insurgents with the Bulgarian Army in March 1917.

147. — Dimitrie Dimitrievitch, curate of Barbatovats Parish, Prokuplie District, Toplitsa Department.



Being interned, fled from Bulgaria and fought with the irregular troops. Captured, he was imprisoned in Nich Fortress (December 1917) and, later on hung.

148. — Pavle Popovitch, curate of Kurchumlia Parish, Kossanitsa District, Toplitsa Department.

149. — Krsta Popovitch, curate of Kurchumlia Parish, Kossanitsa District, Toplitsa Department.

Both killed in Kurchumlia in March 1917.

4. — *Vranie Department*

150. — Petar Tsvekovitch, curate of Preko-Pichelitsa Parish, Yablanitsa District, Vranie Department.

In March 1916, was led by soldiers to a forest and bayoneted.

5. — *Prizrend Department*

151. — Canon Sevastiane Loukitch, Superior of Holy Trinity Monastery, Podgorski District, Prizrend Department.

In August 1917, brought to Uskub on Major Sarasrov's order, and hung there on General Tochev's order.

III. — *Killed by Albanians*

1. — *Rachke Department*

152. — Toma Protitch, Novi-Bazar Department.

153. — Kosa Koulagitch, Curate of Novi-Bazar Parish.

Both retreated with the Army to Mitrovitsa (Kosovo) where the Albanians killed them in the presence of Austrian soldiers, and threw the bodies into the Ibar river on December 4th 1915.

2. — *Prishtina Department*

154. — Canon Sava, brother, in the Gratchanitzia Monastery and Confraternity, Gratchanitsa District, Prishtina Department.

Killed on the way near Preluja Village.

3. — *Prizrend Department*

155. — Djona Stoianovitch — Lynched and torn to pieces.

IV. — *Priests killed by Bulgarians on territories occupied by Austrian troops*

156. — Axentie Radosavlievitch, curate of Semendria Parish. Retreated with the troops to Nich, where the Bulgarians arrested



him on the pretence of informations wanted. They killed him on the way.

V. — *Names of the priests who died in Bulgaria from Hunger, ill-treatments or other calamities*

1. — Nitchifor, Archbishop, Prizrend Department, died in Sofia on January 1st. 1918.
2. — Trifoun Radivoievitch, Prizrend Department, died in Karlovo on July 10th 1916.
3. — Mihailo Stoyanovitch, Morava District, Nich Department, near Trevna.  
Died working on the road performing unskilled labor.
4. — Dimitrie Popovitch, Vranie Department, died in Haskovo.
5. — Radivoie Stevanovitch, Omolie District, Pojarevats Department, died in Krdjalia.
6. — Pahomie, monak, Nichava District, Pirot Department, died in Sofia.
7. — Andra Liubitchich, Rame District, Pojarevats Department, died in Sliven.
8. — Miliutin Yelenich, Poretchie District, Kraina Department, died in Gorgne Panitcherevo.
9. Yovan Todorovitch, Pirot Department, died in Gorgne Panitcherevo.
10. — Damnian Issailovitch, Prizrend Department, died in Gorgne Panitcherevo.
11. — Pavle Yankovitch, Pojarevats Department, died in Gorgne Panitcherevo.
12. — Militch Popovitch, Rame District, Pojarevats Department, died in Gorgne Panitcherevo.
13. — Yovan Popovitch, Zablonik District, Vranje Department, died in Eski-Djoumai.
14. — Dimitr Dieux, Velesse Department, Died in Eski-Djoumai.
15. — Miloche Karitch, Brza Palanka, Kraina Department, died in Eski-Djoumai.
16. — Jivo Ivanovitch, Pojarevats Department, sent half dead as convalescent and died at home three days later.
17. — Stoian Nikolitch, Massuritza District, died in Eski-Djoumai.
18. — Monk Agatangel, Poretchie District, Kraina Department, died in Chumen.



19. — Yakov Voukotich, Poretchie District, Kraina Department, died in Chumen.

20. — Isaie, Prior of the Convent, Mlava District, Pojarevats Department, died in Chumen.

21. — Dimitrie Petkovitch, Nich Department, died in Eski-Djoumaia.

#### REMARK

Above list is far from complete ; many are the victims on whom no information has reached us yet. Nevertheless as concerns the land occupied by Bulgarian troops, the above is sufficient information, since the names of the priests who dissapeared or were taken away by the enemy prior to his retreat are known. But in the land occupied by the Austrians, many priests had to follow the retreat to Bulgaria where they were imprisoned first, then released on condition to use the Vranie-Surdulitsa-Nich road. And Bulgarians killed them on the way, or near the Nich slaughter-house. The real number of victims will only be known when all priests abroad will be back home. The missing ones will be enquired upon. Also the various examinations made now will bring facts to light.

Comparison from information to hand :

Assassinated priests (death proven up to now) .....	156
Died of Misery .....	21

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Total of the Dead .....	177
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Priest who came back to Serbia, after the liberation of the territories, from internment camps .....	137
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Among the dead are two bishops. Also two bishops among the priests who came back.

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#### N° 34

REPORT OF THE PRIEST MILYA A. YONTCHITCH, ON THE ASSASSINATION OF TWENTY PRIESTS AND ONE OFFICER BY BULGARIANS IN THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 11/12 1915, NEAR KREMENTITZA VILLAGE, ON THE ROAD CONNECTING BELA-PALANKA WITH PIROT.

In spite of all official statements that Bulgaria would remain



neutral to the end of the European War, everybody knowing what Bulgarians really are was convinced that it could not be, and that Bulgaria was only awaiting the best possible opportunity for attacking Serbia treacherously, in the back. This unspoken belief, based on the well-known Bulgarian felony, came true on October 1st 1915, date of Bulgaria's War declaration to Serbia.

PIROT, border-town, although fortified and defended by valourous troops, was abandoned as a consequence of the retreat of our detachments fighting in Vranja and Zayetchare, and also because of the advance of Austro-German armies in the North of Serbia. The evacuation of all administrative departments, and also of the inhabitants who guessed what Bulgarian ferocity would be, began on October 12th 1915. I left, in my turn, for Nich by the last train of October 13th with my family. Nich was full of refugees. I found there many priests from Pirot and surroundings, and also from other Serbian regions. We discussed whether we had better surrender to the enemy or escape to a more distant spot. We decided the surrender, in order to remain with our parishioners, and partake of all good and evil which could befall the souls entrusted to our care. Several of us, before taking this step asked for His Eminency, Archbishop of Nich, Monsignore Dossitey's advice. He answered that himself would stay, but could not advise anyone to stay or go. Every priest had to act according to his own feelings and conscience. We took the decision above related, and waited for the Bulgarians to come.

They entered Nich on October 23rd 1915, in the afternoon.

Already four days afterwards, they started their criminal administration by the internment of His Eminency, Archbishop Dossitey and of his Deacon, Miliutine Kotsitch. At the same time, the priests were officially invited by the Town Major of Nich to come to his offices; he said he was very fond of the clergy and glad to make our acquaintance, also that he had asked the Government whether we could be allowed to resume our office or else be interned. He added that should we be interned, we had nothing to fear. We would be in his offices; he said he was very fond of the clergy and glad to make known by this that we were going to be interned — and we did not wait long.

On November 7th, it was publicly announced by drum beating that all priests, High Schools professors, School teachers and other Employees of the Government or of the Town had to call on or before the 10th of November at the Major's offices to receive a Circulation



Permit. Most refugees were anxious to get one, not knowing the treachery of this. All priests, 16 of us, went there on November the 7th but instead of receiving a permit, we were kept one by one and escorted by soldiers, bayonet on the rifle, to Nich Fortress where, we were put in a dungeon. Prisons were crammed with soldiers, state employees and civilians. Not enough room to lie on the ground ; we had to sleep seated. The dirtiness was undescrivable, the treatment ferocious, the food being refused to prisoners. In short, all that could make us feel the ferocity and barbarity of the rules was done fully and mercilessly. Bulgarian soldiers are splendid thieves : boots, shoes, slippers, upper garments, watches, etc... everything was good for them. The priests were treated even worst than the rest, not being allowed the customary short walks in the prison yard and being left without any food whatever for the four days we remained there (7th to 11th of November). On leaving, at 6 a. m., we found that our number had increased to 22. We were ordered to take with us all our belongings and step out into the yard where we joined 300 or 400 Serbs (soldiers and civilians), including two officers, all ready to go. The column was led by a Bulgarian N. C. O. to Bela-Palanka, where we arrived at 10.30 p. m., having left Nich at 9 a. m. — Bela-Palanka Town Major, Reserve Officer Zarie Stoyanov, of Sofia, received us on the steps of an abandoned inn. He told us maliciously that he excused himself of such faulty billets for the night, and that we had to make the best of them and rest ; also that we would not leave the next morning before 8 a. m. for Pirot, on our way to Sofia. The fact is he persuaded us that, we were going to rest all night before marching again next day. We ate what we had been able to get in Nich and, without a blanket, laid on the floor, tired out by the long march of the day. But as soon as we were soundly sleeping, loud voices awoke us saying : All up ! a wire from Sofia orders us to leave immediately as we must catch in Pirot the Sofia 6 a.m. train. We protested saying we were too tired to walk, but rifle butts answered us, hitting our backs. We were driven harshly out of the inn, counted, and at 1 a.m. we were in fours on the Pirot road. Yankovitch, a Nich priest who died since, wanted to fill a bottle with water on passing a bridge, but Bulgarian soldiers called him names and sayed : What's the good of fetching water, since we are nearly « there ». We had already noticed, on leaving the inn, that a N. C. O. was whispering something to the soldiers, orders, very likely, and we began fearing the worse. All the time, we were being told lies. About



1 1/2 miles from Bela-Palanka, before arriving at Cremenitsa village, the column had to stop ; we were told it was for rest. Five minutes later, we resumed our march, but we had gone scarcely a hundred yards when the « guide » in front ordered loudly to leave the road and walk in ploughed ground on the right towards a defile in the mountains. We stopped all of us to enquire why we had to leave the road, and we were told that it was a short cut for Pirot and Sofia. But we did not move and implored the soldiers not to take us to the mountains ; we offered them all we had, but this was useless. We were forced on, and a soldier cried out : « What ! you are afraid ! You suspect us wrongly, because we also have children of our own. » We walked through the field and entered a valley called Yankova Padina. At a spot called « Golemi Camene », the guide in front ordered to stop. At the same time, all soldiers escorting us ran to the rear and fired volleys in our backs. A few of us fell immediately. The reports were lugubrious in the full night, 2 a.m., and two priests, Tichomir Popovitch first, and John Z. Popovitch afterwards fled to the mountains, followed by one of our officers. On seeing this, I did the same, but when reaching the top, I received a bullet in the back, under the left shoulder-blade, and fell, but rose again at once running down the other side of the mountain. I saw a bush and hid there.

At that time, two soldiers came running and firing. Catching sight of the two running priests, they followed them. I seized the opportunity, and ran to a larger bush which I thought a best hiding place. But a Bulgarian soldier saw me moving and cried to me : Are you one of us ? Not receiving any answer, he fired in my direction. The bullet struck the ground under my left knee, in which I felt the commotion. Said soldier, not hearing me move and perceiving the two priests followed by his two comrades, joined them. I kept quiet some time, watching for any other soldiers to come, but not seeing any, I retraced my steps, crossed again the mountain, found the ploughed ground and the direction we had followed to enter the defile. But I was afraid to fall accross the three soldiers who had pursued the two priests and had to come back, or to be discovered in some other way, and I went to rest between a rock and a small bush, twenty steps inside the mountain. I saw an officer and two soldiers riding from Bela-Palanka, later on several soldiers with pick-axes, spades and shovels, also a large kerosene tin. I saw also the corpse of the priest John Z. Popovitch brought from the mountain, where he



had fled to, to the spot where the others had been assassinated. All this before 6 a. m., day-break time.

The following priests perished on this spot : Archpriest Dobrossav Marcovitch ; the Nich Priests : Louka Maryanovitch, John Z. Popovitch, Yanko Yankovitch, Marko Yankovitch, Sava Petkovitch of Tchitchevats, Stoyan Stamenkovitch of Barech, Dragoutine Pechich, of Yaglitza, Dragomire Yovanovitch of Soucovo, George Pechitch of Smrdane, Jordan Nentchitch of Pirot, Stanco Kostitch of Yaglovik-Yzvor, Ilia Popovitch of Bela-Palanka, Douchan Popovitch of Klissoura, Milan Miljkovitch of Malotchane, Bogossav Steritch of Raglievo, Miloutine Milencovitch of Bochniane, Svetosare Ilitch of Houm, Archmonk Kyriyak from the Hilender Convent Mission in Nich, and Alexis Yovanovitch, of Pirot, 80 years old, who had remained in Bela-Palanka. He was killed the next day near Cremenitsa village about 9 a. m. and his body was very likely thrown in the Nichava River, since a few days later on the body of a priest was found in the river.

Had I been waiting for the soldiers on the spot of the slaughter, I would have been killed, too. I therefore crept on the rock as soon as everything was silent and, seeing nothing, ran to a small wood where I got rid of my cassock, undressed as far as decency allowed and crossed a small pasture-ground to hide in a closed garden. Looking towards the spot of the crime, I was a cloud of smoke arising : the priests were being burnt with kerosene to get rid of any and every sign showing the victims to be priests. The inquest held later on the subject by the Prefect of Bela-Palanka department confirmed it.

I did not stop long where I was, and about 9 p. m. arrived in Ponnore Village, entered a house and found in it a peasant with two women and a child. I asked for water and rest, not disclosing who I was — saying instead I was a shoemaker. I wanted scissors to cut my beard. They had none, so I cut it with the peasant's knife. He questioned me, and I told him that, my children having never seen me with a beard, I was cutting it not to frighten them on my return, after being away so long. He believed me. Leaving the village I found on the road a bulgarian chariot. I asked if the man could drive me to Pirot. On the way there, I told him I was a tradesman. I arrived in Pirot at 1 p. m. without having been discovered. I hid at once and remained there from November 12th 1915 to June 28th 1917, i. e. until General Tassev's amnesty for all those who had taken part in the guerrilla warfare or had hidden.



Advised by my friends, I appeared before the Bulgarian authorities on June 28th 1917, and went home, in Pirot, quite free up to August 7th 1918, when I was imprisoned for 4 days and afterwards interned in Eski-Djumaya. I stayed there up to Serbia's liberation, coming back for good to Pirot on October 21st. 1918.

Above report was handed on December 8th 1918 to the Pirot Sub-Prefect.

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### N° 35

HOW MY FATHER, ONUFRIE POPOVITCH, CURATE OF VLASSO-TINTZI CHURCH, WAS ASSASSINATED IN THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 6/7TH 1915, 2 MILES S. E. OF VLASSOTINTZI.

My father who, with his two daughters from Brousse, had taken refuge at his married daughter's, came back to Vlassotintzi on November 28th 1915.

On December 6th, a week later, Ivan Baykuchev, Sub-prefect, born in Trn, celebrating his nameday, invited him for the same day. Among the other guests was Stoytchev Stevan, Captain of the 1st Company, 42nd Regiment, Sofia Division. Said Captain was born in Sofia, his father being judge in this Capital's Court of Appeal. The Captain's private address there is 10 Tzar Sena Street.

That very night, about 11 p. m., two Bulgarian soldiers, bayonet on the rifle entered our home and informed my father he had to leave immediately with them for Bulgaria. My father, 60 years old, did not feel very well on that particulier day and asked them to come back the next morning, adding that he would try to get a horse by then. But the soldiers answered him that they would not allow him to ride since they, themselves, had to walk.

My father got ready ; as he was going to take some money, his guards did not allow him to go out of their sight and ordered my sister to go and fetch it. On leaving they enjoined us not to leave the house this night — otherwise it would be blasted by order. My father begged of them to allow him to take his blanket and some linen ; they forbid him.

He was first imprisoned, but soon after the same two soldiers, with two more, came to take away and escort the prisoner.

Crossing the Town Bridge on Vlassina River, a whistle was heard.



The escort stopped seeing an Officer nearing. But it was only a N. C. O., Balabanov Nikola, who exchanged a few words with the soldiers and joined the group.

Near Manastirichte Village, 2 miles S. E. of Vlassotintzi, the Bulgarian soldiers stabbed my father, with knives, on the head, neck and also in the breast and stomach, finishing him with blows of rifle butt on the skull. They robbed the corpse of 3000 francs in paper money, 6 gold 20 franc coins, a watch, and buried it in a 15 inch deep grave.

Baykuchev, the Sub-prefect's brother, coming from Sofia told he saw my father in Pirot, sitting in a cafe, waiting for a horse to ride back to Vlassotintzi, — having been released. But the rumor was growing that my father had been assassinated, and many people were sure of it. None dared say anything, for fear of the Bulgarians.

Soon afterwards, no doubt was possible. My family had found and recognized the corpse. My mother begged than the Sub-prefect to be allowed to have a funeral made according to custom. But the Sub-prefect denied it was my father's body, and required proofs. Seven days later, my mother brought him rags of the apparel and the false teeth of the late curate. After many hesitations Baykuchev authorized a secret funeral of the body. He gave orders to us for the bier to be sent by carriage, covered with straw, for burial on the other side of the river, avoiding to cross the bridge. But at the same time he, Baykuchev, informed Captain Stoytchev, who was then at Leskovats, of what the family wanted to do, giving orders that the burial should be prevented. On the next morning, a sergeant came and told us that if anybody of our family touched the grave, our house would be blasted.

On the same day, two Bulgarian officers went with soldiers to the spot where the murder had taken place. The corpse, which the severe cold had kept whole, was undressed and cut in pieces. The flesh was scattered on the soil, and the hungry dogs ate in the dirt the remains of my dear father. A guard of three soldiers in the night and one in the daytime was on the spot to prevent people from getting near. Three days afterwards, the guard was recalled, no trace being left of the assassination. But a man, paid by my family had been on watch all the time. As soon as the guard had departed, he informed my family who went with two sacks to gather the soiled remains and buried them in the vineyard.

We have still my father's garments, showing how he was kil-



led. The collar has three holes, made by the knives. The waistcoat has twenty, — one of them, at the place covering the heart, being larger.

The principal authors of this crime are : Major Stoytchev Stevan ; Baykuchev Ivantcha, Sub-prefect ; Ivanov Zarie, Mayor of Vlassotintzi ; and Balobanov Nikola, sergeant, born in Sofia.

Dimitrie POPOVITCH,  
Schoolteacher in Vlassotintzi.

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## N° 36

### REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE MORAVA DISTRICT SUB-PREFECT DATED NOVEMBER 15TH 1918 ON PERSECUTION OF PRIESTS OF SAID DISTRICT

1. — The Curate of KORMAN Parish, Milan Yovanovitch, stayed in KORMAN when the evacuation took place. According to a report from the Mayor of Korman, corroborated by other informations, the Bulgarian Authorities abused from the beginning M. Yovanovitch and interned him very soon in Bulgaria ; he came back from this country on the 27th of last month.

All real and personal estate of his was pillaged, destroyed or burnt (his home was burnt). The Bulgarian Sub-prefect, A. Nechoff, took from him more than 2540 francs, leaving his family and himself without any means of living.

The little time he remained in his parish, the interdiction to officiate pronounced by Varlaam, Bulgarian Bishop of Nich deprived him of his duties. A Bulgarian pope from Kazanlik, named Todore Pechoff, was sent to Korman to attend Parish work in Yovanovitch's stead.

All the time the latter was interned in Bulgaria, his wife and children lived in Veliki Chilegovatz in utter misery, ill-treated and even tortured.

2. — The Curate of KULINA Parish, Michel Stoyanovitch, from Nich District, stayed in Kulina after the evacuation of the place. Bulgarians sent him soon to Bulgaria, for internment. He died in captivity. His wife and children are in Alexinatz, without any means of living. All the family's property was pillaged and destroyed.



3. — The Curate of GREDETIN Parish, living in Gorni Adrovatz, Archpriest Svetislav Juyovitch, left with the Serbian Army on October 29th 1915. He is now in Nice (France), as Serbian Military Chaplain. All real and personal estate belonging to him was destroyed. He has no family in the district.

4. — The Curate of Jitkovatz, Lazare Martinovitch, stayed in his Parish after the evacuation. He died from ill-treatments on January 4th 1916. After his death, the Bulgarians abused his family, especially the daughters. A Bulgarian Officer planned to violate one or them but a German Druggist intervened and this crime was left undone.

5. — The Curate of Trniane, Peter Marinkovitch, stayed in his Parish after the evacuation. He was many a time bothered by Bulgarian Authorities who ill-treated him and his family, obliging him to give them money. On March 10th 1917, he was on an internment list for Bulgaria, but having paid a certain amount, he was released and went back home. Nevertheless, he was sent under escort to Jitkovatz sub-prefecture two or three days afterwards, spent one night in the town, and disappeared on the next evening (15th of March). It is asserted that pope Peter had his throat cut open on the Morava Bridge, his body being thrown into the river. A priest's cap was found some time later on the riverside and a human corpse, with a toothless skull, in a thickish not far off. This was the priest's body.

All his property was pillaged ; his daughter-in-law and her four children were ill-treated and tortured. One of his daughters died from ill-treatments.

6. — The Curate of GREIATCH, John Antitch, was allowed up to March 1917 to remain in his Parish, but frequently, he was summoned by the Bulgarian authorities to Alexinats, kept a few days in prison and released.

In March 1917, all the District was under Terror Rule ; the 25th Bulgarian Regiment committed then numberless atrocities. Priest Antitch, rather ill, was taken on a chariot to Jitkovatz by order of the Sub-Prefect. He never came back having been killed near Alexinats, on the bridge, by Ivan Angheloff of Sliven, of the Bulgarian Police, and Elie N..., a gendarme convicted of numberless atrocities.

The priest's property was completely pillaged. His family is now in dire misery.



At the time when the Priests Marinkovitch and Antitch were murdered, the Jitkovatz Sub-prefect was TASHTCHIEFF, famous for his criminal activity.

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### N° 37

Statement by Ahmet Ussein, ex-Major of Prjievo :

I am just back from Bulgaria, having been interned there since April 1916. I have to make known the abominable crimes the Bulgarians committed against our countrymen. In Karlovo were about 800 civilians from Old Servia and 500 to 600 soldiers, fed with only some sort of soup, made of water and bread, and daily exposed to the ill-treatments of the Civil and Military Authorities. For instance I saw a young girl schoolteacher being beaten because she had not allowed a camp's officer to take advantage of her. Two other girls received 20 blows with a stick because they did not work quick enough. They complained to the officer in command of the camp of this cruelty ; he answered them : You are Serbs. It would be better to kill you all ! All interned had to work on the roads, repairing them or keeping them clean night and day. Hungry, sick, they were often whipped harshly by soldiers and gendarmes.

Among the interned were 200 priests whose work was to break stones on railroads ; Bulgarians required money from those who wanted to escape such labor. Two Members of the Servian Parliament were living in camp in the same condition as the other prisoners. But whenever a foreign mission visited the Camp, they presented themselves and obtained from the Bulgarian authorities some clothing, linen and bread for us—a real treat. But they were removed to Plovdiv and, before leaving us, they received before all of us 25 blows with the stick because they refused to admit they were Bulgarians.

This statement was received by the Negotin Sub-prefect November 10th, 1918.

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**N° 38**

Statement by Ahmed Mustapha, of Kenali.

When the Bulgarians fled in 1916, they took away my oxen and chariots and obliged me to drive them from Bitol to Mogila and afterwards to Prilep, where we had to stay seven days without bread nor any food whatever. On the seventh day, I went to the sergeant and begged of him to give me bread, or to release me. He struck me—this was his answer. In the evening he took the oxen from me and I never knew since where they are. I was sent to a detachment doing stonebreaking on the Kitchevo road, and I was given a hammer to work. We were nearly naked, and without shoes; as soon as we complained of hunger or exhaustion, we were beaten unmercifully. Every day, ten to fifteen of us all. All the money I had on me was taken by them; this was done to everybody.

The food was very poor and scanty. On the Kitchevo Road, we received every day a piece of cornbread, less than 8 oz., and every evening a meatless soup—more like hot water than anything else.

Never was any clothing served out to us - no linen either. Whoever did find an old sack was lucky and made with it some sort of a garment. No hut and no shelter in our camp. We were not even allowed to have fires in the open. Our camp being on Kitchevo Road in the winter of 1917, I declare under oath that during the fortnight in which the cold has been so severe (January) 40 to 50 frozen bodies were found every morning.

Being in Prilep, we were shown gallows, and told that this was to be our fate if we did not obey. Same thing in Gradsko. I never saw anyone hanging on these gallows, but it was said that many Serbs were hung in the night.

Like all those taken into slavery, I suffered from hunger, and I state that all those who succumbed were victims of hunger.

This Statement was received by the Morihovo sub-prefect, November 23 rd, 1918.



### N° 39

Statement by Jakul Selim of Kenali.

In 1918, eight days before the evacuation of Kenali by the Bulgarians, one of their patrols took me to Bukovo, and from there to Jovagnevtse and Prilep, where I stayed four days. Afterwards, some of us retraced our steps in the direction of Bitol, to do front work, digging trenches and carrying munitions. I went as far as Snegovo, with coils of barb wire carried by tow of us. I worked two months in the trenches and left again for Prilep first, to stop in a place just behind called « Varosh ». After the Snegovo shells, we had to suffer here real tortures. Breaking large and hard stones with heavy hammers, we had to fill each of us a large case, used as measure. Anyone behind in his work received ten blows with the stick immediately.

When working on the front, we received a loaf for four. But on arriving in Varosh, the food was less and worse : 4 1/2 pounds of corn for 2 or 3 days. We roasted the corn or ate it raw. Afterwards we received some corn flour, a ration for four.

With me were my brother Mussa, Ali Kerim, Sali Demicha, Jachar Jakub, Tcherim Bairam, Murat Djafer, Bairam Omer, Arslan Jacher, Adem Jacher. All died, some of hunger, others from the blows received ; Mehmed Rucham, Sali and I are the only survivors. Both can confirm what I have said.

On my return home, I learned that Bulgarians took away all my cattle, and my brother Mussa's too.

This statement was received by the Morihovo District Sub-prefect, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. 1918.

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### N° 40

Statement by Aden Betchir, of Kenali.

When the Bulgarians arrived here, they arrested me immediately and sent me to Bitolj, where I was imprisoned until said town was evacuated. In their flight, the Bulgarians took me with them to Prilep.



In Prilep, I was again in prison for nine months. Real torturing began there. We had only 4 oz. of bread a day and a jug of water. I was taken out of the room only once a day for bodily necessities. In four small rooms, we were a hundred of prisoners. Said prison was underneath Marko Fortress. In those nine months, more than 2000 people were brought tied up for the night, and taken out the next day in the same fashion. At last, I too left with 19 fellow-prisoners, under escort of four guards by motor lorry for Gradsko and from there by train for Chumen.

In Chumen we were brought to a barb wire enclosed camp in which were already 5.000 prisoners : Serbs from Serbia and also Russian and Greek soldiers. We had 11 oz. of bread daily, but nothing else. No hospital in camp, so that 15 to 20 people died every day, and we had a good many sick. Whoever asked for a doctor was beaten. Corpses remained two or three days on the spot before being buried. On leaving Chumen, we went to Provadia, a forest in which we cut wood during 100 days. Afterwards, we came back to Chumen and, from there, went to Lom-Palanka.

In the Provadia Forest, I very often had to eat the bark of young trees, because we were fed on meatless soup and received no bread. In Lom Palanka, we had to load and unload barges. I did this work four months, receiving blows now and again. I saw prisoners, exhausted, fall into the water and drowning. I saw also two of them who drowned themselves wilfully, to escape such sufferings. I could not myself endure it any more — especially the cudgelling — and fled to Rumania with Omer Kapil on a raft tied with strings we made in the night — we slept then in the barges — and to which we tied ourselves by the belt. We had but a very faint hope, but death itself would have been welcome then. On the opposite shore, Rumanian shepherds came to us and handed us over to the Authorities.

I assert that in Chumen Camp more than 1.500 people died during my stay there. I say under oath that the only causes of such a terrific death rate were hunger and bastinadoes.

This statement was received by the Morihovo District, Sub-prefect, November 26th, 1918.

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N° 41

REPORT

received from TANASSIE UROCHEVITCH, Archpriest for Toplitza Department, on the atrocities committed by Bulgarians in Internment Camps.

The Serbian Priests in the territories occupied by Bulgarian troops having been murdered wholesale in October and November 1915, all those listed for internment in Bulgaria expected death from day to day. A good many, fearing tortures, tried to commit suicide during deportation; those not strong enough bodily died on the way or on arriving at the camps.

I will name the following by way of examples:

Priest Dragoliub Popovitch, Curate of Butchie (Timok Department): attempt at suicide in Zayetchar Prison. He seized the revolver of a gendarme (policeman) and aimed at his chest, firing twice. But the bullets did but scratch the skin covering the ribs. In spite of his wounds, he followed to Bulgaria but not by the same route. Instead of via Widin, he was taken to Sofia via Nich and Pirot.

Priest Peter Popovitch, Curate of Brestovatz (Krainia Department): attempt at suicide in Negotin Prison with the guard's rifle. The wound in the chest was most severe. It is a miracle he did not die from it.

Priest Stanko N..., Curate of Balta Berilovitz (Pirot Department): committed suicide on the way to Bulgaria, throwing himself from a bridge into Nichava River, and was drowned. He escaped thus the atrocious death suffered by all his comrades; all the group was murdered by the Bulgarians near Bela Palanka.

Priest Andra Liubitchitch, Curate of Veliko Gradichte and ex M. P. Old age and poor health made him unable to stand the journey's hardships. He died in a street, in Sofia. Was buried in this Capital's cemetery.

Priest Dimitri Popovitch, the old curate of Ratai (Vrania Department) was obliged to walk in the snow and the cold, with his luggage on his back, for eight days. He arrived at Haskovo Camp, tired out, and died 5 or 6 days afterwards.

Canon Patromie, of Divlian Monastery (Pirote Department), died of exhaustion and fright as soon as arrived in Krdjali Camp.



Priest Dimitri Petrovitch, Curate of Lok-Bania, was deported in 1917 only, when internments had been stopped a long time already. Nobody can tell what he had to endure in the prisons and on his way to Eski-Djumaia, where he was interned — even himself, mad from tortures and anguish, is unable to talk about it. People who lived with him noticed though, on his face, hands and chest, numerous marks of blows. In flashes of half-lucidity, he says that the guards ill-treated him continually. He was in camp about six months and died, refusing all food for fear to be poisoned.

Other priests died in Internment Camps, in Bulgaria, from bad food, want of medical attendance and inhuman treatment. Their names are :

1. — Radosav Stefanovitch, Curate of Laznitsa (Pojarevatz Department) died after his guards had beaten him with the butt of their rifles. Was very old and nearly blind. Having been robbed in the Nich Prison, he was in utter misery, pennyless, when he died in Gornie Panitcherivo.
2. — Paul Popovitch, Priest from Pojarevatz Department. Died also in Gornie Panitcherivo.
3. — Michel Popovitch, Priest from Rabrovo (Pojarevatz Department). Died in Gornie Panitcherivo.
4. — John Todorovitch, Priest from Pirote Department. Died in Gornie Panitcherivo.
5. — Trifune Dimitrievitch, Archpriest of Prizrend. Died in Karlovo.
6. — John Popovitch, Curate, from Vrania Department. Died in Eski-Djumaia.
7. — Damiane Isailovitch, Member of the Prizrend Ecclesiastic Tribunal. Died in Gornie Panitcherivo from exanthematic typhus.
8. — Monk Agatanghele, from Kilendar Convent, detached to the Belgrade Ecclesiastic Tribunal. Died in Eski-Djumaia.
9. — Igumen Isaie, Principal of Vitovnitza Convent (Pojarevatz Department). Died in Chumen Hospital.
10. — Jacob Vukovitch, Curate of Maidanpek (Kraina Department). Died in Chumen Hospital.
11. — Dimitri Bogdanovitch, Priest from Veles. Died in Eski-Djumaia.



12. — Stoyan Nikolitch, Curate of Kievo (Vrania Department).  
Died in Eski-Djumaia.

13. — Miloche Karitch, Curate of Chtulitza (Kraime Department).  
Died in Eski-Djumaie.

14. — Miliutin Yelenith, Priest from Bela-Palanka. Died in  
Sliven.

The interned priests were brutally and harshly treated. Since the day of our arrest to the day of our release, we have been used as ordinary criminals. We were always shut in, and an armed guard followed us everywhere. Only a few priests had in Karlovo the privilege of living for a certain time in private houses. But this trifling exception set apart, nobody was ever able to leave prison or camp outside the enclosure. Even when going to mass, a guard was with us. When the camp was short of drink water, we went for water in a column, four in each file, and did anyone step out, he was brought back energetically by the butt of the guard's rifle.

The food was neither healthy, nor sufficient. The bread was exclusively of corn pretty often, but normally of a mixture of barley, rye, wheat and corn. In 1918, the daily ration was brought down to 11 and even 9 oz. For long, the only meat served out in Eski-Djumaia was poor mutton or smoked goat. The smell was so putrid that many prisoners could not eat it. Many priest, unable to get over the disgust for such meat contented themselves with the bread ration, and this was not sufficient food to keep them in good health.

In all internment camps of Bulgaria, the supplies were handled in such a way that the people in charge of them were growing rich at the prisoners' exense. In Gornie Panitcherevo, for instance the Camp's Manager, Lieutenant Kristo Semerdjieff, and in Eski-Djumaia, the Manager's assistant, Nicephore Petkoff made lots of money. They were dismissed, it is true, but much too late.

Only in Karlovo have priests been employed for garden and agricultural work. In Eski-Djumaia, they cleaned the rooms and the ground inside the enclosure of the camp, dug and cleaned latrines, brought the rations from a distant sport, and water to the kitchen. They carried away manure and refuse, washed the floors, carried fuel wood, etc...

It looks as if all Camp Managements had acted on the principle that the people must be crammed into very narrow lodgings. In Haskovo several sheds were always empty, but we had to live in two



or three rooms only. The Authorities were deaf to our entreaties for more room, and empty sheds remained so. The smell of the latrines, too near the dormitories, the promiscuity of people and apparel, the dirtiness and vermin, etc... were fatal to the prisoners' health. Lice and bugs swarmed. We visited our bodies the best we could, and swept the bugs with bean leaves — sometimes as many as 80 to 150 stuck on the same leaf ! Some disinfection apparatus was in camp, but his efficiency was not sufficient for such a large place. Priest Yovan Todorovitch died from infection received through lice.

All means were used to grab money from us. In Gornie Panitcherivo, Lieutenant Semerdjief is a rich man with the money he got from priests, officers and rich merchants. He promised furloughs or even release if money was given to him. But when the interned one had been deprived of all he had, the promise was not kept. In Eski-Djumaia, Nicephore Petkoff had imagined real taxes levied on priests. Such shameful methods did not come to an end before our release.

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## N° 42

### REPORT

received from Zagorka M. Yovanovitch Schoolteacher on Bulgarian Crimes in the region of Alexinats

Bulgarian cruelties are undescribable : beating women with a large stick was a daily occurrence during all occupation times, and a few instances are submitted here.

One day, in August 1917, I found in the schoolyard a woman laying on the ground, with a swollen head, frightened and frightful. I asked her what it was, and she told me things which made me shiver. 2nd Lieutenant Konnev, commanding in Rajanj, two other officers and about 40 soldiers circled her house, in Pankovatz, took away her husband, Sreten Stochitch, and gave her blows until she fainted. They said the cause of this chastisement was that they hated the Bulgarians and had expressed the wish that the Serbs would soon be back. On recovering her senses, she was beaten again on the back and the stomach, fainted again and woke up the next day on the road ; she was quite alone. She could not move. Peasants passing by told her they saw her husband dead in a ravine. The love for her young husband



(he was only 19) acted so strongly on her that she could rise and went to the Bulgarian officer commanding in Djunis, for a permit to take the body to the cemetery. It was refused to her. I may add that the poor woman was pregnant.

2. — From same village were taken away to Rajanj: Obren Milenkovitch and Jivadine Stochitch, aged 25/26, accused of not being fond of the Bulgarians, and also of having declared they were Serbs.

In Rajanj, they remained about twenty days and were examined and cross-examined several times, and were sent back to Djunis — for taking leave from their family, were they told, before deportation. But it was instead for being executed in the presence of family and friends. Obren, seeing his father among the crowd, cried to him: Save me, father, I have done nothing! And the father presented himself to the officer in command and told him, kneeling: Sir! have me hung, but give my son his life!

Two soldiers seized then Jivadine, put a bandage over his eyes, and killed him with several shots. Two other men dragged Obren to a tree, put a string round his neck and hung him.

The officer who examined the case and gave the verdict was from the 4th Company of the 30th complementary Regiment. His name is Konnev. He was then in Rajanj.

3. — About August 22nd 1917, at 6 a. m., the officer commanding in Djunis received an order brought by courier. He sent a detachment to Kaonik which returned two hours later with a young man, half dressed, named Liuba, son of Miloche Stevanovitch, of Kaonik, 27 years old. Liuba was followed by a good many women, old men and children. One after the other, they were asked questions and, meanwhile cries of terror were heard from the spot where they had assembled. They were accused of dreaming of greater Serbia, or else of having children or brothers on the front. They were then to Aleksinats, where this torment continued. The most zealous tormentors of our population have been Major (now Lt-Colonel) Roussev, of St-Zagora, and Lt-Colonel (now Colonel) Dobrev, both of the 30th Complementary Regiment.

In Aleksinats, nearly all were released, but Liuba and a 60 year old woman, Radoika Vessitch. Some day, all Kaonik village was summoned to a plain near by, and these two victims were brought for execution. Liuba asked for the favor to go to a small wood not far off to change linen. He came back ten minutes afterwards with



the Serbian cockade on his hat. He looked as if he was going to his own wedding. Very gay, he smiled and told the soldiers : Do as ordered ! Old Rodoika has not been less heroical. She kissed her people, lit a church taper and waited for the bullets. The first ones did not bring her to the ground. She stayed upright until she was a sieve. The German officers present admired the heroism of the Serbian woman, but did nothing to prevent the Bulgarians from committing these crimes.

Were also bastinadoed : a woman, Persida Kostitch, of Kaonik (200 blows on the back and the stomach) ; Dragolium Kostitch, 11 years old, Milena, daughter of Rodoie Djonitch (a strong girl before, now of very poor health) and many others in this village and in those of the mountains, near Ribarska Bania, were many human bones can be seen.

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### N° 43

#### REPORT RECEIVED FROM PROFESSOR VELIMIR LAZAREVITCH, ON THE CRIMES COMMITTED BY BULGARIANS IN GUEVGUELI CANTON

On commission received from the President of the Inquiry Commission held on the Crimes committed by Bulgarians in Guevgueli Canton, commission dated December 3rd of this year, I visited the territory of Mirovatz Parish, including Mirovtse, Petrovo, Galarovo, Smokvitsa, Miletkovo, Davidovo villages. Having heard officially what the people had to say, I beg to submit the following report :

In all the villages of this Parish, Bulgarian Soldiers and Authorities committed all sorts of violences on the population. Commandeering took place in all of them, and in every house, the inhabitants being left bare. All the best families were interned, especially those in which father, son or brother had served in the Serbian Army. The Bulgarian Soldiers being billeted in Serbian homes, violences took place every day ; women and young girls were violated. This happened, for instance, to Helen, Vandjel Stoyanovitch's wife, of advanced age and mother of four children. The Bulgarian soldier who did it was called Sande. One day he appeared with four horses and wanted to put them in the house. The abovenamed lady opposing this was assaulted and dishonored by him. The poor woman, fear-



ing for her fame, never told it before she knew she was pregnant. She went then to the Parish Hall and related what had happened. She was advised there not to kill the child. On the day she was to deliver, the police was sent to protect her. In the upper part of the house in which lived this woman, a certain quantity of hay was stored ; the day before they fled, the soldiers of the 5th division put the hay on fire and the whole house, valued at 25 Turkish gold pounds was burnt.

Bulgarian soldiers violated, in June 1916, Losane Anastasevitch, wife of Anastase, of Miroctche, on her way from the mill. They said to her : « If we give our life for Macedonia, we want something for it ! » The two of them did the stupration the one after the other. The woman was taken ill from the commotion and called the Doctor to her, but did not tell him the truth. Feeling pregnant, she went to the Parish Hall and said how it happened. The Parish Authorities promised to take care of the child, but she never received any help.

Peter Ruchkovitch's wife says : One day, I was watering our Indian Corn and Watermelon Field, near the Vardar, when I noticed that the flow of water had stopped. Surprised, I tried to find out the cause and saw, at a turn, that the water was derived towards a neighbouring field. And all at once, before I could move, I was assaulted by two Bulgarian soldiers. One of them kept my mouth closed with his handkerchief, and held me close in his arm while the other did what he wanted from me ; they changed places to give the other fellow his turn. They fled, leaving me lying on the ground. I told nobody, but about St. Constantine's day, I had a child and all women have since kept aloof from me. I live since in shame and unhappy at my fathers' here, in Mirovtche.

Rista Krstovitch's wife says : that working one day in her Indian corn field, where she was with a little brother of hers, she was assaulted and violated by a Bulgarian soldier the name of whom is unknown to her. To achieve this, said soldier had put the point of his bayonet near her throat, saying he would kill her if she resisted. This happened in 1916. This woman was since interned in Bulgaria where she had a child who died in Drama, on the way back to Macedonia. Her husband, in the Serbian Army Service Corps, died when working on railroad repairs. She found her home empty and pillaged.

Maria Dimitrievitch reports that having gone to the woods for logs, she was assaulted there by three Germans she could not under-



stand. One of them had a sporting rifle and threatening her with it, violated her. The child born from it died two months old.

Djordje Gligorovitch, of Davido Village states : The Bulgarians took from us all the cattle, paying nothing. They gave sometimes receipts, but they could never be cashed bearing no date nor the name of the commandeering party. The pay office was not mentioned on them. The peasants were obliged to work on the roads, repairing them and did not receive even bread for it, the enemy soldiers having scarcely enough for themselves. Everywhere, the soldiers violated women ; but this was known only nine months afterwards, when children were born. Up to now, only two women had a child. The husband of one of them served in the Serbian Army. He was told that his wife, Velika Bogatinovitch, had been dishonored, but nevertheless, he allowed her to stay in his house. The other woman, named Fidana Ristovitch, hid her shame as long as she could and only when the child was born did she say that Bulgarian soldiers had violated her as a vengeance because her husband, reported missing since the retreat of the Bulgarian Army, had distinguished himself as supporter of the Serbian Ideas.

In Smokvitse Village, Bulgarians violated Mitza Yantchevitch (now living with an old man of Petrovatz), Chitchirina Athanassovitch, Raina Ristovitch, Fida Sveyovitza, Kata Ivanovitch, Maria Yovanovitch (who married afterwards Yovan Stankovitch of Mirotvche), etc... Altogether 17 women.

In Petrovo Village, Bulgarians killed in an Indian Corn field, at a spot named Kriva Reka, a man called Risto Djurovitch-Yovanovitch. The soldiers wanted to gather the corn, and he opposed it. They cudgelled him to death. An inquiry commission was sent to the place where the crime had taken place and had the corpse exhumed, but found the death quite natural. All the village knew that this peasant had been killed with sticks. Later on, a rumor was spread that he had been killed by Russians or Turks. But there is not the least doubt that this is a Bulgarian crime. The deceased was 42 years old. He left five children now in the charge of their grand-father, Djuro Yovanovitch.

Peter Dimovitch, Guard of the Petrovo Forests under Serbian Administration, was arrested for being a supposed partisan of the Serbian Ideas. In 1917 he had to pay 600 francs, as ransom, to escape internment. This money was received by the officer in command of the 1st. Battailon of the 1st. Division, Todor. (The surname



is not known to him). He was four months imprisoned in Prishtina. Nicolas Noi, of the same Division, took from him 350 francs because he refused to give him straw. He had also to pay a 250 francs fine, and another one of 165 francs because he was not able to give 160 turkish liras, as required from him. He was fined too for having said to a soldier who had tried to violate the daughter of the village priest, that it was a shameful act and that such crimes had to be stopped once for all. Patrols of soldiers in arms dragged him right and left. His house was searched several times. Once a group of soldiers knocked at his door after midnight. He refused to open the door. They broke it open and rushed into the house pretexting a search. But in reality, they pillaged it, taking away all his corn (10 tons), a cow, 14 goats, three baskets of butter, a large quantity of soap, etc... And they came back to take all the straw. On the day before the evacuation, the Bulgarians took from him 5.360 francs belonging to the Church.

They took from Yovan Pechevitch, Petrovo Village, 50 goats, 4 oxen, 4 pigs, 1 mule, 3000 measures of corn, 200 or 300 of wheat and rye, 6 turkish gold liras and 4 silver watches. All this was done when the owner was absent. On his return, he found the door broken open and the house being plundered. He fought with some soldiers « finishing the job » and received a severe blow. He was persecuted because one of his brothers was in the Serbian Army. Djordje Djalakovitch's wife was robbed of all the sheep, corn, straw, etc... Very poor, she had cried and begged for something to be left for her food. But her prayers were not attended to because she also had a brother in the Serbian Army. In the homes where no man was left, the women kept watch on the barns and granaries, but the Bulgarian soldiers drove them away with their bayonets saying : When the French Army come, you will have all the bread you want.

In the villages of Mirovtche Parish, internment was not applied blindly : only the best Serbian families, particularly those having someone in the Serbian Army, were listed. First the men were taken away, then the women. On Bulgarian territory, the man was not interned with his wife and children; they were kept separate in concentration camps, guarded by sentries, where they remained two or three months before being sent somewhere else. In Mirovtche, people to be interned had three days to get ready for the journey, but in other places, this respite was not granted. The people left leaving house and fields unprotected. Vassilka Petrovitch, a woman of Mirovtche,



who was interned with her mother in Rekovo Department, says on this subject : We were taken from home a few days before St. Elie's day. The Mayor informed us three days in advance that we would be taken to a place he could not know. He advised us to take with us bread for three days, a water jug and a blanket for all the family. We had to leave all the cattle and furniture, for enemy use. Eight days later, our husbands were interned. We were escorted all the way and the soldiers treated us inhumanly. We were not allowed to leave the column even for physical necessities or to fetch water. Whoever infringed this rule was sentenced to death. Many women were struck with the butt of rifles. Our husbands were taken to Provodia, near Chumen. In the last period, we had nothing to eat. On our return, we found our homes empty.

Lazar Gligorovitch's wife, of Miletkovo, complains that the Bulgarians burnt her house, after pillaging it. Before, the officer in command of the 5th Regiment, Dimtiar Samardjieff had been billeted in her house with 10 men. The house was valued at 25 turkish liras, and the furniture was worth 4.000 francs. She knows the names of two of the soldiers who took part in this crime : Lazarov and Pantchoff, of Rutchchuk. The soldiers obliged the inhabitants to declare they were Bulgarian. On leaving, they put the church on fire.

Yokov Kara-Yovanki, of Mirovtche, states : We were interned on about St. Elie's day, the men first and then, separated from them, the women. We were seven from the same village. My wife and children were interned in Donie-Lukovo (Orechovo Department). As to me, I was taken to Provodia (Varna Department). On the way we had to submit to all kinds of bad treatments. We had to walk quickly ; we were even obliged to throw away our garments and the winter linen to accelerate our step. The police (gendarmes) threatened us with death and struck us for the least thing. Nobody could leave the column, whatever his excuse. In Chumen, two Serbian soldiers were killed because they had stepped out for physical necessities. They were robbed of all they had and buried in a ditch. The interned ones were left two months in a barb wire enclosure, suffering from hunger. Only at the end of the internment were they allowed to work. We, of pure Serbian origin, have been specially ill-used. From my house, nothing remains but the walls. Everything was pillaged and taken away. My estate was worth 20.000 francs. Now, I could not raise on it enough to feed on.



Very often interned Serbs, working on Bulgarian estates, received no pay for their work. For instance Rista Russovitch, a woman, was never paid by Ilia Badjkoff, for whom she worked.

Konstantin Yovanovitch, of Miletkovo, states that the Bulgarians had asked him, for formality's sake, if he was willing to give to the Bulgarian Army what he had. He answered he was so poor that what he had was hardly sufficient to keep him alive. But nevertheless, everything was taken from him. And the same thing was done in all the houses of the village, nothing being paid. We dared not leave our homes and could not resist, therefore the Bulgarian gathered themselves all the corn in the fields, and destroyed what they could not take away. When leaving, they uttered their disappointment and rancor in a most violent way : Sons of Macedonian wh...., did they cry to us, we had the war because of you and, now, we are wrecked ! On leaving too, they put the church on fire which was entirely the prey of the flames. They had used it to store the rations and the ammunition. The Holy Books and the Service requisites were burnt too.

During the War, all males and females in the village, from 15 to 60 years of age were commandeered for the fatigue duties. No food was given them ; only lately did they receive a slice of bread each, about a quarter of a corn loaf. Officers and men were billeted in our homes paying nothing although they had plenty of money. The German soldiers were billeted in the school which has been deteriorated by them completely. When billeting the troops, the officers measured by steps the room available, leaving only a tiny space to the family, all the rest was for the soldiers.

Djordje Belovitch, of Davidovo, member of the Parish Council under Serbian Rule and, for some time, Parish Cashier, was deported to Bulgaria and interned in Chumen with two brothers of his. Their wives and children were interned in Pehovo. Seven other families from the same village were interned, their estate pillaged and destroyed. They were not even granted the necessary time to prepare for this journey, being immediately taken away and escorted. From the Delovitch family, 275 shegoats were taken, also 40 sheep, 2000 measures of corn, 3000 of straw and a large quantity of rye, wheat etc... In the house of this estate, sergeant Stevan Tchustanbegoff took a sewing machine. All the fields of this village and of all others in the same parish were devastated.

Andon Djordjevitch, of Davidovo, states he does not know the



motives of his internment. He was taken away with a group to Galitch, Orechovo District, and their wives were interned in Kneja, same district. Men and women had to work for their food, better said for some food, because all suffered from hunger. On the road to the internment camp, they were not allowed to leave the column even for physical necessities, for fear they might run away. They were abused for the least thing, and very often beaten. They had to walk with naked feet, and it was a problem to find some stuff to cover the body with. On the road, a good many Serbian soldiers, prisoners, were met; they were in the same condition. Once they saw a Serbian soldier with two sheep on his back and a Bulgarian, very likely the owner of the sheep, struck him on the head with a big stick because, under such a burden, he stumbled and could not walk straight. At several places, they saw Bulgarians beating Serbian soldiers working.

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#### N<sup>o</sup> 44

#### REPORT RECEIVED BY THE INTERALLIED COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE CRIMES COMMITTED BY BULGARIANS IN SERBIA

The undersigned, commissioned for inquiring on Bulgarian crimes in Vlassotintzi District have ascertained as follows :

1. — We traveled for information in the twenty following parishes : Brodatz, Vlassotintzi, Gorgni-Orachatz, Gredelatz, Darkovatz, Dobrovatz, Deyan, Dobro-Polje, Kalanatz, Kruchevatz, Kanonitz, Orochatz, Predeyan, Prissyau, Ruplie, Ravna-Dubrava, Svotgya, Negotinatz, Tzrna-Irava and Chichavatz.

2. — The following report results from a few days only of investigation, and embodies therefore but a feeble part of the numerous crimes, inquiring lawfully on which would necessitate many months. But had we time enough to do this, how could we describe at length, or even approximately, the full cruelty of the Bulgarians and the diversity of their methods in showing it. Only a summary is possible. It appears that Vlassotintzi District suffered less than others, for instance Yablanitza, Kossanitz or Prukuplie districts ;



but from what we have seen and heard here we can infer the martyrdom of those districts which are shown as having suffered most.

Without exaggerating what we have seen, we can state knowingly that the words « pillage, robbery, assassination, fire », are most feeble for expressing the doings of Bulgarians in this part of Serbia. So evident are the crimes, so frequent and diversified, that not only was it impossible for ordinary people, with a scanty vocabulary at their command, to amplify, but even to relate the real horror of what happened. For instance, a man appears before us one-eyed, having lost the other eye through blows from the Bulgarians. Well, his appearance is a fact, and what he says cannot amplify nor lessen the truth. Deaf people, cripples from broken arms or legs, or those who have had their ears cut or show scars or other marks on the body are clear testimonials of their word. All these victims used to cry bitterly at the end of their evidence. Other « testimonials » are the corpses of those who were assassinated after having been tortured, and the bones found here and there, half eaten up by dogs. In short we can say that many people were assassinated or burnt, many others died of wounds received, but that nearly every inhabitant was beaten and robbed of his all. Lucky exceptions are those who did not feel how hard has been the fist of our enemy.

3. — This district has been ruled, like all the rest of Serbia, by co-existent civil and military authorities. Whenever measures were taken for the extermination and martyrdom of the Serbian race, they worked on a common accord. When the agents of the Civil Power did something on their own, our people suffered double, because those of the military power did not keep behind, and vice-versa. For instance, when soldiers pillaged somewhere, the gendarms (police of the Civil Power) came soon afterwards and took what had been left. Often, before the pillage, the inhabitants were beaten, the women violated and the head of the family tortured on the pretence of making him say where weapons were hidden, or where Serbian insurgents could be. But the real motive was often a search for money. At all hours, day or night, everyone was fearing for his life. Anyone in the Bulgarian Army, Officer or private, could kill and take away all he wanted; and all moveables went with them. Complaining to superior officers was worse: ill-treatments ensued. It is true that sometimes the criminals were brought before tribunals, but it was a very Platonic satisfaction since no punishment was effective and, moreover, the prosecutor was treache-



rously punished for it or even assassinated. The soldiers called « Wheat-reapers », « country-police » or « millers » committed unimaginable atrocities. Bastinadoes, all kinds of abuse and the deprecating words for the « Serbian mother » were daily occurrences. The stick struck on all occasions, even the least, as shown by the following two examples : a poor fellow was publicly bastinadoed because he answered « if you please », instead of « at your command », and he lost one eye from it ! An old woman was atrociously beaten because she implored in the following words soldiers who invaded her garden for potatoes : « My children, leave something to the old woman who worked all summer ». — Many people were beaten twice a month for no other motive than ruling the population more easily by frightening it.

The principal aim of all authorities, civil or military, was to get rich quick at the expense of the Serbian people. For instance, Bulgarian priests married for money children 14 or 15 years old. And to increase the number of marriages, they promised that brides and bride-grooms would not be interned. But quite the opposite was done : the bridegrooms who have not been interned were sent to the Bulgarian Army.

On the door of all offices was the inscription : « Here Bulgarian only is spoken ». Everybody had to attend the meetings when Bulgarian speakers proclaimed the « Morava » to be Bulgarian and asserting that the province would remain part of Bulgarian territory.

4. — Besides the Town Major, the Sub-prefect, the Mayor, who were Bulgarians, an office, called the « Inquiry Office » was opened in Vlassotintzi for obtaining « confession » from people supposed to be « guilty ». Anyone brought there was first bastinadoed and otherwise tortured before being sent to prison. When the accused could not walk from blows received — and this was frequently the case — he was helped out by two Bulgarians. Everyday, people living on the Town Square heard the cries of the unfortunates being tortured. The tavernkeeper witnessed all these horrors.

5. — We give below in tabulated form a glimpse of what Bulgarian rule meant for the District :

Committed in 1915 :	
Public Assassinations .....	8
Secret Assassinations .....	6
Bastinadoes .....	12



Tortures .....	6
Rapes .....	3
Ransoms, pillage and robbery .....	2
Fires .....	
Deaths from blows received .....	
Bastinadoes followed by pillage .....	8

in 1916 :

Public Assassinations .....	
Secret Assassinations .....	
Bastinadoes .....	7
Tortures .....	
Rapes .....	
Ransoms, pillage and robbery .....	8
Fire .....	
Deaths from blows received .....	1
Bastinadoes followed by pillage .....	7

in 1917 :

Public Assassinations .....	64
Secret Assassinations .....	39
Bastinadoes .....	49
Tortures .....	48
Rapes .....	15
Ransoms, pillage and robbery .....	163
Fires .....	292
Deaths from blows received .....	13
Bastinadoes followed by pillage .....	49
Maimed during deportation .....	2
Burnt in houses .....	3
Drowned in W. C. ....	1

in 1918 :

Public Assassinations .....	
Secret Assassinations .....	
Bastinadoes .....	67
Tortures .....	3
Rapes .....	3
Ransoms, pillage and robbery .....	6



Fires .....	22
Deaths from blows received .....	8
Bastinadoes followed by pillage .....	41

Totalling 1915 to 1918 both inclusive :

Public Assassinations .....	72
Secret Assassinations .....	45
Bastinadoes .....	135
Tortures .....	51
Rapes .....	24
Ransoms, pillage and robbery .....	187
Fires .....	316
Deaths from blows received .....	21
Bastinadoes followed by pillage .....	100
Maimed during deportation .....	2
Burnt in houses .....	3
Drowned in W. C. ....	1

6. — We claim particular attention for the following crimes :

- a) Fires, murders, hangings and pillage in Kruchevitza, Tzrna-Bara and Chichava villages ;
- b) Secret assassinations of the Priest Onuphriye Popovitch and of Blagoye Ilitch, living in Vlassotintzi.
- c) Mihailo Pavlovitch, beaten to exhaustion and thrown, half-dead, in the latrines ;
- d) Rape of a little girl 7 or 8 years old ;
- e) People burnt alive in Tzrna-Trava ;
- f) Women murdered wholesale in Tzrna-Trava.
- g) Ravna-Dubrava school put on the fire when the Bulgarians retired after the armistice and capitulation.

7. — The complainants cannot, in most cases, give the exact names of the officers and soldiers who committed the crimes. But from information to hand, the following are among the criminals :

Major Chappov, in command of the 17th Complementary Company, born in Pleven.

2nd Lieutenant Petkov, in command of the 3rd Company of the 17th Complementary Group.



2nd Lieutenant Stevan Vassiliev, Chief of the Criminal Police Office, born in Kazanluk.

Ivan Nikolow, Mayor of Vlassotintzi, born in Vrania and living in Sofia.

Captain Stevan Stoitchev, in command of the 1st Company of the 42nd Regiment of the Sofia Division, and his servant, Peter Salev, born in Teteven.

Nikolas Balabanov, N. C. O., born in Sofia.

Ivantcha Baikuchev, Vlassotintzi Sub-prefect, born in Trn.

Zariye Ivanov, Mayor of Vlassotintzi, born in Trn.

2nd Lieutenant Ivan Tochev and Corporal Petko, both of the 3rd Company of the 42nd Regiment, Sofia Division.

Yanko Rabakdjiyef, Quarter-Master Sergeant of the and Company, 17th Complementary Brigade.

Leon Avramov, N. C. O., 12th Company, 11th Territorial Regiment, born in Vidin.

Lieutenant-colonel Kutintchev, of Ruchtchuk.

2nd Lieutenant Naidan Cheptanov, of the 19th Alpine Detachment, 17th Complementary Brigade, born in Troyan, and his servant Anton Damyanov, born in Sliven.

Police Agent Beltcha Braneuof, of Kazanlik.

2nd Lieutenant Terziyev.

Quarter-Master Sergeant Rista Guenov, of Tcherveni-Breg.

Ivan Sokolov, private, 17th Complementary Brigade, born in the Istip region.

Arsen Uzunov, born in the Bela-Slatina region.

2nd Lieutenant Batchvarov, born in the Bela-Slatina region.

Metodie Nikoline, the Bulgarian Secretary of Chichavatz Parish, born in the Tchustendil region.

Lieutenant Daskalov, of the 17th Complementary Brigade.

Private Stanoie Randjelov, born in Klissura, living in Sofia.

Djordje Natchev, Comitadji of Plovdiv region.

Corporal Nikolas Baikuchev, of Trn.

Vassilie Nikolov, of Lomnitza, Trn region.

Corporal Tzone Popov, born in Trn.

Nicolas Dobrikov, private, 5th Mountain Battery, born in the neighbourhood of Tzrno-More.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nakov, of the 6th Complementary Brigade.

Leonida Papov, of the information office, 17th Complementary Brigade, born in Ressan.



Private Ristov, Signal Detachment of the 41st Regiment.

Private Milan Spassov, 6th Brigade, born in Varni.

2nd Lieutenant Kassabov, born in Kratovo, 17th Complementary Brigade. He assassinated men in Kalna, burnt houses in Ravna-Dubrava.

Lieutenant Stoyanov, of Sofia, 6th Complementary Brigade, and Corporal Yordan Dimitriyev, of Yambole. They assassinated 14 innocent men in Veliki-Krtchimir.

Rustem, hairdresser in Bela-Slatina. Appointed for the bastinadoes which took place in Gligorie Mitkovitch's café (bar).

The cruelty of the Bulgarian General commanding in Nich is specially mentioned : he ordered a wholesale murder of all males between 16 and 60, and the internment of all the rest, as was done in Chichava.

Signed : Sreten Dinitch, schoolteacher, Todor Milenkovitch, schoolteacher, Tehirilo Yandovitch.

Leskovatz, December 20th 1918.

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## N° 45

REPORT RECEIVED BY THE INTERALLIED COMMISSION  
OF INQUIRY RE. THE MURDER OF THOMAS DJURDJEVITCH,  
PRESIDENT OF THE SMEDEREVO TRIBUNAL, THOMAS  
ZAFIROVITCH, M. P., THOMAS Z. MIHAILOVITCH, TRADESMAN,  
AND THOMAS MIKITCH, JUDGE AT VRANIA TRIBUNAL.

1) Statement by the widow of Thomas Djurdjevitch.

My husband stayed with me in Prichtina, our children being ill. The Bulgarians came soon. We lived in a house belonging to a man, called Mouarem-Aga, and Thomas said he was a tradesman because the Bulgarians, on their arrival, had announced that all State employees and dignitaries would be arrested. We were waiting in Prichtina for the Belgrade train to run under Bulgarian management. One day, after Christmas, the Prichtina Town Major summoned Thomas, and having received him friendly, told him he knew



who he was, but being over fifty, there was no danger for him to be interned. He added that, should my husband want to leave Prichitina, he would give him a pass to go anywhere he wanted to, allowing him even to stop in Vrania, to gather things we had left there on our way to Belgrade. At that time, we suffered much from the cold, shivering all night on old and hard straw-mattresses laid on the floor, and Thomas asked the Town Major to grant us passes for Vrania to take there our bed things before going to Belgrade. On arriving in Vranie, The Station Officer, Latcheff, took brutally from my husband's hands the papers. We found our house nearly in ruins, and in the rooms, still habitable, the Bulgarians had put horses and oxen. No trace of furniture or clothes could be seen. We could hardly find a shelter in the place : no inn, and the people we knew would not have us their homes, such was the terror in Vrania. A good many well-known citizens and priests had already been killed, and the inhabitants were afraid to be accused of connivence with my husband if they accepted us in their house. On the following day, January 4th 1916, Thomas presented himself at the Parish Hall ; in the afternoon, he called at the Town Major and received the necessary papers to go to Belgrade with all his family. But these papers had to be signed too by the German Officer and this could not be done the same day, although Thomas and I waited in his office up to 8 p. m. He told us then he had no time to attend to this, and asked us to leave our documents and come for them at 8 o'clock the next day. In fact, they were given me the next day, and not used to Bulgarian treachery, I ran gladly to our house, hopeful at seeing us safe from the blood-dripping claws of our enemies. I found Thomas on the threshold, ready to go out : Major Ilkoff had ordered him to bring the papers back, pretexting he wanted some information from such an eminent man, and this obliged him to ask my husband to stay a few days more. On the same evening, my husband went to Ilkoff's, but came back one hour afterwards, accompanied by soldiers. He told me Ilkoff had found lodgings for us a bit further off, next to a workshop, and that we had to stay there. On January 9th, Thomas was summoned again. He asked then Major Ilkoff to deliver him the passes and to allow us to leave, explaining why we could not stay, without the least comfort, in a cold, tiny room. Ilkoff answered : « Bring me from your Town Hall a document signed by the Mayor and three witnesses certifying you are not a rebel, and I will let you go. » When Thomas came with the required certificate, Ilkoff exa-



mined him again, and my husband, weary of such dilatory ways, answered him : « I am a Serb, patriotic and honest. You will get nothing out of me to the contrary. » And Ilkoff threw the passes and the railway transportation papers into a drawer, which he closed, saying : « Well then ! you will remain here until you get a bit more reasonable » And for that day, the examination was over. On January 22nd, we heard that Ilkoff was going to be sent somewhere else, and that Colonel Kakandjieff, who had ordered so many slaughters in Leskovatz, was appointed in his stead as Vrania Town Major. On the same day, about noon, a man came to us and advised me to bring Ilkoff a few hundred francs begging of him to let us go. Thomas, in a temper, answered : « I do not want my wife to implore a Bulgarian, and I have not spared money for this use. » The man left, and on the same evening, four men, bayonet at the rifle, led by a sergeant, took Thomas away. Before the door, in the shadow, I saw Kakandjieff and Ilkoff. I was not allowed to wish my husband good-bye, and he could not take anything with him. Suspecting the worse, I went to the officers, threw myself at their kness, and, weeping, asked them to spare my husband's life. Ilkoff stammered a few words — I understood he would take care of him — but Kakandjieff, exasperated, took him by the arm, and both went off. I ran behind the soldiers to know where they led Thomas, but one of them saw me, stopped, aimed at me with his rifle and howled, furiously : Go back ! Under this menace, I retraced my steps home, and the group went on. Opposite the house in which we lived, was a canteen where a few Bulgarian doctors, a Pope watching us by order, ex-comitadji called Nicolas Petkovitch, and a few officers took their meals. Taking no heed of time, hour, politeness, I rushed into the room in which they were, and beseeched them to have pity for my children, and to speak for their only bread-earner. Behind me was my daughter Militza, the elder, who followed me. Moved, I think, by our tears and despair, the officers looked at us, exchanged a few words and asked the Pope to take us to the Prefect and have an audience granted us. Also to protect us against the patrols. I was told that the Prefect was an influential man, who took care of the interned, and that it was advisable to try and have his protection. As soon as I was introduced to the Prefect, Dr. Dimitroff, I kneeled before him and ask him mercy for my husband. He spoke to me encouragingly and comforted me with promises : he would do all that could be done, sending a wire to the Tzar of Bulgaria explaining



him our sorrow and unfortune, and he was very hopeful my husband's life would be saved ; on the other hand, his internment was nearly certain. But my husband was killed. I never saw him since he was taken away from me.

2) Statement by the widow of Thomas Zafirovitch.

Thomas Zafirovitch, was suffering from a chronic inflammation of the kidneys, from arterio-sclerosis and also from heart's disease ; he had frequent crisis of the latter. His life was often in danger, but attentive treatment and care prolonged his days. Ilkoff, the Bulgarian Major, was billeted in his mansion and went often to see him. Several times, he met the doctors in the patient's room, and assisted to the drugging when he was in a crisis. One day, in the second half of December 1916, Ilkoff called to his room Thomas Zaphirovitch's wife. The Station Officer, Latcheff, was present. In a brutal way, they told her that it was impossible to have her husband any longer in Vrania, because he was a public man and, as such, must be interned, whether ill or not. Frightened, because she knew what crimes they had committed before, Mrs Zaphirovitch implored them and promised them money for allowing her husband to remain in Vrania until he was cured ; afterwards, they could do as they wanted. But her entreaties were vain. A few days later, Thomas was summoned at the barracks. At that time he was attended to by two Bulgarian doctors, Petkoff and Markoff, and Mrs Zaphirovitch asked the latter for a certificate that her husband was not well enough to go to quarter ; this document is still in her hands. Ilkoff did not bother Thomas for a few days and asked again the wife to come and see him, saying to her during the conversation : « You are rich ; go with your husband to Sofia and live there. » She understood that her husband could not stay much longer in Vrania, and promised that as soon as Thomas would feel strong enough for the journey, they would go. Quite aware of Bulgarian treachery, she had a new certificate, drawn up by doctors Markoff and Petkoff, with a view of producing this document if a new internment order was issued. Thomas did not leave his bed, and his cure was slow and difficult. He was so feeble that he could hardly walk down the few steps from his room into the garden, and went back immediately to bed. Seeing him so ill, his wife hoped that the Bulgarians would not have the cruelty to intern him, and that he would die in his home. On the 20th of January, the examining magistrate called and said harshly : How long are you going to stay at home ? Am I



to call on you for the examination ? He ordered Mrs Zafirovitch out, closed the door and remained alone with Thomas. His wife never knew what was said then. When she came back in the room, Thomas was so tired and nervous that she did not ask him anything, fearing a crisis. On the same day, without notice, Major Ilkoff and his adjunct Kraneff, with two doctors, Sapudjiev and Vassiliev, entered Thomas' room. The physicians were commissioned to ascertain how ill Thomas was, as the two other doctors might have been bribed. They were of opinion that the patient could be interned in spite of the two certificates shown by Mrs Zaphirovitch, and although just before, in the very presence of Ilkoff, Dr Markoff had drugged the patient during a crisis. She begged and entreated. It was useless. No pity. On January 23rd 1916, in the evening, four soldiers in arms, led by Sergeant Popoff, who has been so famous, came, and Thomas was ordered to get ready to leave. Desperate, Mrs Zaphirovitch cried and wept, calling to her help the Prefect, Dr Ivan Dimitroff, who since two weeks lived in the house, billeted in Ilkoff's apartments. To her cries, Dr Dimitroff arrived and ordered the soldiers to leave Thomas alone, such doings being contrary to Law. « Kill him here, but do not torture him ! » — The sergeant draw his sabre and, furious, replied to the Prefect : « Go back ! I do not know you ! I have an order to take him away. I cut a good many heads up to now, and I can also cut his ». Mrs Zaphirovitch wanted to give her husband warmer boots, because he had in his room nothing but thin slippers and thin clothes. But the criminals did not allow it. « Not one step forward ! » shouted the sergeant, and brutally he took Thomas away, not heeding his disease nor his wife's tears and despair. The next day, she went to Colonel Kalkandjiev, on whose order Thomas had been arrested, and asked for mercy and also where he was. The Colonel replied : « I took him. Go to quarters, see Ilkoff, he will tell you. » Mrs Zaphirovitch went to Ilkoff who said he did not know where her husband was ; besides, he could write to her soon. She called on him later on a second time, and he told her with irony : « You go to the Prefect, you want wires being sent ! » So everything was useless, and Mrs Zaphirovitch understood that nobody could be approached by her in the matter. Everyone swore he knew nothing about it and was most cruel.

3) Statement by the widow of Thomas Mihailovitch.

On November 15th 1915, my husband had just gone out when Bulgarian soldiers in arms entered our house and asked brutally :



Does the tradesman Thomas Mihailovitch live here? I answered that this house was his, and that he was not at home. In the room were at the time our neighbour, Djoka Nikita & Ilya Denitch, an ex-tradesman. Doubting whether one of them was or not Thomas, they took them both with them; but on leaving the house, they met my husband who had to join the group. All three were led to quarters where, by order of the officer in command, the two first arrested were released and Thomas kept. My children and I spent the night in tears. Having no man-servant in the house to come with me, I was obliged to wait until daybreak to go for information. Very early, I called at the officer's office and begged of him my husband's liberty or, at least, to tell me why he had been arrested. He answered me that his liberty was out of the question; on the opposite, he would be interned because he was guilty. He showed me a poster of welcome to the Allies we expected in October, on which my husband's name was as member of the Organization Committee. My husband was also to get the flags ready for street adornment. This was his crime. I was desperate and did not know what to do. Fortunately, General Boyadjieff came to Vrania on the 18th of the month. I made up my mind to go and see him, explaining him the case and asking from him my husband's liberation. The General received me and promised to go into the matter. By his order, Thomas was set free in the evening of the 20th and sent home, but forbidden to leave his house. Two months elapsed. Thomas never went out, and Bulgarian officers or men were constantly billeted in our house. The Station Officer, Latcheff, came twice to our house and asked the soldiers why did not Thomas go out. He added: He must be a rebel to hide as he does. He knew that my husband stayed at home by order of the Town Major. My husband was therefore in a strange predicament, not knowing what to do, in order to please everybody. He was very much afraid of being arrested again; the first time, all he had on him had been taken from him: watch, purse, pocket-book, and when he was set free, he did not have the pluck to ask them back. In spite of all this, a sergeant and two privates called on January 23rd to arrest my husband. In my despair, I begged a German Officer, a captain, living in our house, to see the Bulgarian Town Major and intercede for my husband. Our teras — my five children's and mine — moved him and he went twice to quarters, insisting on the fact that my husband had been the last two years trading in Belgrade and was therefore to be considered an Aus-



trian subject who had taken refuge in Vrania. But this was useless. Tomas was deported and never saw his family again.

4) The collective statement by Mrs Djourdjevitch, Mrs Zafirovitch and Mrs Mihailovitch.

With our three husbands, another man, Thomas Mikitch was arrested the same night by soldiers who pulled him out of bed. All four were together in the Parish school, having eaten nothing, and lightly clad although it was freezing outside. At midnight, exactly, they were taken by soldiers, bayonet at the rifle, in the direction of Surdulitza, along with four other citizens of Vrania. But, seven days afterwards, said four citizens were sent to Bulgaria meanwhile our martyrs remained in Surdulitza where they have been executed. We have this information from the inhabitants. Thomas Zaphirovitch, M. P., and Thomas Mikitch, Judge, could not walk alone. They were helped each by two soldiers, one under each arm. A healthy man can walk from Vrania to Surdulitza in five hours; but the unfortunate martyrs, exhausted and ill, strained all they could to advance slowly with terrific pains. Who knows if they had ever reached Surdulitza if a German soldier, at the general request, perhaps also moved by pity, had not received them in his supply waggon. They arrived on January 24th, at night-fall, in the ill-fated Surdulitza, where so many terrifying scenes, the telling of which freezes the blood of civilized people, took place. Our husbands were lodged at headquarters, in a dirty, ice-cold room, with no wooden floor nor the least furniture. The lice of the preceding victims and the bitter cold tortured them. They remained two days without food being not yet « listed » for rations ! On the tenth day, they were thrown out and killed by bayonet thrusts. Thus ended their torments. We tried to send them linen, medicine, sugar, tea and paid somebody to bring the parcel to them. But the Surdulitza Town Major did not allow the delivery. Later on we were told by witnesses that our husbands had tried to buy shirts through their guardians, but that this also had been forbidden. They slept on their overcoat, a stone under the head. Thomas Zaphirovitch's wife sent to the Town Major, through somebody, both certificates from Doctors Markoff and Petkoff, asking him to free her husband for illness. But her petition was rejected. When Thomas Zaphirovitch was led out for his execution, he was so exhausted that he fell on the threshold of the inside door and was killed there. He could not go further. Surdulitza citizens say that the three others were bayoneted in a valley, not far from the town.



N° 46

REPORT ON BULGARIAN ATROCITIES THE REGION  
OF LESKOVATS

There is not one home, in the Turekovatz Parish, which did not complain to me, during my inquiry, of the cruel and criminal Bulgarian rule they suffered from during the three years the enemy occupied the territory. I heard officially only 250 people in this Parish, but the facts revealed are quite sufficient for a positive indictment against the merciless system applied by Bulgarian Authorities. The culprits are not individuals acting stealthily, but civilians or soldiers of all rank and condition committing officially or privately all crimes — pillage, theft, rape, ill-treatments and tortures — as a matter of-course, on the recognized principle than Bulgarian rulers can do what they please with a subdued population. Nevertheless, I will name all those I could identify.

Turekovatz village, seat of the local tribunal for the 12 villages of the Parish, is about 2 miles distant from Leskovatz, left of the road running to Lebane. Geographical position opened it from the onset to invasion, and, in fact, from the first to the last day of Serbian slavery, terrorism has been most violent there. Three times, it was the prey of flames; everybody, including old people, children and women was swept with sticks and the butt of rifles outside the village, meanwhile the Bulgarian soldiers set fire on order to the houses, barns and sheds. All real and personal estate of the well-to-do peasants, who had founded their little wealth on indefatigable labour and the vicinity to town, the natural riches being thus worked to the utmost, was annihilated. All conceivable means were employed by the Bulgarians to pillage, ruin and destroy this resourceful place. And the poor people, reduced to slavery, were defenceless.

A poor old man, Kosta Tassitch, of Turekovatz, was searched several times and recovered his freedom by money. The last coins he had put aside, were extorted from him in the most barbarous way. One evening six men struck him with the butt of their rifles and ordered his grandson, aged 16, to get a fire ready. They then put the old man near the flames and burnt his right side until he had given his last bit of money.

By similar tortures, but mostly with the aid of a big stick only, or of an oxnerve cudgel, or simply of the butt of the rifle, the follo-



wing were pillaged : Marian Mitrovitch; Stanko Ivanovitch (80 years old), his wife and his daughter-in-law; Svetozar Blagoyevitch; Sanda (wife of Mika Yevremovitch; Tanka, wife of Givane Stankovitch; Nataliya, wife of Toma Aleksitch; Dekka, wife of Gortcha Yanitch and her sister-in-law, Perka, who died under the blows received; Keva, wife of Duchan Stankovitch; Stanko Marinkovitch, the neck of whom was lacerated with a knife, and his brother Todor; Iliya Andreyevitch (80 years), Stanko Andjelkovitch, Gortcha Pechitch, Goyko Mitich, Traiko Michitch, Sanda, mother of Givane Ilitch. All these were mercilessly beaten and pillaged without the least cause for it by Bulgarians passing through the place, the names of whom are unknown. They used to come in groups of three to twenty soldiers, at any time of the day, and struck the inhabitants with sticks, oxnerve cudgels and the like, or the butt of their rifles, as long as the victim stood the blows. Such abuse had grown into a real habit, and the peasants used to say that it was a Bulgarian way of greeting the Serbs good morning or good night.

Such terrorism was tolerated and even made use of by the Mayor of the Parish, Dimitriye Tavradsiva, of Trn, by Dimitriye Ardalov, of Kariovata, by Lieutenant Krsta Phillipov, by 2nd Lieutenant Ivanov, of the 17th Company. And did anybody complain of these five criminals, beating took place afterwards on the least opportunity. Yovka, wife of Veliko Zlatanovitch having refused to give a hen for nothing, was atrociously beaten; Sanda, wife of Mika Yovanovitch, because she would not give a pair of stockings; Dinka Stankovitch, for taking bread to her son, aged 16, Miloche, who was in prison and murdered the next day; Mita Savitch, aged 78, for taking his cattle out to his own fields; Todor Ilitch, because his plough was broken; Stoyane Milenkovitch, because his chariot broke in work hours; Milan Marinkovitch, because his animals did not walk quick enough (on complaining, he was beaten too by the judge and the Bulgarian gendarme until the blood flowed from his mouth). Cruelly beaten also Svetozar Blagoyevitch's mother for protecting her cows somebody wanted to take away; Yovan Mladenovitch (who died from the blows received) for taking his sister-in-law's defence; Djordje Milkovitch and Vida, wife of Dimitrie Zlatanovitch, for refusing to give a lamb. Rista Krstitch's daughter, Ljubitzka, aged 12, was violated four times because she did not guard cattle properly. Bojana Stando- vitch, the same, for a lamb, and Djordje Mikovitch was beaten because the only pig he had left was not fat enough. Stoyko Stanoievitch



has had his father assassinated and his brother interned, and was himself harshly beaten for being late at a fatigue, oxen having to be led somewhere.

This fatigue, to take the oxen out, and also the obligation to be on guard, were often stratagems to rob the people of their money or of their cattle. And in such cases, the victims were struck, too, as happened to Yovan Markovitch, Krsta Stoikovitch (whose father was robbed of 150 gold coins of 20 francs each and of his silver watch and killed), Petar Ilitch, Yossif Yovanovitch.

Such fatigues were imagined mostly by Dimitrie Tafradziya, Mayor of the Parish, but this even was too much trouble, and later, he simplified his method. He required money, and those who could not bring any, were threatened of special fatigues, of death, of internment or of being sent to the Town Major of the District. We can say that one inhabitant out of two, in this village, was robbed in this fashion.

Besides all the above crimes in Turekovatz or Petrovatz — arson, tortures, stickbeating, pillage, robbery — the Bulgarians are guilty of raping innocent and defenceless women. Roska, wife of Traiko Philippovitch, states : « One night, six Bulgarian soldiers entered our house, in which I was with my daughter-in-law, a young and beautiful woman. The six of them violated her, each in his turn, and beat me because I took her defence. My daughter-in-law left my house and took refuge at her father's, in another village. The next day, two more soldiers called and wanted to see my daughter-in-law, being sent, very likely by the six. They searched all the house and, not finding her, threw themselves on me, already an old woman, doing both of them violently what they had come for. » Keva, wife of Stevan Dimitriyevitch, was beaten at the very time her daughter-in-law Timka was raped. The following women have now venereal diseases from having been assaulted by soldiers : Nikola Dimitriyevitch's daughter, of Karadjordjevatz ; Roska Stochitch, of Belanovatz ; Miloika, wife of Rista Zlatkovitch ; Draga, aged 16, daughter of Tzveta Yotzich, of Belanovitz, and also the latter's daughter-in-law. The daughter and daughter-in-law of Miloche Stanoievitch of Tzrnitza, were obliged to follow the Bulgarian soldiers in their march and work through the forests ; also Stoianka Krstitcheva and Gouga, wife of Djordje Stoikovitch.

When the women defended themselves, the Bulgarians used to beat them with the butt of their rifles, or stuck their knives under



their nails. Many women are mad from these tortures : Staniya, wife of Ivan Petrovitch, and Liubitza, wife of Laza Petrovitch. In the statement made the day before by Yephimilia Stamenkovitch, a startling example of it is found : « I had two children, Todor, a son 25 years old killed under my eyes, and a daughter Militza, aged 20. She was the most beautiful of all the girls in the village. One day, they wanted to get at her and used violence ; she took refuge near me, crying : Take care of me, Mamma ! The Bulgarians struck both of us, to separate the one from the other, but we clung together. My daughter died under their blows, and I am now alone in the world. »

The following were killed by tortures, or shot :

1. — Shot : The 17 year old son of Mitar Mitchitch, ex M. P. for Turekovatz ; Miloche, son of Dimitrie Stanoyevitch ; the nephew of Marian Mitrovitch, Traiko ; Duchan and Harahimpie, brothers of Svetozar Blagoyevitch ; Ilia, son of Yovan Stoilkovitch ; Duchan Stamenkovitch, aged 24 ; Mirko, aged 21, son of Sotir Krstitch—all of Turekovatz. Bojidare, aged 16, nephew of Traiko Todovitch ; Petar Yovitch, of D. Trnyane ; Traiko Ilitch, of G. Trnyane ; Todor, aged 25, son of Yephimilia Stamenkovitch, of G. Trnyane.

2. — Assassinated : Kostadine Lazarevitch, of G. Stupagne ; Prokope Philippovitch, of G. Stupagne ; Prokope Tzvetkovitch and his son Nikolas, of G. Stupagne ; Stoian Djordjevitch and his son Drakope Philippovitch, of G. Stupagne ; Stoian Djordjevitch and his son Dragutin, aged 17, also his brother, Yovan, all three of G. Stupagne ; Mladen Djordjevitch, of G. Stupagne ; Slavko Tzvetkovitch, of G. Stupagne ; Djuro Tzvetkovitch, of G. Stupagne ; the son of Milia Liubenovitch, aged 30, of D. Stupagne ; Tchirko Petrovitch, of Petrovitza ; Stoina, wife of Milovan Petrovitch ; Andjel Stoshitch, of Dushanovo ; Yovan Stamenkovitch, of Drenovo ; Seraphilje, son of Nikolas Yovanovitch, of Kaludjerovatz ; Zlato Zlatkovitch and his two sons, Rista and Stanoiko, of Kaludjerovatz ; Stanoiko Stanoyevitch, of Urotitza ; Nedeliko Simitch, of Milianovo ; Vuskatiya Milutinovitch, of Uramatz ; Petar, aged 17, son of Done Stanoievitch, of Uramatz ; Stanoie Stamenkovitch and his son, Kosta, of Milianovo ; Randjel Nikolitch, of Milianovo ; Tzvetko Mischitch, of Milianovo ; the son of Tzveta Yotzitch, aged 13, of Belanovatz ; Dragomir Markovitch, of Belanovatz ; Traiko Markovitch, of Belanovatz.

From information received by the Sub-Prefect, 85 people died from blows received.



The culprits of above crimes are numerous ; the names or other information are not always obtainable, but here follow a few of the well known criminals : Lieutenant Djordje Pop Ivanov, of Sofia ; Corporal Parcharov ; Stevan Matchkov, Bulgarian Comitadji ; Natcha Daskalov, of Peruchnitza ; a Corporal from the 1st Territorial Regiment of Sofia Division, named Dimitriye Ardolov, of Karnobat ; gendarme (policeman) Stevan Sokolov, of Trn ; Yordan Gueorguiev ; Marinov ; Yanatchko Daskalov, schoolteacher of Peruchnitza ; Lieutenant Krsto Philipov ; 2nd Lieutenant Kutchev ; and the Mayoy, Dimitriye Tavraddiya, of Trn.

Inquiry made by.  
Professor Miloche Dimitriyevitch.

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## N° 47

### REPORT ON THE CRIMES COMMITTED BY BULGARIANS IN DOIRAN CANTON DOIRAN

When the Bulgarians entered Doiran, on November 29th 1915, they found in the town inhabitants of the neighbouring villages also. As soon as a week after their installation, they searched all Serbian homes for arms, books and also the flour the citizens had received from the District's depot. Whoever was found with flour at home was immediately arrested and often beaten. According to Tano Mitovitch's statement, this was the real motive of his arrest. The Serbian books which were found in the gymnasium, in the Normal School and in the Reading Room were thrown into the street by soldiers, and lost.

Besides the above, Bulgarians began commandeering from the citizens stoves and beds, according to what says Annetta, wife of Nicolas Tchirich, in whose house they took a stove and a bed. From houses, not inhabited because of the evacuation, the furniture was taken away without the least attention : this happened in the houses of Stoian Andonovitch, tradesman and Mayor of Doiran, of Miroslav Stoianovitch, Sergeant of the Customs Forces, of Milan Maisner, Principal of the Gymnasium. This was done indistinctly in all houses in which Serbian State Employees had lived.



Many people protested, but to no avail. All furniture from the Gymnasium, Normal School and also from the private flats of the State or Municipal employees were publicly sent from Doiran and sold by auction in Valandovo or exported to Bulgaria, on order received from Kitchov, Director of the Exchequer. All the population was still in town when the demolition of Doiran began. The Bulgarian soldiers first pulled down the houses abandoned by Mohammedans, using the stones and other material for building underground passages, trenches and shelters. When the Austro-Germans arrived, the owners of all houses but the tiny ones were compelled to sell them for the same use. Hussin Effendi and Mita Tassitch, born in Doiran, can prove it.

All Doiran inhabitants were deported. First, twenty families, of patriarchal standing, were interned, and also a few mohammedans such as Medime-bey, Mehmed Abdulovitch, Zia Djemalovitch. Zikri Alilovitch, mentioning what has just been related, asserts that the Bulgarian authorities did not even try to explain the motives of such internments. As a rule, people were arrested at home and sent to prison; later on, they were escorted by police to some destination without having had time to take leave from family or take the most needful with them. Zia Djemalovitch was condemned to hard labour and worked with 2000 Serbian prisoners, breaking stones for road-building. This man suffered from hunger, and says everybody else did, too, especially the prisoners who, besides were left without shoes and garments. The above named were interned in the spring 1916.

Later, on Major Bossian's order, all other inhabitants were informed by drummers that they had to leave town within a few days, a big battle being expected.

The people not showing much haste in executing this order, were again enjoined to leave, taking with them but the most necessary things, all the rest was to be packed and put in the cellars, the churches or special deposit places, when the owners could find parcels on their return, which was to take place about ten days afterwards. Soldiers and a few Doiran citizens had to take care of all these things. According to Hussin Effendi, Polidevka Vassilievitch and Dimitrie Nakovitch, who were heard officially in the matter, the Bulgarian Authorities sent the people away to get rid of witnesses of the intended pillage and pulling down of houses. Zikri Alilovitch says that two or three weeks afterwards, the Town Major allowed a few Doiran citizens to check the parcels stored. They saw that a



good many were missing, and looking into a few houses near the buildings where the military and civil guard was lodged, found them entirely plundered, for instance those belonging to Magda, widow of Priest Risto Tchokmakovitch, and to Zikri Alilovitch. The citizens of Furka and Valandovo say that Bulgarian soldiers sold publicly various things they got in the pillage of Doiran.

The people from Doiran were deported in various directions : in the beginning, Kavadar and Negotin (Tikvesh) where children could not endure the sufferings and died wholesale — according to statement made by Anneta, wife of Nicolas Tchiritch, hundred of them perished in these two places. Another part of the population was interned in Serbia — Vlassotintse, Nich et Pirot, 25 families in each of these three towns. But most of the people had to go to Strumitza, and a few scattered in various Serbian and Bulgarian towns. All these deportations took place within ten days, about St. George's day, in 1916.

In the same year about St Elie's day, Doiran was set on fire after sending away the civil guard and getting from the houses all building material — also of course all the articles which had escaped the preceding pillage. Hussine Effendi and Zikri Alilovitch were told by Bulgarian soldiers themselves that Doiran was set on fire by the Bulgarians. Said two witnesses looked at the flames from Vessili village, near Valandovo. It was like burning waves devouring Doiran. According to some inhabitants, all was burnt in one night.

When the Doiran inhabitants were deported by groups, the authorities told them they were not allowed to take any food with them, and that the State would provide for their rations. But several days elapsed before they received even a piece of bread. The mothers were obliged to gather wild herbs and roots to keep the children alive.

When on march, though, a small quantity of bread was served out now and then. On the way, a carriage was overturned and killed Katarina Karaovitch, wounding two more people. Dimitrie Yamalievitch died on the way.

During the short stay of Bulgarians and Germans in Doiran, these ordered a good many arrests. On neutral territory, Pataros, Akandjeli and Brest, they caught all the people who were ruled by Doiran authorities, such as Rista Nanovitch, Inspector of Police, 35 years; Petar Tankuchevitch, shoemaker, 30 years; Dimitrie Usunovitch, tradesman, 35 years; Dimitrie Peikovitch; Kosta Boyadjievitch & Jussuf, belonging to the village of Bachabos. They were all accu-



sed of being spies, and, after their arrest, were tortured before being hung in Prilep. At the time of the Doiran deportations, Katarina, wife of Kosta Boyadjievitch was also arrested by the Bulgarians. She had to abandon the infant of hers she was nursing, and went to Prilep.

From picturesque Doiran of the thousand houses, nothing is left but a few crumbling walls. Wild herbs and thorns grow on the site of the once happy homes, and the inhabitants can hardly find where the house was in which they lived contented so many years.

#### VALANDOVO

Hardly one third of the once so beautiful Valandovo village does exist now. Trade was pretty brisk there, and future prospects most encouraging. The surroundings are picturesque. And now, the fine houses are nothing but a heap of ruins and cinders. Three days before the Bulgarians retreated from the region, they ordered strictly all the inhabitants to leave immediately the village. These not obeying quick enough, coercion was employed. Many fled to the mountains, at the risk of losing all their property. From there, they heard the songs and accompaniment of Bulgarian troops enjoying themselves in the houses three consecutive days. And, then, large flames issued from the village and leaped to the sky, saddening and terrifying the hearts of the Valandovo people who saw all they had the prey of these flames. Many families were ruined, and have no shelter for the days to come. Several groups of inhabitants were deported either for internment or compulsory enlistment.

Andon Atanasovitch, aged 38, born in Valandovo, says : Before the arrival of the Bulgarian Army in Valandovo, he was in Doiran, and came back to his village five or six days afterwards, but the enemy had demolished his house and pillaged all that was in it. He had nothing left. On January 19th he was summoned with Nano Nakovitch, father of Risto Nanovitch, of Valandovo, and Mitar Djordjevitch to appear before the Bulgarian authorities, and without being given time to get ready, all three were sent under escort to Strumitza and imprisoned. Later on, they were interned in Sliven and had to do the same work as people condemned to hard labour. They have been ill-used, especially Andon Atanassovitch and Mitar Djordjevitch. Father Nano, 75 years old, exhausted, had been left on the Petritch road with one of the escorting soldiers. His fellow-citizens having



tried to help him were pushed on with the butt of the rifles, receiving hard blows. They were told in Petritch, before arriving at the internment camp, that old Nano had died. But it is believed by most that he was killed.

Near Sliven, in the concentration camp where the soldiers led them, they found about forty Serbian priests and many officers and other ranks. At a time, epidemics spread, and about ten people died every day. The sick had no attendance, and half living soldiers have been buried. Once, seeing a young man showing still signs of life being buried, the interned and prisoners present protested. The burial was postponed and said young fellow recovered his health.

Mita Andonovitch, aged 40, born in Valandovo reports that he was compelled by the Bulgarian authorities to go from home with six more fellow-citizens, in February 1917, for internment. But instead of this, they were taken to the Macedonian Complementary Regiment, in Uskub. Two months afterwards, 40 more Macedonians joined them, and among these were several men from Doiran too. A few escaped in the mountains ; others refused to receive their arms. The day the armistice was signed, witness was in Kumanovo with 150 of his comrades.

Sava, 43 years of age, wife of Nicolas Dontchevitch, of Valandovo, was imprisoned 20 days end of January and beginning of February, for leze-majesty. She was examined several times, and threatened with 3 years imprisonment and even death at the gallows or by a firing squad if it was proven that she had been slandering Tzar Ferdinand. Having offered to call witnesses she was released. She relates that she saw in prison a Mohammedan woman with an infant at her breast who was there because her husband had left with the Serbs. Fifteen to twenty Valandovo families were interned. Forty houses put on fire. The Civil Cemetery, near the Church has suffered a good deal. The tombs of the victims of the Bulgarian Comitadjis raid, which took place on Good Friday 1915 have been razed to the ground. On the very spot, the German and Bulgarian Cemetery has been laid and enclosed with uneven walls ; the tombs have large stones with inscriptions.

#### PIRAVA

From Kossantchitch (Vrania Department) where he was school-teacher, Risto Djordjevitch, born in Pirava, aged 38, was led to



Nich on hard labour. On December 20th 1915, he was arrested as spy and sent, 10 days later, to Veles. But the Bulgarian Authorities had to release him on March 8th 1916. He stayed some time in Kavadar, as Parish Hall Secretary, then was interned and accused of having written to Serbian dignitaries for help at the time of the Vrandovo rebellion. He was also suspected of having gathered opium from the fields of several Mohammedans who were sent to Bulgaria after the raid made on Good Friday. He was released on November 18th 1918 only. During detention, the Bulgarian authorities took all his furniture, and his father, 60 year old, was compelled to do fatigue work, every day.

Commandeering in the villages was made without account being taken of the food necessary to the owners. All men from 18 to 40 have been compulsorily sent to the Army — about one hundred in Pirava village. Two houses only were burnt down.

#### ARAZLI

Mustapha Chabanovitch, 35 years old, of Arazli Village, says that the Mayor of this Parish, Taipe Alilovitch was ill-used by the Bulgarian soldiers — among whom was the officer in command, a 2nd Lieutenant — for not giving chickens not belonging to him. He was tied up and taken into the Pojar mountains, where he received blow after blow and had his throat squeezed meanwhile. All the money he had on him, 300 francs, was stolen. He could escape, otherwise, he would have been murdered.

Issim Chabanovitch says : Women and children had to do fatigue work for road repairs — Arazli-Lipovik main road — not receiving any food nor money for it. They had to gather herbs and roots to feed on. At work, they were constantly ill-treated by the soldiers. The officer in command ordered even the soldiers to pull away the veil covering the face of women.

Dalipe Chabanovitch was interned one of the first in 1915. He was accused of having been friendly to the Serbs. Besides, he had been Mayor of Arazli. He was not allowed to take leave from his family.

All the books in Serbian had to be delivered to the authorities.

After the raid of 1915, made by the Bulgarian Comitadjis on Good Friday, the population had built near Strumitza station a small chapel to commemorate the men who fell in the fight. And each



tomb was besides something like a monument. The Bulgarians destroyed the chapel as soon as they arrived, the cemetery was devastated and, on the site, military depots were built with the material they got from the chapel. Nothing but ruins can be seen to-day.

As reprisals of the Bulgarian military authorities, the gardens not only of the Mohammedans who were sent to Bulgaria on the day of the raid, but also of the onlookers have been given to soldiers with everything in them. The wronged parties having complained, they were told that it could not be done otherwise in war-times.

Commandeering started just after their arrival in the Parish, food in general, cattle, grapes, cotton, wool, etc... being taken ; sometimes a receipt was given, but very often all was taken by sheer force. Vintagetime being near, the peasants were told that they would not be allowed to gather the grapes if they did not promise to sell the wine at an exceedingly cheap price. By this stratagem, more than 150.000 measures of grapes were spoilt in 1915. Everywhere wheat has been commandeered, the owner not to retain more than was scantily necessary to keep alive. The poor had nothing to eat and were compelled to go nightly to friends and beg for a little wheat. In the day-time, all wheat on view would have been confiscated. Damages to the Parish only from such commandeering amounts to 400.000 francs.

In the various villages of the Parish, a good many houses were destroyed :

In Arazli village, out of 70 houses, 25 only are standing now.

In Ekchisse village, out of 12 houses, 1 only is standing now.

In Barakli village, out of 120 houses, 111 only are standing now.

In Plavuch village, out of 250 houses, 80 only are standing now.

In Djuldeli village, out of 40 houses, 20 only are standing now.

In Udovo village, out of 120 ouses, 43 only are standing now.

In Vessili village, the Bulgarian soldiers pulled down the mosque. The population tried to resist and was fired upon.

On property belonging to Mohammedan Churches, 15.000 maples 10 or 12 inches in diameter were cut. Arsa Konstantinovitch, born in Gradetz asserts that Bulgarian authorities enjoined the Parishes to partake of the Bulgarian National Festivities, and gifts were extorted from the inhabitants for Bulgarian soldiers. Same witness complains that his house was pillaged because he was acting for the Mayor and refused to go over to Bulgaria with the troops. He was accused of planning to deliver the Parish Hall to the enemy. He escaped with much trouble, nightly, to Arazli with this family.



#### BACHALI VILLAGE

According to the declarations of Mustapha Alil, Alil Alilovitch and Sadik Osman, 42 houses out of the 72 of this village were pulled down by Bulgarians. The Chief of the village says that commandeering was done more like pillage, whether food, cattle or chariots, etc... were taken away. To such an extent was it done that the inhabitants had to buy back stealthily from the soldiers enough food to live on. Women were doing hard labour work, and moreover, beaten and ill-used in all ways. Their veil was pulled off, and their breast bared.

#### PLAVUCH VILLAGE

Memed Assanovitch, Parish Councillor, and Mustapha Alilovitch, both born in Plavuch state that the Bulgarian authorities had all building material, brought from the houses pulled down, carried either on chariots or else by Serbian prisoners. During the Bulgarian Comitadjis' raid of 1915, a good many families were deported to Bulgaria, and about fifteen only came back home. The things commandeered have not been paid for. The inhabitants were turned away from their houses to billet the troops. Same thing at the mill near Valandovo. Having taken all food from the inhabitants, these were receiving but very irregularly flour and other rations. In 1916, the population had to work on the Valandova-Kosturno road.

#### FURKA VILLAGE

The agreeable little Furka village is on table-land at the crossing of roads going to Doiran, Guevgueli and Strumitza. The ridges near by were abundantly wooded. Vineyards and mulberrytrees were widespread. The clean streets and the tidy houses conveyed an impression of richness. Before the War, the village had 80 houses, a school and two churches, an old one and another. When the Bulgarians retreated, no trees were left on the ridge, and the vineyards were reduced to a few dried up stocks. Mulberry-trees were few also, and battered. One third of the houses had been destroyed by fire or pulled down. The tombs around the Church were in bad condition, the monuments and chapels having been razed to the ground. The



inscription on the old Church was torn away, and the new one had been put on fire.

The population of the village had fled to Doiran before the Bulgarians arrived. But an order was issued to go back to the village. On returning, no shelter could be found by the inhabitants, the troops having been billeted in nearly all houses. Soon after, the Bulgarians started ill-using and bothering many families on the suspicion they were Serbs, or Serbian spies, or supporters of the Patriarchate. Everybody who under Serbian domination had been a Mayor or only Field policeman, was prosecuted. Yelena, widow of Teokar Savovitch, aged 36, was ill-treated because her late husband was a well-known Serb before 1912, having been killed by Bulgarians in the first Balkanic War. With a view to annihilate completely all the late Teokar's family, they kept on harassing the widow and the defenceless children. On New Year 1916, her calvary began. She was summoned to appear to inform on the disappearance of her brother, an ex-Serbian gendarme, and of her son, who left the country with the Serbian Army. Later on, she was accused of having stayed in the village to spy. In the night, at any hour, Bulgarian soldiers, led by a Turk serving in the Austrian Army, entered her house, requiring young girls to satisfy their vices. They used to strike her with the butt of their rifles, threatening her with knives, and the children, frightened to death, cried all the time. Once, they took her away from her home and dragged her through the village until daybreak. At each step, they stopped to menace her with their knives on her throat. In one night, she was struck more than 50 times with the butt of rifles.

The first Monday of 1916 Lent, all the inhabitants assembled by order in the Church, where the Bulgarians made two groups of them : on one side, those who were thought friendly to them, and on the other, the Serbs or Greeks (Patriarchists). In this way, the list of suspects was made. A cross showed the Serbs, and their houses too had the same mark for a future vengeance. Austrian officers did this selection. The above named Yelena was there. On leaving the church, she was tied up with thirty more people and escorted to Doiran. All this was done in such a cruel fashion that they all thought to be executed immediately. The children cried, running after their fathers and mothers ; the soldiers took them violently from their parents' side, making them stand far away. In Doiran, the



examination of the prisoners took a fortnight, each one appearing several times.

The object was to condemn them as Serbian spies, and the examination continued in Valandovo, from which place the men were sent to Strumitza and thus separated from the women who were escorted back to Doiran and Furka. In the last named village, they went from one place to another for two whole days, spending the night in prison under guard. On the third day, they left for internment. With the above named Yelena was also Yelena wife of Bazyle Atanasovitch, whose father was killed by Bulgarians in 1913, also Menka, wife of Lazarus Stoikovitch and many others, and all endured the same sufferings as Yelena. They were altogether : 8 children, 3 men and 20 women or girls, the oldest and most exhausted of all being Menka, wife of Lazarus Stoikovitch. She felt so ill from bat treatments that the other women were obliged to carry her. For eight days, they remained without a bit of bread because they had been forbidden to take with them anything whatever. Only on reaching Pirot they could buy some bread stealthily. Menka, at the end of her vital powers, died in the train taking the group to Sofia.

Said group was put in a concentration camp, near Sliven. One shed only was allotted to all of them. In this camp were also Serbian officers and men, prisoners, and also a girl from Prokuplie, all alone. The sentries were especially strict toward prisoners : did anyone of them go out at night for physical necessities, he was fired upon and killed. In such circumstances did our group live five months. Later on, they were allowed to work for a living, controlled by the authorities. Lazar Stoikovitch, aged 65, who was in this group, says as follows :

The day before Epiphany, in 1916, a Bulgarian N. C. O. called at his house, in Furka, ordering the accompanying soldiers to take him, not allowing him even to get ready for a journey. The next morning, he was escorted with two more citizens of this village, Theodor Savovitch and Theodor Aristovitch to Strumitza first, and to Sofia afterwards. They walked twelve days to reach this Capital, where they remained 68 days in prison, under guard. They appeared several times before the Officer in command of the Place, whose aid de camp whipped them with his riding stick because they answered they were Serbian subjects. Old Theodor Savovitch fell under the whipping, but this did not stop the officer who battered him with



his feet all over, the General Officer in Command looking impassively all the time.

The first visit they had in prison was Dr. Vateff's, a lawyer, who offered to have them released for 150 francs, each. They gave the money, but remained in prison. Then came Kosta Nicoloff, of Ruchtschuk, promising the same for 130 francs each. The price was again paid, but they did not get out of jail. After two months, they were sent to Krdjali, for fatigue work, but some time later, Aristovitch was taken to Uskub, and received in a group of 80 or 90 men between 20 and 40 years of age, for compulsory enlistment in the Complementary Macedonian Regiment. All these men came from the districts which had been but a few years before liberated by Serbia. On being visited by military doctors, he was declared unfit for active service and released, with a pass for home.

But not long after his return, Aristirovitch was again arrested. Captain Tochhoff visited him in the prison and, stopping his invectives, struck him with his horse-stick on the head, back and kness for the most futile reason. Aristirovitch was ill from it threes days, unable to move. He was then sent again to the Complementary Regiment and served in Dedeli for the transportation of supplies.

Aristirovitch was often sick because of the blows he had received. Even now, he coughs and his knees are swollen. He was at the end allowed to appear before the Medical Council, in Nich, and sent to Sofia Military Hospital; but transfered to Pleven (where he was still when the armistice has been signed) to make room for others. When leaving the hospital, he received a document showing he was born in Sliven, and had to go there on being released from the Army.

Lazarus Stoikovitch, who narrates all these details, was set free some day and allowed to leave Krdjali for home. But the document handed over to him stated that he was a Serbian prisoner, so that three days after his return in Furka, he was arrested again, and all his family with him, for internment. He arrived in Sliven, but his wife died in the train in Sofia. He lost a young son in Sliven.

Besides above group, another one of 30 people was taken from Furka on St. Elie's day, in 1916; among them were 10 little children from 2 to 10 years, and 6 boys, the rest women and girls. They were all interned in Kneja, Orehovo District, Vrachani Department. All interned there could go where they pleased, but had to work or pay for their living.



#### KAZANDOL VILLAGE

According to evidence by the inhabitants, Bulgarian soldiers assassinated in the night, when the Bulgarian Army retreated from Doiran District, a man called Redjepe Chabanovitch, of Kazandol.

#### NICOLITCH VILLAGE

This village, on the shore of Doiran lake, is nothing but cinders and ruins. The Bulgarians destroyed, too, Vogovetz village.

When the war was declared, Doiran District had about 30.000 inhabitants. The population, dispersed, driven or taken away by Bulgarian rule and exactions, is now 5.000 only.

Inquiry made by M. Y. MAIZNER,  
Principal of the Doiran Gymnasium (College).

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### N° 48

#### RESULTS OF INQUIRIES MADE IN PROKUPLIE DISTRICT (Toplitsa Department)

From general information summarily received, the Bulgarians committed during occupation :

##### I. — ASSASSINATIONS

- a) by arms, on 700 people.
- b) by bastinadoes, on 156 people.
- c) by hanging, on 71 people.

Besides, 31 people were burnt alive (26 in a large caldron, and 5 trown into a fire).

##### 2. — RAPES

264 women and girls were outraged.

##### 3. — DESTRUCTIONS

3.200 houses and other buildings were burnt.



#### 4. — VIOLENCES

4,800 people were struck on the naked body, and 25 people on the head.

#### 5. — EXTORTIONS AND PILLAGE

Money extorted and damage done to private property amount at least to 20,000,000 francs.

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### N° 49

DEPOSITION by DARA POPOVITCH, daughter of  
POPE KALITCHANIN, of GORNIA KONIUCHA (Aged 24)

On Circumcision Day, in 1918, voivod Gavril Stoiloff summoned me to his place, and 4 soldiers took us then to prison, my two younger sisters and I. In the afternoon, accompanied by a soldier, I came back to the voivod's where, for the first time, I saw a woman being beaten. I do not know her name, but she was from Prekadin village. Her face, covered with mud, was full of blood; her clothing was in rags and around her in the mud, fragments of cloth and clumps of hair were scattered.

The voivod asked me to tell who hid the Serbian comitadjis, and where they could be. Having nothing to answer, I kept silent. He insisted and told me to go and fetch them myself. I said this was impossible, because I did not know where they hid. The soldiers seized me then, threw me on the floor, and the voivod, with a bar in the hand, struck me cruelly until he was tired. Ten soldiers held me to prevent me from moving. He asked me then again to tell him about the comitadjis, and, again, I did not answer. The soldiers undressed me, threw me on the ground and struck me with moist ropes. Having made no confession nor acknowledgment, I was released after this and allowed to go home.

My two sisters also were beaten. Inossava, aged 16, was undressed and struck with moist ropes; Mitza, aged 14 was struck first with a stick and afterwards with ropes. Her throat was squeezed to the point that she was nearly strangled. Both could hardly walk



home, and on arriving there, swooned and several hours elapsed before they came back to life.

On the following day Bulgarian Soldiers assembled all the inhabitants of the village. I was there, but not my sisters, and soldiers fetched them, and mother too, who was ill. Gavril, the voivod, asked us to show who the principal criminal was. Leka Milossavlyevitch, kmet of Kognucha, pointed to me and said : « Here is the most guilty of all. She has rifles. She hides comitadjis. » I confessed then I had a rifle, a revolver and bullets. I went for this and delivered it all to them. As to the comitadjis, I said I had been ten days with them in the forest, because I was afraid of the Bulgarian soldiers of the 25th. regiment who were sent to repress the rebellion, and committed atrocious crimes. I followed the comitadjis when they retired to the woods, but came back ten days afterwards, when I got over my fright.

Voivod Gavril ordered me to go to the forest and find there the chief of the comitadjis, Radissav Tochitch, adding that I knew very well where he was. I answered him that after having been tortured the day before, I was too weak to go. But he told me he would have my mother skinned alive if I did not obey. Nothing else could be done but go. On that day, Gavril struck many inhabitants in the village, among others, I remember Milya, wife of Petar Kalitchanin, being beaten. First she was struck with a stick, then undressed and beaten with ropes, one of them being also put round her neck. She was dragged thus in the mud, receiving blows all the time. The suffering made her open her mouth wide, and they introduced into it dogs' paws. Her throat bled from knife thrusts. When she went back home, half dead, soldiers pursued her, stoning her. She fell everytime a stone hit her, and got up painfully. She succeeded in getting home.

On the next day, I left with Gavril and his Company looking for the comitadjis. Before we went, the voivod sent ten soldiers to my home who gave my mother a most cruel beating, using sticks. They threw her, too, down the staircase, and a knife was introduced in her mouth. They asked her at the same to deliver the wheat of the comitadjis. We reached Diuchnitze village, Kognucha district, where Gavril ordered all inhabitants to assemble, and had more than half of them beaten. I remember especially Lyubomir Djokitch, aged 17, assaulted with stick and knife, and also Blagoye Tcholovitch, aged 60, so harshly beaten that he gave all he possessed to put an



end to the torture. The voivod took with him the cattle, the wheat and the furniture. His wife also was beaten and unable to get up again. The Bulgarian soldiers danced then a kolo around her, each one, dancing, coming near her and kicking her.

In the evening we arrived in G. Totchani, Kognucha parish. Gavril allowed his soldiers to go where they pleased and took his secretary and myself to a house in the village, to spend the night there. I begged of him to allow me to go and sleep to a family relationed to mine, but he refused. In the room were two beds : one for the voivod, and the other for his secretary, Risto Koseff. Gavril came near me and asked me to sleep with him. I refused. He told me that, at the assembly of the day before, I had attracted his attention, and this was the reason why I had not been beaten as the others were. He wanted me to love him. I resisted and nearly succeeded in escaping altogether, but his secretary prevented it going to the door with his rifle and bayonet on. The same secretary said then to Gavril : Beat her ! and Gavril seized me and laid me on a bench, mastering me completely and abusing of my girlhood.

On the next day, he assembled all the inhabitants of the two villages, Tochani and Grabovatz, both of the same parish, and asked them who had taken the wheat and sheep of the comitadjis. Some confessed, and were sent to Court. Others did not, saying nothing, and were struck before being sent to Court, too. Gavril took with him the wheat and the sheep. Neither of them belonged to the comitadjis, but the people had confessed to escape blows. Those who had not confessed said a falsehood at last, accusing themselves wrongly, to make an end to the beating.

In the evening, from Dogni Tochani village were taken away : Yossif Philipovitch, another man called Rayko the family name of whom I do not know, and Marko Vassovitch, kmet of G. Tochani village. From afar, I looked to see what was going to happen : voivod Gavril wanted a certain confession to be made. Not being satisfied with the answers, he struck first Rayko and Marko. After beating them atrociously, he tied their hands behind the back and hung them by the feet to a tree. I heard then Yossif cry out : I am an old man, I do not want my soul to be lost ! But he was being struck so harshly that his mouth was foaming. The soldiers thought him dead. To make sure, they brought straw and burnt it on his chest. Yossif groaned. His hands were then tied, same as had been done to the other two before, and he was hung, too, by the feet. They remained



a long time so, and the soldiers, for amusement swung them now and then, to see a chest knocking the chest of the next victim. Afterwards, they burnt straw under their heads and while burning, they were touching the heads with a little stick « to clean them from the soot » used they to say. From afar, I smelt the flesh and hair burning. Yossif was most disfigured.

Next day, all three had to walk to G. Kognucha vlliage. Yossif's head was quite swollen and could not open his eyes. He walked like a blind man, stumbling and falling at each step. And the soldiers kept on beating him with the butt of their rifles.

A little later, we went to Prekachnitza village, where Gavril summoned several people : the Tchadjanovitch family, an old man and his old wife, also Milivoye Lovitch and Milivoye Perovitch of Belfanitzza, G. Kognucha parish, who were in Prekachnitza on their way to somewhere else. All of them were beaten until half dead. Then they were thrown by the soldiers the one on the top of the other, in a heap, and they kept on beating the lot. Lokitch, who was on top, died from it.

On the same day, we went to Donia Benyachitza where I saw Borika Nechovitch, aged 60, being beaten so harshly that she could hardly breathe. They plunged then a bar into her mouth. She died from it. In this same village, a boy of 14 was also beaten while Stan-kovitch's house was searched topsy turvy. A woman, ill, was pulled from her bed to be beaten.

Radissav Tochitch, chief of our comitadjis, having surrendered, I succeeded, with much trouble, in escaping and went back home. Gavril did not bother me for two days, but on the third, he had me imprisoned in Prekadin where Tane Nikoloff, and Lieutenant Guinkoff and three others acted as judges. I stated what Gavril had done with me, and Kristo Koseff, who gave evidence, confirmed what I said. Having spent about ten days in prison, I was released.

Two days afterwards, Gavril called with a man named Andji Petroff. He wanted me to state before this man that I had been compelled by someone to make such declarations against him before the Prekadin judges. But I answered that all I said there was the truth.

On February 3rd., Gavril left our house nightly and walked to Milivoye Palibrk's. It had been snowing, and his footsteps were imprinted in the snow. On the next day, he ordered soldiers to surround Palibrk's house, and arrest all the family. He examined them and coming back to our house, said us that the family had confes-



sed that one of our comitadjis, Drlyivitch, had entered our house in the night. He asked then my mother who had called. My mother did not answer and was thrown on the ground and beaten. Even then, she confessed nothing, and Gavril struck her again. She was then compelled to say that Drlyivitch had called, although it was not true. He took a seven strand rope, moist, made knots to it, and having thrown me to the ground, struck me on the naked stomach in such a way that I fainted. He struck me four times. After the third blow, not able to accept more punishment, I cried out : Drlyivitch has come ! But giving me a fourth blow, he told me. » I do not punish you because of Drlyivitch, but because you complained in Prekadin. I will do as I please. I have a right to. Go and complain to Lieutenant-Colonel Atanassoff. He is our Chief. We are the conquerors ! » The soldiers had to put me on the bed : I could not move. On the next day, they took me again to Prekadin prison. Examined anew, I said how I had ben struck, and had been compelled by it to say Drlyivitch had called.

I remained 12 days in prison, ill. I was then taken to a house, in Prekadin, where I was 10 days in bed, and afterwards to Prokuplie for medical attendance ; I was seriously ill. On the day following my arrival, Lt-Colonel Atanossoff summoned me, but I could not go to him then. I did so a few days afterwards, as soon as I was able. Atanassoff asked me to confess that Drlyivitch had called. I refused. — Why did Gavril beat you ? — Because I complained of his violences. — What can you do ? Gavril already told Colonel Drvingoff and myself all about it ! — I do not want anything, but thought you would not approve of it ; now I see you both agree, I can do nothing, of course. — Confess that Drlyivitch called ; if not, I will hand you over to Gavril, and he will hang you. I have the power to hang you all, if I wish, and nobody can interfere... He left me then and sent Gavril and voivod Lazar Klenkoff who began threatening me. Atanassoff came back a few minutes afterwards and told me laughing, pointing to Gavril : « Do you know him ? » He went out with him, leaving me alone with Lazar expecting this one would persuade me of the necessity of acknowledging it all, against the promise I would come out of all this with my life. The two others entered again the room. I did not confess. They threatened me again, and considered together the form of the confession they wanted from me. And at last, the Lt-Colonel told me : « Your



life is in our hands. You can save it, and Gavril will tell you how. He will take you home. »

On arriving, Gavril told me : « The Lt-Colonel is my best friend. As a rule, he is for us, comitadjis and « macedonians », a real father. He wants you to call on him to-morrow, and sign your confession. What does it matter to you if the others are hung ! You will save your life, and you will get from us all the money you want. » Having promised to go the following day, and see Atanassoff, and also to make a full confession, he left me. But instead of going there, I called at Colonel Rayeff's telling him all the truth. He set me free. The Lt-Colonel, learning what had been done, ordered me immediately to go at once to my village, and appear before Gavril or Lazar. Instead of this, I remained in Prokuplie, informing Colonel Rayeff of this order. He told me I had better stay.

Gavril was imprisoned, and released. Since then he committed new crimes.

Prokuplie, December 13th 1918.

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## N° 50

### STATEMENT BY PARASKEVA, WIFE OF YOVAN RADOVITCH, SCHOOLTEACHER IN KUMANOVO

The Bulgarians found me in Prichtina, where I had taken refuge on leaving Kumanovo. Life had been impossible for me in Kumanovo, being hunted up by the soldiers and forced to abandon all the lodgings I took to. In Prichtina, living was expensive, and hard. I went to the Bulgarian authorities for wood and flour. But they sent me away every time saying : Here we have nothing for thee ; go to King Peter, or the French or English Allies ! Although the railway was operated, I was obliged to walk all the way from Prichtina to Giulyane and was told : There's no train for thee ! I was continually watched by comitadjis or soldiers. Later on, I came back to Kumanovo, but was to go every day to the commissariate. I was put questions several times on politics, my husband, his friends, his opinions. My answers did not satisfy the Prefect, who got cross. Vovod Krsta took me then by the arm and led me to a neighbouring



room, saying : Speak, tell me what your husband's opinions are ! I told him again what I has said to the Prefect. He ordered me to lie flat on the ground, but I did not obey ; where upon he squeezed my temples tight, and I had to stoop. Get up ! he ordered me next. I did it. He struck me, and I fell. He knocked my head with something hard ; I swooned. On going back home, I noticed how nervous and agitated I was. My health gave way and I got mad. Nevertheless I succeeded in getting much better owing to the care Dr Novakovich, of Belgrade, took of me, attending me underhand. During the time I was ill, nobody bothered me.

My husband sent me 4 or 5.000 francs, but I received 600 only. I was asked : « Who sends this money to you ? » I answered : « My husband ». They replied : « It is not true, you get it from the Serbs or from English or French people for propaganda ». I was asked to sign statements I never made, and refused. The criminals threatened me and on September 11th 1918, at 6 o'clock, I was summoned to the Police Court where they struck me and sent me home to fetch bed sheets and bread for two days. On the way I told my guard that I had rather be killed by him than tormented constantly. I was not even allowed to get ready : as soon as I arrived home, two gendarmes came and took me immediately with them. My father, aged 90, was struck, and all the way from home to the Police Court, I was beaten and shouted at, at the same time : « Take this to Serbia ! Take this to King Peter ! Take this to the French ! Take this to the English ! Take this to your soldiers ! » I was struck again on arriving and, two days later, left for Sofia. From Sofia to Tetovina, I had to walk 50 miles, insulted and despised by everybody. They obliged me to sleep in the same room as the gendarmes. I never received any food on all this journey, but in Sofia, where half a pound of bread was served out to me.

This statement was made December 12th 1918, before the Kumanovo Town Council.

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N° 51

Deposition by MIHAILO CHOYLEFF, Bulgarian 2nd. Lieutenant, on being examined by the Serbian Military Authorities in POJAREVATZ, December 19th 1918.

While I was in the hospital, George Senomeileff, a comitadji, was admitted as sick (ven. disease). He told me that 2nd. Lieutenant Tchavdareff had committed so many crimes in Kladurovo, Ranovatz, villages of the Mlava district, that he had been sent here to do the same with the inhabitants of this region. Said Tchavdareff had also been in Lebane Village.

Lieutenant Karadjeff had also committed many crimes in the same and other villages.

I happened to see once, in the Hospital, 2nd. Lieutenant Tchavdareff, and asked him why he had done all these things. He answered me that, for him, it meant very little.

George Senomeileff told me that Tchavdareff and his men killed, one day, from 10 to 20 people some of whom begged for the permission to smoke a cigarette before dying — This comfort was refused them.

I know that Tchavdareff and Karadjeff were Reserve Officers of the 32nd. Regiment. As much as I remember, the Nich Town Major sent an order to remove all inhabitants from Kladurovo and Ranovatz villages ; but Tchavdareff and his comrade construed the order in their own peculiar way and acted with the violence they used to show.

Both these officers not only killed the women, but violated them, or contaminated them with the disease of some of their men. One of the diseased soldiers was specially selected by 2nd. Lieutenant Tchavdareff to do this by order.

I may add that besides the above crimes, said officers used to take ransoms from the inhabitants, stealing also occasionally. I saw in the hospital Tchavdareff's pocket-book full of Serbian notes.

I know them both to be reserve officers, but not what their profession is in ordinary life.

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N° 52

Evidence by Vassilie Djakonov, ex 2nd. Lieutenant in the Bulgarian Regular Army (active officer), examined by the Serbian Military Authorities in Uskub, December 21st. 1918.

In the beginning of 1917, being on duty in Uskub, I lost the confidence of my superior officers because I helped several Serbian families : Professor Jarkovitch's, tailor Trifoun Tchoutchitz's, also a lady with five children. I ventured an intervention with the military authorities on the subject of their internment, and was punished for this with three months' imprisonment and two years' postponement of my promotion to a superior rank.

During my stay in Leskovatz (about 10 days) I saw Bulgarian soldiers pillaging the houses and the stores, taking from them all they wanted — the military authorities kept their eyes closed. But during this time, I know of no citizen being killed. Colonel Zlatonoff, in command of a brigade, was then town major. He informed all officers of the contents of a private circular from G. H. Q. advising to allow any crime or violent deed which may be committed by Bulgarian soldiers, and to hush up the case if any. By order of the Officer in Command, we took from tradespeople all army supplies, such as rice, lard, red pepper, etc... My company and machine gun section left for Vrania, by order from Divisional H. Q.

On the way between Leskovatz & Vrania, in the villages we passed by or rested in, the soldiers pillaged the houses and burnt them down. I do not remember the names of the villages, our rest in them being so short. After the second or third night, just as we were going to leave, a large military escort came towards us, pushing forward young fellows from 16 to 18 years of age and old men above 60, also an old woman. Altogether from 20 to 30 persons. The officer in command of the escort handed over to Captain Charaptcheyff, commanding our company, a letter from Major Zlatanoff. It was an order to put immediately to death all these people, including the woman. Executing the order received, Captain Charaptcheyff had them taken away from the village and shut up in a barn. Next thing, he himself put a machine gun in position and opened fire. During the fire, one of them succeeded in getting loose and escaping. On ceasing fire, four men, a young fellow and an old woman came out of the barn. All the others were killed.



The far from, lucky survivors begged on their knees, kissing the earth before the Captain, for their life. I, myself, asked him to spare at least the young fellow, nearly a child, adding that God did not want them to be killed, having protected them in front of the machine gun fire. But the Captain would not listen to anything, saying it was an order and he had to comply. He gave the order to have them all shot, but I gave the woman a push and showed her quick that she could hide behind the barn, what she did, meanwhile the four others, understanding all hope was gone, took to their legs; soon, they were killed by rifle shots and the bodies were brought back to the barn. The Captain noticed then that the body of the old woman was missing. He found her, panicstricken, behind the barn and gave an order to kill her. All the corpses were afterwards moistened with kerosene and burnt.

We did not leave on that day, but the next morning only. I do not know the name of the village, which lies on table-land, in the mountain. Because of these atrocities, I had a quarrel with the Captain in Command who wrote to Vrania to have me removed from his company. I was sent, then, to the Germans, for technical improvement.

I say also that the people killed in the way above described had no weapons with them. From the dress, I think that some of them were peasants. But I have been unable to find out their standing or the region they were from.

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## N° 53

Yordana, wife of Spassa Yagnevitch, of Radovitch, examined re. the murder of Gutza, wife of Duchan Vessevitch, and of their daughter, made the following statement :

« In my house, in Radovitch, lived Gutza and her daughter. I do not remember the date, but it was the same day Bulgarians killed the Mayor, Nikolas Antonovitch, and his brother Yovantcha, three days I think after the Serbian Army evacuated these regions, — a man, Rista Vuk, of Radovitch entered our house with two companions and strangled Gutza with a string. I immediately took hold of the child and went out; but avoiding the street for fear there should



be any guards, I stayed in the yard. Rista Vuk came out first. Seeing me, he exclaimed : « This is Gutza's child, give it to me ! » I entreated him then, imploring him to spare the innocent little thing. He answered : « Keep silent, Serbian mother ! Not another word ! » The baby could not understand what he meant and was smiling offering him her little hands. He tore her from me, went back into the house and cut the child's throat near the mother's body. I do not know where the Bulgarians took the bodies to. »

This evidence was received November 11th 1918, by the Sub-Prefect of the District.

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## N° 54

- 1) Statement by Nicola Gatchevitch, made in Bogumil, November 2nd, 1918.

When the Bulgarians invaded this region, including Bogumil, the terror spread, as they immediately tortured people. Machine guns were in the streets, and fired on the houses. The paysants fled towards Prilep, and I did the same to escape death and protect my family. When we arrived in Kostintsi Village, Prilep District, I saw that the Bulgarian Officers and men had brought together our women and children, obliging all females to undress completely. They were then outraged and in spite of wind and rain had to do gymnastics. Afterwards, they were allowed to put on their chemise, but soldiers stepped forward and bayoneted twenty women and girls, some of them not even 10 years old. I saw this terrific slaughter from a garret, in the village, where I hid to escape arrest and death. Among the victims are my wife Iana, my daughter-in-law Lenka, my daughter Bojana, my god-daughter Ilinka and my son Nedelko, aged 17. Besides my family, the Bulgarians killed, on that day, a good many men, women and children. Some were killed on the spot, but others at the same time were escorted away to be slaughtered in Kostintsi and Tserjilichte. Bulgarian officers and men went through the villages and got hold of old men, women and children who were knived like sheep or otherwise killed. The Bulgarian officers killed many with their own hands ; at the same time, they cried out insults to the Serbian race. All victims were robbed of their money and all



bodies were left unburied, so that many were eaten up by dogs. On seeing such atrocities, women in pregnancy had a miscarriage caused by fright; the soldiers pierced then the small ones with the bayonet and cried out, brandishing their trophy: This one also was a Serb. All along the road to Prilep, some corpse, atrociously mutilated and ragged, can be seen every ten steps on the average.

- 2) Statement by Nicolas Georgevitch, made in Bogumil, November 2nd. 1918.

Bulgarian Soldiers and Comitadjis killed my wife Boiana, my daughter Stoina, My daughter-in-law Lenka, my son Alexander, my grand-daughters Bojana and Nathalia, and my other daughter-in-law Maria. Before murdering them, they assaulted and violated my wife Boiana, my daughter Stoina and my daughter-in-law Lenka, who were later on taken out with the rest of the family and killed.

- 3) Statement by Atanas Iovanovitch, made in Bogumil, November 2nd. 1918.

I saw with my own eyes that Tassia, daughter of Ilia Markovitch, of Bogumil, aged 18, was tortured, and also Bojana, mother of Tassia, Boika, daughter of Ilia Momirovitch, Momir Sokolovitch and the elder son of Ilia Momirovitch. The tortures were of the worst, and the victims have been afterwards slaughtered and burnt, women having been outraged before. Tassia implored them to let her live, but the maddened barbarians cut her breast and threw the body into the fire, where the others were.

I saw this scene of brutal savagery from a hut not far off, when I hid to escape these barbarians.

These statements were received by Sub-Prefect of the District.

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## N° 55

Statement by Iordan Teovitch, husbandman in Maroltsi, aged 18.

My brother, Iovan Teovitch, aged 25, was a Serbian soldier and captured by the Austrians, but escaped and came back to Veles where the Bulgarians took him and sent him to Dobro Polie, on the



Salonica front. He escaped again and came back home where he was 40 days hidden. Seeing that his mother and brother were daily abused, he tried hard to slip through the lines and, with Vassil Trbitch, arrived in the Serbian trenches. He remained up to now a Serbian soldier. In our house were : our old mother Bena, 60 ; our sister-in-law Anuchka, and a young brother, Ivche. Every day, we were summoned by the Bulgarians and struck. They dragged my old mother through the Teovo and Uskub prisons, in which they undressed her **naked** and struck her mercilessly. They asked her : « Bitch ! say where your son Iovan is hidden ! » My mother swooned very often under the blows. They often took me to Vantche Petruchevitch's house, where the officer in command of the place was, and struck me ferociously on account of my brother. When I swooned, they recalled me to life with cold water compresses, but I was then beaten again. They have maimed me so that I can hardly walk now.

This statement was received by Bojidar D. Radulovitch, delegate of the Inquiry Commission, December 9th 1918.

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## N° 56

- 1) Statement by Helen, wife of Dimitrie Natchevitch, living in Bogumil.

On September 14th., Holy Day of the Cross, I went to Church where the Bulgarian Bishop Melentie was officiating. After mass, he made a speech,, saying among other things : If your fathers should come nightly from the battlefields, asking you to open the door, you must not open before daybreak because they are from Old Serbia ; and then you shall tell them : You are Old Serbs, but we are Young Bulgarians. If soldiers come and see you, do not escape, and do not fear pregnancy ; it is holy. Serbia is destroyed and does not exist anymore, and we will kill all Serbs because Bulgarians only must live. God has blessed them with the domination of all the Balkans.

After hearing this, I went home. We had been in church that day by order.



2) Statement by Marko Natchevitch, living in Bogumil.

On September 14th. 1916, the Holy day of the Cross, an important festivity, the Bulgarian Bishop Melentie came from Veles, his seat, to Bogumil and ordered everyone to come to church on that day. But few people came, the large majority being women. When service was over, he held a speech full of insults to the Serbs and Serbia. He said also « that women must not escape before Bulgarian soldiers, even if they were to be pregnant ; there was nothing unholy in this, Serbia being destroyed ». He told us also that we must not allow our parents or relations who went to the war to enter our houses, should they come back, because they were « Old Serbs », and all of us here had to be « Young Bulgarians » ; also that the Bulgarians would kill all those who had Serbian names because, did he add, nobody but Bulgarians should live in this village.

Both statements received by Sub-Prefect of the District. November 2nd 1918.

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N° 57

1) Statement by Vaska, wife of Simon Petrovitch, of Dolgovatz.

On November 1st 1915, 15 Bulgarian soldiers invaded my house. Not having the money they required from us, they struck us all in turn. My grand-son, aged 18, could bear the blows easily. The criminals, noticing it, bayoneted him to death. Afterwards they wounded with the bayonet and killed by cutting their throat everybody in the house but me, who was hidden in the garret. With my grandson, I lost there my sister-in-law Krstana, my grand-daughter Velika, my other grandson, aged 8, my daughter Mitra, aged 6. I saw these four having their throat cut.

2) Statement by Ivan Kostich, of Dolgovatz.

In the first half of November 1915, I do not remember exactly the date, but it was Sunday, the Bulgarians entered our village.

When enemy soldiers neared our house, my brother Stevan, who saw them in the yard, advised all men to hide ; he wanted to



stay with the women and children to receive and give them what they wanted. We did accordingly, my brothers and I hiding in some part of the buildings. Stevan walked out to receive the Bulgarians, but they rushed our house and struck him mercilessly, also the women and children. They searched all the house, taking 70 twenty franc coins, and took out to a pasture-ground, belonging to Nicolas Yovanovitch, of Dolgovatz, my brother Stevan, my wife Kalina, the boys Metodie, Petar, Iliya, and girls Tassa and Yaglika, also Stevan's wife Proouka, his daughter Zlatana, my brother Spirko and my daughters Boghinia, Zvezda and Menka, where all had their throat cut, the bodies remaining unburied until next Thursday, when peasants from Zerta village came by order of the Bulgarian authorities and dropped them in a grave dug for more than 60 corpses.

I never saw the criminals, for I was hidden. No one in my family escaped death. I am therefore unable to say who the soldiers were. I have heard from some Bulgarian soldiers that the 8th. Division passed through my village, and very likely the murderers belonged to it.

3) Statment by Gvozdan Stanoyevitch, of Dolgovatz, aged 16.

On November 1st. 1915, on the arrival of Bulgarians in our region (about 60 Bulgarian soldiers and a few Turks from Tzernilichte), a Bulgarian soldier and a Turk entered the house where I lived in, requiring money. We had nothing but 10 gold coins of 20 francs each, and gave them away. Afterwards, they seized my mother, aged 60, my sister-in-law Mitra, aged 30, and both my nephews Zlata aged 8 and Nova aged 2, saying : To the butcher's you dogs ! Go and see your King Peter ! They took us to a spot outside the village called « Samokovo » and when arrived in Nicolas Yovanovitch's pasture-ground, they asked us again for money before piercing us with their bayonets. First my mother was slain, after her the children and little children. I was struck with a knife underneath the jaw so violently that the blade, entering by the right side, came out at the left. I fell to the ground, and they all thought I was killed. Several corpses fell on the top of me, so that the criminals did not notice I was still breathing. They went to Tsernilichte village. During the night, I got from under the corpses and fled to the forest, in which I remained three days. The bodies of the little children were burnt, but my mother and my sister-in-law were buried in a common grave, with many other corpses. The soldiers acted on orders received from



Bulgarian authorities, and the officer in command was a lieutenant whose name I do not know. The only man I knew was Scheriff Sulyskoff, of Tzernilichte. One of the soldiers thought that my brother Petar might be spared, being deaf, but Sheriff said it was necessary to kill him because he could otherwise be used by the comitadjis in the forest to bring them bread. I was trembling and so afraid that I did not see the man who cut my brother's throat ; but I saw Sheriff before him, standing, and very likely he knived him, too.

4) Statement by Velyko Mitchevitch of Kostinatz, aged 57.

On November 1st. 1915, the enemy invading the country, a troop of Bulgarian soldiers entered my house and pillaged it. My wife, Tzveta, aged 50, my daughter, Velika, my sons Stoyan, Kitan, and my grand-son Tane Stoyanovitch were murdered.

Another grand-son of mine, Krsta, the younger, was taken to Tzernilichte village and most odiously beaten, being afterwards killed and dropped into a large grave dug for 200 corpses. From all my family, only my daughter-in-law Linka, my daughter Voina, my son Peter are living now, and all were repeatedly beaten and ill-used. They report 7 or 8 wounds by Bulgarian bayonets.

5) Statement by Tocha Velikovitch, of Dolgovatz village.

In the beginning of November 1915, when Bulgarians entered my village, a detachment of soldiers invaded my house and pillaged it from top to bottom. Afterwards, they killed my wife Bissera, my brother Rista, aged 33, my daughters Donka and Boyna, my mother Anna, my daughter-in-law Blagoya, my two nieces Menka, aged 7, and Trayanka, one year old. All had the throat cut with a knife.

This statement was received December 10th by the Sub-Prefect of the District.

6) Statement by Peter Mihailovitch, of Dolgovatz village.

« In the beginning of November 1915, when the Bulgarians entered the village, a detachment of soldiers rushed my house and killed in it twelve people, cutting their throat. The victims are : Kupa, aged 80 ; Maria, aged 70 ; Srebra, aged 40 ; Grozda, aged 35 ; Antcha, aged 30 ; Menka, aged 25 ; Trenka, aged 20 ; Nove, aged 5 ; Tzvetana, aged 30 ; Djuveta, aged 2 1/2 ; Dona, aged 2 and Radomir,



aged 1. All were killed in my yard. One month afterwards, I took the bodies to the cemetery, near Dolgovatz Village Church.

These statement were received December 10th 1918 by the Sub-Prefect of the District.

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### N° 58

Statement by Djordje Milenkovich, aged 48, born in Dolgovatz.

Sunday, November 1st 1915, Bulgarian soldiers rushed my house. As soon as I saw them coming, I fled and hid in some straw near by, where I remained 24 hours. On reaching the house, they required money. My sister Djurdja gave them 50 gold coins of 20 francs each. Afterwards, they took all my family to a pasture-ground called « Samokovo » belonging to Nikolas Yovanovitch, and cut every one's throat. My father Milenko who resisted their orders was bayoneted in the yard.

In « Samokovo » pasture-ground were murdered my wife Stamenka, my daughter Tsveta, aged 12, my sons Milenko, aged 8, and Smile, aged 2, my sister's two children, a young girl aged 6, and an infant, not yet christened, three weeks old. My sister-in-law Dosta was bayoneted but could escape and come back home where she died two hours afterwards.

This statement was received December 11th 1918 by the Sub-Prefect of the District.

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### N° 59

Statement by Stoyanka Stoykovitch, of Dolgovatz, aged 18.

The Bulgarians entered our village in the beginning of November 1915. I do not remember the date, but it was Sunday. A group of Bulgarian soldiers invaded our home, and stole 100 francs from my father. Afterwards, they took all of us : my father Stoyko, my mother Theodora, my brothers Petko and Voin, and myself to a pas-



ture-ground belonging to Nicolas Yovanovitch called Samokovo. Two hundred people were already there, guarded by soldiers with the bayonet on the rifle.

Every one of us in the crowd was trembling for his fate. A man, in Bulgarian uniform, came, a knife in the hand, seized the pope Trayko and cut his throat in front of us. I could not stand this and fell to the ground — my family did the same. This assassination made the children and women cry and squall, so that the Bulgarian soldiers, furious, sprang forward with opened knives and killed right and left, men, women or children. My father, mother and brothers were killed. I was wounded having been stabbed 8 times. I remained in this cursed place, in my blood and other people's blood, until the night was dark. I made then all the effort I could and dragged myself towards home, finding it entirely pillaged. I dressed my wounds and went to bed, tended by a few neighbours who could escape the slaughter. The bodies of my family are in a large grave, along with the bodies of the other victims, in Samokovo. I alone am living now of all my family.

I know no one of those who tortured and killed Dolgovatz's inhabitants.

Above statement was officially made in Kostinatz Town-Hall, on December 12th 1918.

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## N° 60

Statement by Kone Zdravkovitch, aged 48, husbandman in Dolgovatz, living now in Prilep, 7 Kraljevitch-Marko Street.

On November 5th 1915, when the Bulgarians entered Dolgovatz, I was in my parents' house, in the same village. As soon as enemy soldiers were said to be in the outposts, I hid in the ruins at the village's entrance, where my Parents' house was. I had the precaution to take some bread with me, to prevent me from coughing. Two Bulgarian soldiers appeared first, and my sister-in-law, Petra, came to them. They asked her : Were are the men ? She said : With the Serbian Army. One of them said to the other : Take her and shake her a bit. He did so and pricked her with his bayonet. She fell dead. Her son, Krsta, aged 5, cried and ran to his mother. The



soldiers struck him also with the bayonet and killed him too. The rest of the family was in the pasture-ground : Linka, Peter Spirkovitch's promised wife ; Mitra, Yordan Spirkovitch's wife ; Alexis Spirkovitch. All were killed by the bayonet. From everywhere laments and cries were heard. The murderers brought together about 120 people in the pasture-ground, with Trayko, the pope, and all were pierced with bayonets. Some of them were burnt with straw as fuel, but all the bodies were left unburied, being eaten up by dogs and pigs. Before the murders, the soldiers had, of course stolen all the money, and, afterwards, they pillaged everything in the homes. I remained in my hiding place until evening and when the night was dark, I fled to the forest, where I found a small cabin with already 16 people sheltered. I stayed 3 days there and, all the time, more people were coming, among them women with bayonet wounds. One of them died in the forest. Then I escaped one night and made my way to Prilep.

Above statement was officially made in Prilep Sub-Prefecture on December 14th 1918.

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N° 61

*To Minister-President Dr Radoslavov*

Sofia.

I, the undersigned, in the name of the citizens of the town of Ohrid, firmly believe that the government, which has given instructions to send the historic relics from Ohrid for the Sofia museum, will strictly conform to the promise given, that if circumstances permit, all the relics which have been carried off to date will be returned to the town. The undersigned begs that this order be not applied to the icons which are on the iconostasis of our church of St Clement, and further that the door of the sanctuary of the said iconostasis be immediately returned. We take the engagement to preserve the icons and the door from any eventual damage, as we have done up to the present. We declare that we cannot allow of thefts in the temple, theft commenced by an unjust order endeavouring to deprive us of relics which are precious to us. The same order aimed at prevent-



ing us from giving to our souls, by our prayers, courage in critical moments. We await a just reply to our humble prayer.

The Metropolitan of Chrid,  
BORIS.

Guardians of St Clement's Temple :

The President : Giourge Budev, priest ; Pande Boyadjiev ;  
Anastas Bochnakov ; Ki Kalaydjiev ; Iv. Altchev.

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N° 62

Military Telegraph n° 352.

TELEGRAM

To commander of Alexinatz

Date 3 XI 1915.

Apply to Serbian sanitary staff, as well to Serbian wounded, most rigorous supervision and do not allow their free movements.

Chief of 6th Division,  
Colonel POPOW.

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N° 63

To commander of 9th regiment of Line of Communications  
Treat as prisoners of war all fit men from 18 to 50 years of age inhabiting the conquered districts. Those captured by fighting units, send them to the Divisional Staff : those taken by reserve units, send them to base commanders for despatch to the interior of the kingdom. (As per order n° 866 of Nov 5th 1915).

Chief of Staff of 9th Division,  
(Signed) Lt.-Col. MUSTAKOV.

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**N° 64**

Commander of Lines of Communications, Kriva Palanka 20 XI 1915

**ORDER N° 18**

Taking as basis the despatch from the chief of lines of communication of the 2nd Army, n° 324 of 19th of present month, I order, for the last time:

1) Those who know where may be found possessions without owners must report same, in a period of two weeks to the head of finances here, or to this office, for registering and confiscating.

2) Those who possess goods without owners must hand them to the above-named authorities in a similar period.

3) After the expiration of this period, i. e. two weeks, search will be made. Those who have not executed my orders will be tried by court martial.

4) This order must be announced to the public by the town crier.

Base Commander:

Lt POPOW.

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**N° 65**

Uskub Prefecture of Police

**Order n° 13**

Conformably to the order of the Prefect of the Uskub Department dated December 5th N° 587 :

I order :

1) Serbs having been able to obtain permission to remain temporarily in the town, for health or other reasons worthy of consideration, must not circulate in the town in groups nor leave their residences except in cases of extreme urgency ; further, one person only, to be designated, to be the only one able to make purchases.

2) All inhabitants of Uskub, those in public establishments as



others, must speak pure Bulgarian, failing which their requests will not be taken into consideration.

3) It is forbidden to speak or to listen to the persons speaking the Serbian language in the streets.

All infractions of the present order will be punished according to the laws of the kingdom.

I entrust the Commissioners of Police of Uskub with the execution of the present order.

Uskub, December 9th 1915.

Prefect of Police : S. ZLATAROFF.  
Secretary : V. ANASTASSOFF.

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N° 66

To the Commander of the Circumscription of the 2nd Division  
of Thrace

Philipopoli.

War Office,  
Inspection Section.

N° 7111.

Sofia, Dec. 15th 1915.

On orders from the Minister, the Ministry for War begs to inform you, general, that priests, teachers, officers, ex-members of parliament and all other suspect or undesirable persons, arriving from the old Serbian territories, must be sent to the interior of our kingdom, notably to the towns of Kazanlouk, Karlovo, Exi-Djoumaia, Kazli-Agatch, Haskovo and Kerdjali ; they must be treated as prisoners of war and the provincial officers will see to their food. All these persons can be utilised for working.

Chief of Office, attached to General Staff,  
General-Major BRADISTILOF.  
Chief of Inspection Section,  
Major DIMITRIEFF.



**N° 67**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Staff of military inspection of Morava district, n° 1983.

N° 1223. — 16.V.1916.

To Commander of 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, Nisch.

To Commander of Nisch and Commander of 3rd Brigade,  
6th Division Zajetchar.

To Prefects of provinces of : Nisch, Vrania, Pojarevats,  
Pirot, Zajetchar, Tchoupria.

Taking as basis the order of the staff of the army of operations N° 7483 of the 3rd of present month, I order you to confiscate in public institutions, libraries and private houses, all Serbian books, pictures and cards. Select the most important of these objects and send them to the Ministry of Education ; burn the remainder. Commissions formed, as far as possible, of competent persons, must carry out the revision of the books. Books which can be used and are of historic value to us, must be sent to the Ministry of Education. This work should be done quickly and carefully. Libraries may continue to do business, but simply with writing materials, Bulgarian books, printed matter and with books in another foreign language, except in Serbian.

Inform me as soon as this order is executed.

Chief of military inspection of Morava district.

General Lieutenant KOUTINTCHEV.

The Secretary : MOUSTAKOV.

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**N° 68**

District of Vrania, N° 3991.

Dec. 6th 1916, Vrania.

To Sub-Prefects :

The administrative and police section of the Home Ministry states in its letter N° L7961 of Nov. 25th current, that all Sub-Prefects in



the Morava district have forgotten the Bulgarian language and adopted the Serbian language, for they are employing in their deeds Serbian words.

In drawing your attention to this, I am resolved to ask for punishment for the guilty parties who use Serbian words either in speech or in writing. You have been sent to exercise your influence on the population and not to submit yourself to the power of this brigands' language.

Prefect of District, Dr Gl. ZAHARIEV

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### N° 69

An order from the military inspection of the Morava district (Extraits)

*... Those who refuse to present themselves before the recruiting committee, or those who, when recruited, do not join their unit but hide themselves, as well as prisoners who have escaped from their camp, will be considered as bandits and judged as bandits, if they fail to report before the 15th March...*

March 10th 1917, Nisch.

Provisional Chief of military inspection of Morava district,  
Col. PROTOGUEROV.

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### N° 70

Home and Hygienics Ministry.  
2. VII. 1917, Sophia, N° 8208.

### CIRCULAR

To Prefects of districts of Morava province and of Macedonia.

The Minister for Home Affairs and of Public Hygienics has, on several occasions, received reports from inhabitants of the Morava province and of Macedonia with regard to the brutal and incorrect conduct of the functionaries towards them. Certain of these complaints having been checked by special commissioners, we have, to



our great regret, noted facts which are by no means flattering for our bureaucracy.

You are probably not ignorant of the fact that in naming the personnel for the districts just occupied, the Ministry desired to suitable posts intelligent persons capable of maintaining order and justice amongst the population, with whom we have for so long been endeavouring to enter into touch, and to inspire the conviction that they are part of a constitutional state. These hopes, except for a few rare exceptions, were everywhere deceived. The conduct of our functionaries compared to that of the functionaries of the former regime, is greatly inferior, and this greatly excites, against the Bulgarian regime, the uneducated country people, and still more so the inhabitants of the towns.

In certain places, our functionaries have adopted an attitude absolutely indifferent, and even hostile, towards the manners and customs of the people belonging to other nationalities, as Turks, Albanians, etc. This regrettable state of affairs obliges the Ministry to invite you to instruct the administrative staff under you, as much the police as the communal functionaries, to bear themselves towards the population in the most correct and courteous manner, to respect religious customs and to tolerate manners which do not act contrary to the laws and to decency, to give satisfaction to the legitimate requests of the inhabitants and to refuse to receive any remuneration for services rendered.

It must be understood that each complaint will be checked and in case same is well-founded, the functionaries will be immediately superseded and sent to their respective military units.

Secretary General : TRIFONOFF.  
Chief of Department : St. KIROFF.

NOTE. — The letter produced above constitutes an admission of the Bulgarian Government that the functionaries committed grave abuses in their work, and that the Bulgarian administration was the worst of all.

It is remarkable that the Bulgarian Government should not have taken any steps, however slight, to put an end to the arbitrary manner and abuses of its functionaries.

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N° 71

KINGDOM OF BULGARIA.  
Military Inspection  
of Macedonian Provinces.

N° 28859

August 6th 1917, Uskub.

To Chief of Prisoners' Depot,  
VELES.

Give orders to draw up protocoles in cases of the flight of prisoners which were given you for working parties. In these protocoles you must affirm that the prisoners wished to go to the Morava province to form bands with the object of attacking and killing the inhabitants and frontier patrols, as well as to destroy the military bridges.

By order.

District Chief of Staff : Col. PETEV.  
Second Adjutant-Lt. : D. TOURANOV.

NOTE. — It is to be noted that authorities attribute to prisoners guilty of attempts at escape, false pretexts for escape, without having cross-questioned them.

This procedure had for object the justification of arbitrary executions of prisoners.

N° 72

Very urgent.

TELEPHONE REPORT.

To Commander of 8th Complementary Battalion,  
Vlasotintzi.

The acts of Sub-Lt Petkof can no longer be tolerated. He inflicts on civilians bastinadoes, burns them in lighted furnaces and hangs them. There are men prostrate spitting up blood.

There have been killed up to date 44 sheep, 25 hens, 1 bull, 1 lamb ; there have been taken 260 kilogrammes of oats, large quantities of cheese, fat and eau-de-vie and about 200 loaves of bread — each weighing from 3 to 4 kilogrammes (they however receive the regular ration at the canteen). Petkof has not as yet made any inspection in the mountains. His whole activity consists of not moving from the village of Yastrebatz, and this is so since his arrival here. I will send in a detailed report about this. Please reply at the ear-



liest possible moment in order to put an end to the anarchy which Petrof has provoked.

The Commander of the 3rd Company,  
Lt. INGHILISOF.

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**N° 73**

Sub-Prefect of district of Preshevo,

N° 2839, July 24th 1918.

Very urgent.

To the Presidents of the Parish Commissions of 3 Members.

By order of the Prefect of the Koumanovo district N° 3392 of 21st of present month, you must, in the period of 24 hours, make up in your district the lists with the required documents of all Greeks, person; friendly to Greece, and Roumanian families (Zinzars) who have members in the Greek or Serbian army, or who have fled there. These families must make preparations for a journey. They will be interned within the old frontiers of the kingdom, and this in a delay of 7 days. Must also be interned the members of the above-mentioned families who are considered as spies in our army. The letters, declarations of witnesses, witnesses, various information, confessions of their families, will act as proofs.

You will be held personally responsible for the non-execution in time of this order.

The Sub-Prefect : P. OUZTCHEV.

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**N° 74**

Sub-Prefect of the district of Bouyanovtsi,

N° 4995. September 18th 1918, Bouyanovtsi.

To the Presidents of the Parish Commissions of 3 Members.

Announce in the most urgent manner, the following : In future, no person must use these words : banque, dinar predsednik, prota, and others, as these are Serbian words. Those who do not obey this order ; will be very severely punished.



Send copy of this note to the police authorities in order that they may carry same into execution.

Sub-Prefect : GLIGOR GLIGOREV.

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**N° 75**

The letter of Mr. Theodoroff, Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, sent on December 27th 1918 to General Chretien, commanding the allied troops in Bulgaria.

« By my letters of November 25th and December 16th N° 2988 and 9582, I had the honnour to bring to your knowledge that the Bulgarian Government had instituted a commission, composed of five members, including a Staff Colonel as President and four magistrates, charged to inquire into the accusations contained in the documents attached to your letter of November 16th A. X. N° 1188, in order to inflict, if necessary, legal punishment to the criminals.

I am already able to inform you that, in spite of the unfavourable circumstances that several records to be consulted and persons to be interrogated are not at Sofia, this commission has done everything possible and shown remarkable zeal in accomplishing the task set it. In its work, over and above the conscience of its duty, the Commission has been guided by the conviction which animates the Government itself, that is, that this work of elucidation, and later of punishment, must be carried out under conditions of perfect impartiality. The results obtained by this commission of inquiry which was definitely set up and commenced work at the beginning of the month, are at the present moment the following :

1° The documents pretend that 41 Serbian priests were killed in the Sourdoulitza district, Vrania province. The Commission has noted that in fact some Serbian priests were killed in this district. Their exact number and their names can only however be traced and established later, after checking to see whether amongst the names in the list as killed, do not figure certain priests interned in Bulgaria and liberated later. It must however be remarked that whilst this document is entitled « priests killed in Bulgaria », certain groups of these priests are stated as « missing ».



In the opinion of the Commission, the responsibility for these crimes is on the part of Colonel Kalkandieff, commanding the 42nd Infantry Regiment, Major Ilkoff, Lieutenants Youroukoff and Radkoff, and Sub-Lieutenant Simeonoff. Legal actions are pending against all these officers.

2° According to the document in question, 36 Serbian priests were imprisoned in the citadel of Niche and later killed on the road near Bela Palanka, and that 16 priests were imprisoned in the Zaitchar College, at the beginning of December 1915 and also killed outside the town. The Commission has noted that Serbian priests were unfortunately killed in these two districts, but, as in the previous case, it cannot for the moment determine their number or names. As regards the responsibility, this can be determined in a few days, as they are awaiting certain supplementary information and the hearing of a few witnesses, whose arrival at Sofia is prevented by travelling difficulties.

3° The Commission has remarked that the Serbian Bishop Vikenti and his deacon Tzvetko were killed on the road in the Katchanik Pass. Certain indications lead us to believe that the responsibility for this is on Sub-Lt. Popoff Gheorgi, of the 24th Battalion of Communications, against whom legal proceedings are being taken.

4° As regards accusations of bad treatment of prisoners of war in the Sofia Depot, the Commission hopes to complete its task by the end of this month.

5° The Commission is continuing its researches respecting the Serbian priests pretended killed or missing.

Amongst the accused officers mentioned above, Ilkoff, Simeonoff and Popoff are arrested. Colonel Kalkandieff died in the train during the journey from Varna to Sofia, and Youroukoff was killed in the last battles.

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## N° 76

Copy of the verbal note from the Dutch Minister at Sofia addressed to the Dutch Foreign Minister.

N° 18518.

By his note of May 28th 1918 N° 4174, the Foreign Minister



requested the Dutch Legation to hand, in future, through the Bulgarian Red Cross at Sofia, who would attend to the distribution to the needy, the money previously sent through him, to the Serbian subjects living in the territories occupied by the Royal Armies.

The Minister took this decision simply to introduce more regularity and more rapidity into the distribution of these funds.

Conformably to this arrangement, the Dutch Legation sent to the above Red Cross Society, between June 26th and September 25th last, sums of money amounting to a total of 445,663,80 levas, with a request that they be distributed to needy Serbians, as detailed in the accompanying lists.

However, the Bulgarian Red Cross has just handed back to the Queen's Legation the sum of 439,492,20 levas, as well as all the lists and receipts since June 26th last, with the single exception of those of July 30th 1918 relating to a total of 6,171,60, which the Legation still hopes may have reached its destination.

The result of the foregoing is that since the month of May last a very large number of Serbian subjects have awaited in vain, in the greatest misery, the modest donations for individual cases which had been granted them and of which the total is 439,492,20 levas.

In bringing the foregoing to the knowledge of the Foreign Minister, the Legation of Her Majesty the Queen of Holland at Sofia, charged with the protection of Serbian interests in Bulgaria, considers it his duty to make known the painful surprise it had in finding that the Bulgarian Red Cross had thus failed so signally in its promises, as much towards the Legation as towards the necessitous Serbian families.

Sofia, October 19th 1918.



N° 77

Bulgarian Red Cross, Sofia.

N° 990. Prisoners Department.

Sofia, April 27th 1916.

To the Red Cross international committee Geneva

Gentlemen,

We receive from Geneva a letter with the heading of the Serbian Red Cross, dated March 31st., requesting us to send a complete list of all Serbian War Prisoners and Interned Civilians in Bulgaria, and also detailed information on mail and monies sent to the inhabitants of Old Serbia.

We shall thank you very much if you will kindly inform the Gentlemen who sign for the Serbian Red Cross that we cannot enter into correspondence with them or send them any information whatever re. the inhabitants of Old Serbia who are now Bulgarian Subjects and treated according to Bulgarian Law.

Signed : J.-H. GUECHOFF, President.

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N° 78

A secret order of the Military Inspection of the Morava province,  
May 29th 1918, N° 13 (Extracts)

With the successive development of the organisation of the occupation of the Morava province, and in view of the results that have been obtained in all branches of the administration of the province, this latter must immediately elaborate the bases of an integral internal policy, a policy which should not only procure us the possibility of ensuring perfect internal order, but also the means of being able to commence to dominate little by little the soul of the population, of this population which is so near to us in origin and blood. This policy will give us the means of convincing this population that it is the blood of our blood and that its fusion with Bulgaria is an accomplished fact for us.

In order to attain this high object, it is not sufficient to wish



for in a Platonic manner, to use verbal and written propaganda and perorations. We require acts and acts more powerful and of considerable influence. *It is necessary to have a complete system, a whole general plan in detail which embraces all factors and all sides of human nature.*

To be able to Bulgarise this district, all that is Serbian must be destroyed, and thus, on the ruins of Serbism, will rise Bulgarianism.

1° All the old Serbian professors and functionaries, who are not of use in the district, must be removed to Old Bulgaria. All those who represent the elements of passive resistance as regards moral, must be considered as not of use.

To effect this, there must be organised in Bulgaria, in one town or in several, classes in the Bulgarian language for those who wish to have State employment or a position in a Bulgarian parish.

To be able to carry out all the means set forth above, measures meant to Bulgarise the Morava district, we who are here, officers, functionaries, soldiers and in general, all who occupy a public position, we must all work with doubled energy. Special attention must be given to the development of Bulgarian societies « culture societies », which must become a powerful organisation and an efficacious factor in the Bulgarisation of Morava.

These are the essential points of our policy in the Morava province.

.....We must systematically and energetically demand of the Bulgarian population here :

1° To put on one side and forget completely a certain number of Serbian words which forcibly entered the language with the Serbian occupation of the province of Morava, a list of such words being found at the end of the factum.

2° To declare themselves everywhere as Bulgarians, and to be proud of it.

3° To take part sincerely in all our joys, all our holidays and in all Bulgarian national societies.

4° To take an active part in our national defence and in the effort to propagate Bulgarian sentiments amongst those who are not yet enlightened. To this end, we require Bulgarians in the district, who are already Bulgarians and who will lead the others by force of example. These persons will be the first labourers of the cause, and the whole success depends in the first place on their sincerity and their energy. This is a very important tactic.



Our attention must in any case be specially drawn to the villages. It is there where we shall find our first help and strength, and it is by them that we shall succeed in destroying Serbism in the towns. The villages must be set against the towns.

...The second category of people here is composed of those who have come from Shoumadia in the Morava province, Serbians, Montenegrins and people from Ipek. They are disseminated in Morava and constitute large colonies in the Kourchoumlia and Prokouplie districts. These are the people who form the centres of Serbian organisation and Serbism, in Morava. They hold all possible privileges from the Serbian State and they have been used for the assimilation of the Morava Bulgarians.

This category of people is irreconcilable and it is amongst them that the revolutionary ideas of K. Petchanatz found their fanatical adepts. They are those who raised their hands against the Bulgarian State, and their Serbian conscience is unshakable. Their language is completely foreign to us, and their morals, clothing and soul are quite unknown to us.

We must therefore, following the object of our internal policy :

- 1° Supervise them closely, and constantly study them.
- 2° Reduce to zero their influence over the Bulgarians in the district, by making a systematic difference between the two categories.
- 3° Hold a list of those amongst them who have the greatest influence, and oblige them to declare themselves Bulgarians or to emigrate. In the latter case, their emigration should be encouraged.
- 4° They must not be favoured, except those who become Bulgarian.
- 5° Make them speak Bulgarian and make them respect the name and country of Bulgaria.

...As regards the activity of various persons according to their sex, experience has shown us the following important details which we, Bulgarians, must understand in the proper light and which will serve to guide our opinions and our activity.

It is incontestably established that the most fanatical zealots, and the most violent, are always the women. They are the living centre of the Serbian spirit and they are the most active agents of the Serbian secret organisation. Women act as bearers of the secret post ; they are the ideologists of the organisation : they are the principal propaganda agents and they are aggressive and dangerous.



Taking advantage of the natural inclinations of man for the weaker sex — which is very apparent with our Bulgarians here, i. e. those of the Morava province — women develop dangerous activity against all our initiatives in this district. By their fine eyes and their beauty, by their seductions and by knowing when to surrender, the women here hold more than one of our officers and functionaries, influence them considerably and use them for aiding the Serbian cause and for acting against our propaganda work.

It is time to react against this terrible evil, which may cost us a part of our nation and shake the safety of our State. It is time to break with this female hypnotism and to see clearly the whole nature of this evil and all its consequences.

Towards women, our internal policy should be conducted in the following manner :

1° No woman must be allowed to travel in the province, except those who declare themselves as good Bulgarians, and those who are registered as members of Bulgarian national societies and who attend all our festivals, soirees, theatres, etc.

2° Women and their families must not be helped, unless they declare that they are good Bulgarians.

3° All women must speak the Bulgarian language and no petition either oral or in writing must be admitted if it is not couched in the Bulgarian language.

In order to attain this end, a list must be established of all intelligent and influential women who could play a role, however humble, in Serbian propaganda work.

... The population may be divided as regards age, in the following manner :

1° The aged, those who recollect their Bulgarian origin. Amongst these, are only of use to us those who declare themselves as Bulgarians and who work actively for our work. All others are of no service to us. They are fanatical, like those who have changed their faith. We must be exceptionally amiable and benevolent towards the former, most severe towards the others. The latter are most dangerous men for us.

2° Persons aged from 40 to 55. They have become Serbian by tradition, because they were quite young when the Serbian occupation took place. They are at the age when a foreign spirit is very easy to assimilate.



3° Persons aged between 36 and 45. In all races, this is the age when one is the most active. In consequence, we must study this category attentively, each person separately, in order to know them thoroughly.

4° Persons aged between 20 and 36. They are violent like all young people, but they are not so dangerous. They are still too young for their character to be formed, and consequently, they are not dangerous.

5° Persons under 20. These embrace a mass of quite young people whom one can not only easily neutralise, but also make to work for our cause.

As to the women, the age makes no difference, as we have remarked that women are equally dangerous at all ages.

The extermination of Serbism signifies the extermination of Serbian women who are, in fact, the most powerful factors of Serbism.

...An internal policy which does not take into account the difference of character resulting from the difference in trades, is a policy which will come to an early end by its own fault. From this point of view, we are however short of a general plan of action in the Morava province, and irreparable faults are being committed.

On account of this, we give the following line of conduct :

1° Serbian priests : they represent the essential expression of Serbian spirit. They should be kept away from the province and not allowed to return. If there are still priests in the province, they must be interned. Exceptions must be made for those who declare themselves Bulgarians. The latter must wear the vestments of Bulgarian popes and read mass in Bulgarian. If amongst these latter there are any who are interned, they may be allowed to return to the district.

2° Serbian Professors : They will never become Bulgarian, and if they remain in the district, it will not be for our good. They must remain interned, and permission to return must not be accorded them.

What would be the best policy to adopt for the professors, would be to induce them to adopt benevolent passiveness, or, what would be preferable, persuade them to accept situations in Bulgaria.

The priests and professors who are interned must not be accorded permission to enter the province unless one of their family is seriously



ill, or in case of death, facts which must be checked by a special commission.

3° Serbian functionaries : These must not be trusted. The most dangerous are those who hold high positions : chiefs of provinces, and they must not be allowed to remain in the province, as they will always have an influence over the population. They should be encouraged to emigrate or to take up positions in old Bulgaria.

4° Ex-active members of the parties. All those who belonged to and took an active part in the different Serbian political parties before the war, are dangerous. Amongst them, the most dangerous are those of Pachitch's party. All must be supervised and made to « emigrate » into Bulgaria.

By encouraging the division into political parties ; we must use this for exterminating the elements dangerous for us.

5° Ex-functionaries of the State or of parishes. These include kmets, doctors, engineers, farmers, judges, etc. We must beware of them and study them in order to learn their character (different categories).

6° Hotel keepers, café owners, photographers, chemists, grocers, watchmakers, pork butchers, tailors, etc. To be studied separately and classified.

7° Lawyers and booksellers : These include those who, in peace times, represented the most active members of political organisation. We must ascertain the degree of danger they are to us. In general, we must beware of them and it would always be advisable to intern them, or make them emigrate into Old Bulgaria or in the part of Serbia occupied by the Austrians. In any case, they can be of no use to us.

8° Bankers, stockbrokers, shopkeepers : These, according to their material position, are able and capable of playing a capital political role by maintaining the Serbian spirit of the people here. In general they must be closely watched and the most dangerous amongst them must be interned.

9° Commercial agent, cab-drivers, etc. : These are dangerous as courriers of the Serbian secret organisation. They must be closely and carefully watched. All those who are suspect must not be allowed to ply their trade.

10° Those who have sons or members of the family in the



Serbian army as officers, N. C. O's and soldiers : It is very difficult to conciliate these people, more difficult than in cases of people who have no members of the family in the Serbian army. They must be strictly watched and we must beware of them.

11° Inhabitants of the cities and villages : the villagers have retained sufficient of the morals, dialect and traditions of Bulgaria, much more so than the city dwellers. They must be gained over to our side. We must demand of the villagers :

1° That they range themselves openly on our side, by aiding us to fight the town spirit.

2° That they call themselves Bulgarians.

3° That they employ in their language none of the Serbian words adopted during the Serbian occupation.

In general, they must be helped morally and materially. We must be benevolent towards them and separate them completely from the inhabitants of the towns, in order that these latter may have no influence over them. By aiding the villagers everywhere and always, we may expect splendid success from this separation of the villagers from the city dwellers.

#### DUTY OF ALL SUBJECTS WITHOUT RESPECT OF SEX OR AGE

1° They must speak Bulgarian, call themselves Bulgarians and renew the Bulgarian sentiments they possessed before the Serbian occupation.

2° They must denounce all those who plot against the Bulgarian State and interests.

3° They must be active contributors to all Bulgarian national works.

4° They must aid us in our effort to feed the district and the State, in order that we may end the war victoriously.

5° They must write their letters and correspondence in Bulgarian.

6° They must follow courses in the Bulgarian language and in this manner forget Serbian expressions.



### THEIR PRIVILEGES

- 1° Permissions for travelling.
- 2° Authorisation to trade.
- 3° Food supplies.
- 4° Leave for interned civilians.
- 5° Facility to employ recruited workmen from various companies in their native village.
- 6° Liberate workmen and prisoners of war.
- 7° Facilities for taxes, requisitions, etc.
- 8° Facilities for lodgings, etc.

These privileges can only be accorded to persons who openly declare themselves Bulgarians and who take an active part in Bulgarian propaganda work. The Morava province was Bulgarian and must remain Bulgarian. This is of capital importance for the Bulgarian nation. Without Morava, Bulgaria would be obliged to fight unceasingly for its food supplies and to expend its strength. She could never develop its national culture and well-being. Through the Morava province, Bulgaria will enter the concert European powers as a State worthy of respect and desirable as an ally.

### WHAT IS FORBIDDEN TO ALL PERSONS IN THE MOST CATEGORICAL MANNER.

- 1° The word « Serbian » must disappear completely and no one must pronounce it. All must forget it totally.
- 2° Serbian words must not be pronounced or employed.
- 3° Oral or written requests will not be taken into consideration if they are in Serbian language.
- 4° It is forbidden to sing Serbian songs.
- 5° It is forbidden to speak against the Bulgarians before the people here.
- 6° It is forbidden to speak against the Bulgarian authorities and orders.
- 7° It is forbidden to accord any privilege whatever to persons known as fanatical Serbians.



8° It is forbidden to treat with violence the people here who are suspect, without first proving their guilt.

9° It is forbidden to correspond in Serbian. The censure will stop all letters written in Serbian.

10° In general, it is forbidden to employ Serbian inscriptions, either on shops, on tombstones, etc.

11° It is forbidden to give Serbian names to newly-born children.

12° It is forbidden to give Serbian names to streets.

13° All persons who have to address a Bulgarian official must do so in official Bulgarian language, without any intermediary whatever. We must be very severe on this point...

The Chief of the Inspection, Gen-Lieutenant : NERESOV.

The Deputy : Major General : TASSEV.

Chief of Staff : Col. DRVINGOV.

REMARK : This order must be carefully kept private and locked up after use.

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RETURN TO  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS  
LIBRARY



