
SERB PARAMILITARY'S WAR CRIMES RETEIAL OPENS IN ZAGREB

- 22.05.2018

Balkan Insight (21 May 2018)

Miroslav Jovic, a former member of rebel Croatian Serb forces, pleaded not guilty as his retrial began at Zagreb county court on Monday.

Jovic is accused of killing Croat civilian Ivanka Medved and wounding her husband Branko Medved in the village of Gornje Taboriste in central Croatia in September 1991.

According to the indictment, Jovic and another Serb combatant, Milan Stanojevic, opened fire on the two civilians. Branko Medved survived despite sustaining five bullet wounds.

Jovic and Stanojevic were originally convicted in their absence in August 2007. The Croatian Supreme Court upheld the decision of Sisak county court from May 2006 and sentenced them both to 15 years in prison.

Branko Medved, now 52, testified as a witness for the prosecution on Monday how Jovic and Stanojevic, both wearing military uniforms, shot him and his wife with automatic rifles in the hamlet of Silaj near Gornje Taboriste while they were bringing grass for their livestock.

My wife and I were going up the road, and I saw them [Jovic and Stanojevic], and I said hi. They didnt respond and opened fire at us. We both fell down, Ivanka was killed, while I was wounded. I dont remember when exactly woke up afterwards, Medved told the court.

He explained that his mother and some villagers carried him in an improvised stretcher made out of branches and a blanket to a creek nearby.

There an ambulance took him to the nearest hospital in the nearby town of Pokupsko and from there to a military hospital in the town of Velika Gorica near Zagreb. He was recovering in the hospital for two months and then for a further four months in a medical sanatorium.

He told the court that Jovic was standing some 15 metres away from him before he began firing at them, and that he saw him clearly. According to Medved, Stanojevic was standing some 15 metres further away up the road.

However, Jovics lawyer Dijana Tomasegovic Tomic said that Medved had described the situation differently before the court in Sisak in 2006, saying that Stanojevic was closest to him, while Jovic was at the rear.

Meanwhile defence witness Milan Kauric testified on Monday that he heard that it was not Jovic who shot the Medveds.

Kauric said that while he was at a pig-slaughtering event at his friends house, someone called Pero Mraovic, alias Skender, bragged about shooting Branko Medved.

He said that he shot the mute-deaf one, the coopers son [Branko Medved] who, he said, managed to escape him a few times. He told us that he cursed his [Medveds] Ustasa [Croatian WWII fascist, a derogative term for Croats] mother and told him [Medved], now you wont run from me, and shot him, Kauric told.

He explained that Mraovic probably referred to Medved as the mute-deaf one because he didnt say anything when he spoke to him on previous occasions.

Kauric said he was willing to testify against Mraovic □ who is allegedly living in Canada □ if he is ever brought before the court. He said that Mraovic did not mention shooting Ivanka Medved.

Jovic, a Croatian citizen, was arrested at the airport in gthe Montenegrin town of Tivat in November 2016 and was extradited to Croatia in February 2017.

The trial will continue in June.

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/retrial-for-serb-paramilitary-started-in-zagreb-05-21-2018>

Kaynak/Source: