

Igor VUKIĆ

## OPENING REMARKS of the BOOK PRESENTATION

### RAZOTKRIVENA JASENOVAČKA LAŽ

[Eng. The Jasenovac Lie Disclosed].

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen! Welcome to the presentation of the book *Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž* [Eng. *The Jasenovac Lie Disclosed*] written by academician Josip Pečarić and Dr. Stjepan Razum!

I am deeply honoured to welcome you on behalf of all the members of the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society, which is the publisher of this book. I also express my gratitude to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish for generously lending us this presentation hall. Thank you also to the Croatian Catholic Teachers Association who had a panel discussion scheduled here for today, but kindly agreed to hold it in the small hall. If anyone is interested in their talk, you are welcome to attend later on. Entrance is open to all.

The book we have here before us has provoked worldwide attention even before its first presentation here today. Its mere announcement was enough to stir reactions from eager protestors who prefer that the historical image of the Jasenovac Camp remain as they feigned it, serving their interests for a servile and submissive Croatian people, Croatian citizens and neighbouring nations.

However, news of this event, posted on web news portals such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Slovakian Teraz*, and *Belgrade Telegraf*, actually caused a counter-effect.

Instead of a ban on the book (which according to Croatian law is practically impossible), these threats have only heightened interest in the book and for our work in general.

That is the underlying message of the book. It is an invitation to public debate and an in-depth account on changes that took place over the past 20 years in eradicating the cloud of propaganda hanging over it.

20 years is how much time has passed since the publication of the book *Srpski mit o Jasenovcu* [Eng. *The Serbian Myth on Jasenovac*], written in 1998 by Croatian academician Josip Pečarić. It was his attempt to at least leave a tiny crack in the then colossal mound of Jasenovac lies.

The book also contains information on Mr. Pečarić's other works related to the topic, in particular the lobbying effort in 2012, which prevented historian Ivo Goldstein from becoming a member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. You will enjoy reading the academician's comments and interviews given on this occasion.

Furthermore, a few weeks ago Ivo Goldstein succeeded in being elected as *international member* of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He became an *academician* after all, despite all public warnings on the shortcomings of Goldstein's scientific

and professional work. It is not our intent to belittle the Academy of Sciences and Arts of B&H, but we regret that there was no *Pečarić* in Sarajevo to protect the Bosnian Academy from such a drastic drop in their criteria.

All this reminds us of a case from a city in Slavonia (region in Croatia) where a couple of years ago the mayor decided to finally complete his university degree (during his mandate). After having accomplished this, the local weekly, which, of course, was always full of the photographs of the mayor, printed a story on the event. The reporter wrote that the mayor had now become an “academic citizen”, and the editor of the paper added the headline: “Mayor Becomes an Academician!”

But let us now go back to the book. The events described within were accelerated with the establishment of the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society in 2014. Readers will find reviews and reactions to public appearances, as well as preliminary results of the Society’s work.

Here present is also Dr. Stjepan Razum, co-author of the book. Mr. Razum is a priest, director of the Archdiocesan Archives in Zagreb, and editor of the literary journal *Marulić*, along with his many other duties. Despite all these obligations, Mr. Razum gladly accepted the position of president of the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society.

With his experience, he made significant impact on increasing the publicity of the Society in the first four years of its operation, which, as we can see, even guaranteed mention in the *New York Times*. Members of the Jasenovac Society thank him for this feat and Mr. Razum will continue to work with us as part of the Supervisory Committee.

The book also contains commentaries on a number of authors who had previously (with many difficulties and even personal sacrifices), contributed to the research of the Jasenovac Camp. For example, some of these members are the late Vladimir Mrkoci, then Mladen Ivezić, and other authors who are not members of the Society: Nikola Banić, Nikola Koić and Roman Leljak. The book contains texts by journalists and critics who have analysed the work of the Society and its members. Among others, the book includes exposés by Prof. Matko Marušić, Zlatko Pinter, Milan Ivkošić and Zvonimir Despot.

Included are petitions organised for the unimpeded research of the history of the Jasenovac Camp, as well as other controversial and insufficiently examined topics. One sees in the names of the petitioners – academicians, university professors, former ambassadors and consuls, bishops, entrepreneurs and many other interested citizens – and we are left to wonder how the results of recent research on Jasenovac have not yet taken a dominant position in Croatian society. In the least, the main actors in society have not accepted the idea that a thorough, comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of Jasenovac needs to be carried out as soon as possible.

It is paradoxical that such a proposal was presented a year ago by none other than Ivica Dačić, Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, albeit with the addition of some of his own notions and ideas, but in those exact words.

We heard a shy suggestion on our part from President Kolinda Grabar Kitarović on the formation of an international commission. The President was conveying the idea of her advisor, Ivan

Zvonimir Čičak. However, the proposal attracted mostly negative criticism, and was later not spoken of much.

It could be said that some things in Croatia have not budged from where we stood 20 years ago. Our association and the authors of this book have done everything in our (limited) power to expose the lies attributed to Jasenovac. Nonetheless, it looks as though we will still be treading the untrodden snowy path for a long time to come. I say “snowy” in reference of course to the photograph of Jasenovac Camp published in this week’s *Nacional* magazine. It was shot in January 1945, when Jasenovac was covered in a blanket of snow. Contrary to *Nacional*’s headline, the photo reveals nothing in particular – and will ultimately contribute to our research results of the camp. Without going into the matter further – an article with an analysis of the mentioned photo and commentary from the *Nacional* will be printed in next week’s issue of *Hrvatski Tjednik* [Eng. *Croatian Weekly*].

Upon reviewing reactions caused by this book and announcements of its presentations, we see that there are those in the world, who, although they live in the developed and democratic liberal world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, would prohibit research and censure the writing of books. After this they would probably burn both – the books and authors themselves.

For this reason, it is important to stress the words of renowned historian Dr. Jure Krišto in the foreword of the book *Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž*:

*“Those who appreciate the ‘righteous point of view’ argue that researching Jasenovac is a revision of history, rectification of the image of the NDH (Independent State of Croatia), and denial of its ‘criminal character’.*

*Of course, historiography lives off of revision! And obviously, new insights on Jasenovac will influence the understanding of the NDH. However, one principle must be stressed again: This cannot be a reason to prohibit investigation into the Jasenovac Camp and obstruct information on new findings.*

*After all, were there not countless analyses and outright lies written and stated on Jasenovac and the NDH! Is it therefore not the responsibility of all scientists in the world to prove these allegations erroneous – if and when there is strong evidence for it!”*

And finally, in the afterword written by our member, renowned historian Dr. Mato Artuković emphasises that the myth of Jasenovac branded the Croats as a genocidal people, forcing them into spending half a century in a confessional for sins they did not commit, and nowhere near the amount spoken of today. And it is for this reason that we must now fight against this myth.

Scientists dealing with the issue are called on first to do so. There are too few of us here, though. However, after the figure of “700,000” was dismissed in Croatia, the new dogma on the number killed in Jasenovac is now: “80,000 to 100,000”. Not only do advocates of the new figure reject the possibility of a different result, they also do not allow any inquiry to question the new figure which is now becoming a dogma.

And now, it is my great pleasure to hand the word over to authors Dr. Razum and Academician Pečarić.

Zagreb, 17 January 2019.

## FIGHTING FOR THE CREDIBLE TRUTH

Presentation of the book: Pečarić, Josip and Razum, Stjepan. *Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž [Eng. The Jasenovac Lie Disclosed]*. Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society. Zagreb, 2018, 508 pp.

Dear and respected friends, literature fans, and devotees of the truth. We are presenting a book here before us, co-written by academician Josip Pečarić and myself, and one which many of you, I'm sure, will be interested in reading. At the beginning you will find the Table of Contents for a quick and easy overview of the subject matter. I will thus not waste our precious time together in outlining the book's structure, chapters and headings, but instead would prefer to familiarise you with widespread events that preceded the writing of this work.

In late June 2012, I attended a scientific conference at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, on events that took place in Glina in the summer of 1941. My lecture disappointed the organisers and some of the invited guests, one being the late Đuro Zatezalo who said to me: "Mr. Razum, your talk almost sent me to my grave! But no worries! We disseminated our truth around the world – in English, to boot – and there is nothing you can do to change it!" Some of the other speakers, including the late Živko Juzbašić and Predrag Matvejević congratulated me on my courage in contradicting enforced claims. However, as the organisers were not thrilled with my talk, I assume this is the reason why it has not yet been published, although promised, in the compendium of works from the conference.

After the event, I wondered how was it possible that a certain Đuro Zatezalo, long-time director of the State Archives in Karlovac, could promote in his works and to the world a particular "truth", which he calls "ours", while the truth I laid out at the conference – based on archival sources – was, in his opinion, not "ours" but rather "theirs". There is no secret as to who is hiding behind "our" and "their" truths. It is disheartening that a certain ethnic minority, who call Croatia their home, has the need to promote its own individual truth, to the detriment of the native Croatian people. We are all aware that this was not simply some abstract truth, but instead the politics of this ethnic minority, which together with its native people in Serbia, led to a war of aggression. This truth of "ours" – that is, "Zatezalo's truth", was the ignition which fuelled hostilities, ultimately leading to a war of aggression.

Upon thorough examination of the archival materials regarding events in Glina in the summer of 1941, I came to the realisation that everything written about it in official Croatian and Yugoslav historiography cannot withstand historical and scientific evaluation, because it was written for propaganda purposes – therefore, far from the truth. The authors of various literary works that promoted "our" truth – (Zatezalo's), have at present gained some success, because their propaganda materials (read: lies) have managed to swerve the attention of Croatian and global audiences from their own partisan-chetnik crimes committed against the Croatian nation on the territory of the NDH during WWII. In the decades following the War, they also prevented the Croatian people from building their own political, economic and overall nationalistic life in equal relation with other peoples in the then joint state. But in spite of all the damage, the Croatian people amassed their strength, with the Lord's help, and in the Croatian War of Defence and Liberation, stood on its own two feet. It countered all the lies and aggression, and enabled us

historians, scientists and researchers, to study sources to attain full insight and the credible truth on the events of WWII.

How is it that I as a seminarian and Church historian came to study the facts and myths of the camp in Jasenovac? My first serious encounter with the matter occurred at the end of 1989 when I purchased the book written by Dr. Franjo Tuđman: *Horrors of War: Historical Reality and Philosophy [Croatian: Bespuća Povijesne Zbiljnosti]*, published in 1989 by Matica Hrvatska, thanks to the courageous Marija Peakić-Mikuljan. I was a young priest at the time, just beginning my studies of Church History, and read Tuđman's book in practically one sitting. In the time that ensued, I followed the work and findings of the distinguished Ljubica Štefan regarding the subject. Then at the end of 2008, I read a short but extremely important work by Vladimir Mrkoci and Dr. Vladimir Horvat: *Ogoljela Laž Logora Jasenovac [Eng. The Outright Lie of the Jasenovac Camp]*, published that same year (Emil Čić Publishing). The book makes the following claims, which based on all research conducted to date, have since been confirmed as true:

1. The Jasenovac assembly field/camp was in fact a labour camp, not an extermination camp;
2. The Jasenovac Camp was a transit camp for camps and factories in Germany and Austria;
3. There is no evidence of mass executions in the Jasenovac Camp during WWII;
4. Of all the ethnic groups, the most numerous detainees were in fact Croats, opponents of the Ustasha regime;
5. Not a single Serb was brought to the camp simply for being a Serb, let alone killed for being a Serb (as Igor Vukić has repeatedly pointed out);
6. The exact number of deaths in the Jasenovac Camp is actually lower than the lowest official communist estimate.

In terms of numbers (the most interesting facet for a learned man), given the widespread inflation and unsubstantiated figures we have to date, we must be grateful to Croatian ustasha Ilija Barbarić (member of the First Ustasha Defensive Brigade and Jasenovac Camp), who as an eye-witness testified in his book *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – Bilo Je Pravo Ime [Eng. The NDH – Independent State of Croatia – Its True Name]* (2010), that a total of 18,600 detainees went through the camp. Let us recall that the Jasenovac War Camp existed for less than four years – actually about three and a half, from August/November 1941 until the end of April 1945. Eight years later, Barbarić's data was confirmed by Roman Leljak, but taken from an entirely different source. Namely, Leljak also came across data in the Belgrade Archives corroborating a total of 18,600 detainees that went through the Jasenovac Camp. He also found another important piece of information, especially given the prevalent historical communist claim that everyone who entered the camp also ended their lives therewith. Now Leljak tells us that of the 18,600 detainees, 1,360 of them died in the camp, either of natural causes, disease, infections and malnourishment – or were killed/executed after being charged for violating regulations. Therefore, if one wishes to memorise numbers, it is 1,360 victims who lost their lives in Jasenovac. This is indeed a large death toll, but let us not forget that a war was waging, and a life was worth much less than in times of peace. Just as it was the responsibility of government authorities for the loss of life of those 1,360 victims, the onus also rests on those who blame the entire Croatian nation for an alleged 83,000 victims. I wonder what makes those who fabricate a human death toll (over 81,800) better than those who are actually guilty of the death of 1,360

victims! This is merely a rhetorical question, for the answer is obvious: those who inflate human losses in Jasenovac do not rest at this, but use lies to stir up a new war that devastates much more than those 1,360 victims. Therefore, the culpability of those who support the inflated figures and Jasenovac myth, is not only in theory but in reality, far greater than the accountability of the Croatian authorities at the time, responsible for the death of 1,360 people.

Shortly following the scientific conference on Glina 1941 held at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, a book came out by Tomislav Vuković entitled *Drugačija Povijest (O Srbu, Jasenovcu, Glini ...)* [Eng. *A Different History (Srb, Jasenovac, Glina ...)*] published by Glas Koncila. In the book, Vuković applies excellent journalistic and research skills to warp the Greater Serbian myths tied to those three cities: Srb, Jasenovac and Glina. I had the honour of presenting the book on 27 July 2012 to an audience of reporters at the publisher's headquarters (Glas Koncila), where a journalist for *Slobodna Dalmacija* [Eng. *A Free Dalmatia*], relayed my address in a most sensationalistic manner, thus provoking widespread interest of the Croatian public. This came about as a result of a discussion between Andreja Černivec, reporter for *Hrvatski List* [Eng. *Croatian News*] and myself, published on 9 August 2012, which received great approval among Croatian audiences on the one hand, and an eruption of protests and threats on the other. I cannot forget a moving visit from an old priest from a retirement home in Varaždin, who came to Zagreb just to thank me for stating the truth in the article, which he said, he had waited for his entire life. The man I am referring to, who I believe most of you are familiar with, is Dr. Vjeko Božo Jarak, a priest with the Mostar Diocese. Many others also expressed their gratitude and congratulations on the published article. In all those encounters I felt the heavy weight of blame and irrational guilt being lifted from them, a shroud which we can all tear off ourselves, for we are now free to speak and write of our own Croatian history. The talk published in *Hrvatski List* is no different or scientifically more accurate than the brilliant works written by Ljubica Štefan, Vladimir Mrkoci, academician Josip Pečarić, Dr. Josip Jurčević, M.Sc. Mladen Ivezić, and Tomislav Vuković, who have already written and published books on the Jasenovac myth. The difference was such that our discussion was published in a weekly paper, whose distribution is greater than any book, and so the article was available to a much wider audience. When we add to this the fact that the full text was posted on many online news portals, it ensured its way around the globe, to every Croat in the Homeland and abroad.

At the same, however a wave of protests broke out. There wasn't a reporter from the anti-Croatian faction who did not attack, accuse or brand me, demanding my punishment and persecution. Even former President of Croatia, Dr. Ivo Josipović, protested against the published article, to which he was prompted by, in all likelihood, by order of the Serbian ambassador. The Margel Institute also demanded my criminal prosecution. The heads of the Croatian State Archives at the time, where I am employed, engaged in devious actions to nullify the agreement between the Zagreb Archdiocese and State Archives on storing archival records. But all this was nothing but a futile attempt to intimidate, which they failed to achieve.

Their lack of success was due to the fact that many Croatian scholars, writers and scientists stood in defence of the truth, and thus in my defence, and I thank them openly for that before all of you here today. They are: academician Josip Pečarić present here, Mate Ćavar, Anđelko Kaćunko, Stipe Vuković, Vlado Čutura, Tomislav Vuković, Dr. Mato Artuković, and most importantly Ivica Marijačić, chief editor of *Hrvatski List*, today's *Hrvatski Tjednik*, whom I would like to extend special thanks for publishing the article and appreciating the fact that the myth of

Jasenovac is like an omen looming over Croatia and one that needs to be eliminated. Thus, he opened the pages of his weekly paper to every piece of information that will work towards further demystifying the myth and incredible lie.

Academician Josip Pečarić included the discussion between myself and Andreja Černivec in his book *Zabranjeni Akademik [Eng. The Banned Academician]*. It also finds its place in the first pages of this very book we are presenting here tonight. With it, therefore, begins our narrative, written over a period of six years, from 2012 to 2018. It is a collection of written works, newspaper articles, discussions, commentaries, book reviews, etc., authored by academician Josip Pečarić and myself, including the works of some other authors as well.

We envisioned the work to act as a joist for Igor Vukić's *Radni Logor Jasenovac [Eng. Jasenovac Labour Camp]*, published in May of last year (Pavičić Publishing), which again stirred much enthusiasm, but also a whirlwind of opposition. It was scheduled to be launched in the summer of 2018, but due to unforeseen circumstances came out just before Christmas. In the meantime, Roman Leljak published his book and documentary on the Jasenovac myth, and thus all of 2018 was permeated with valuable materials to elucidate us with our history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

With my experience working in civil institutions, I realised early on in 2012 that in order to demystify the Jasenovac myth, a special association must be established. And so I spoke to some people regarding this matter. While receiving support from some for this venture, I unfortunately also met with much disapproval and warnings of potential consequences, persecutions and the like. For this reason, I put the thought aside for the time being. Soon after, though, on 6 June 2014 to be precise, a group of resolute and fearless colleagues gathered and held the founding assembly of the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society, in the home of our member Dr. Vladimir Horvat in Zagreb's Jordanovac neighbourhood. A large number of published articles in this book came about as a result of the Society, which is in turn also the publisher of this book. I had the honour of being president of the Society for the first four-year term. An electoral assembly was held at the end of last year, where we chose Igor Vukić as our new president – the most diligent and hard-working member of the Society, and the most assiduous researcher of the myth and truth on Jasenovac.

I sincerely hope that it will not take another eight years for the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society to launch a new book on the myth and truth on Jasenovac.

That would be all from me for now, I thank you for your attention!

Academician Josip PEČARIĆ:

## TUĐMAN – THE CHIEF REVISIONIST

Please allow me to extend a warm welcome to you all, and thank you for coming in such a large number to the presentation of the book *Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž*.

And to think the launch was only just announced today in *Hrvatski Tjednik* and yesterday on the portal *dragovoljac.com* [Eng. *volunteer\_war\_defender.com*]!R

This presentation is taking place at a time when the Government is being called to burn this book, as Vlado Bogišić claims in *Slobodna Dalmacija*.

It is in essence a time when we have a Croato-Serbian coalition in the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina.

For more insight into this issue, take a look at the latest commentaries by our brilliant columnists Ivica Šola (*Pupovac naprijed, Penava – stoj!*) [Eng. *Pupovac – Forward, Penava – Halt!*] R

and Josip Jović (*Zašto Se, Gospodo, Čudite Čoviću?*) [Eng. *Why, Gentlemen, Does Čović Surprise You?*]!R

They are actually writing, as are many others, of what I called long ago the “reconciliation of partisan children in all political parties.” I defined the stance of the Bosniaks, on the other hand, with a riddle:

) How do you make a nation your enemy?  
)

) SAVE IT FROM GENOCIDE!

Unripe Croatian politicians are implementing the policy of world powers. They probably do not even know why Cardinal Franjo Kuharić said the following to the heads of the Croatian state at the time:

*Speak to the mighty from a position of principle, never on your knees. Principles are like weapons. And when Croatia appears before the world with clean hands and a clear conscience, she is mighty in face of the mighty.*



The government is on their knees and that is why we have a Serbo-Croatian coalition both in Croatia and in Bosnia & Herzegovina. But when one is on their knees, then such a policy is a little more complex. This is what Ivica Marijačić said in today's *Hrvatski Tjednik*:

*There is no justification for closeness with the chetniks, but there is also no excuse for Zagreb's withdrawal and shameful surrender of Croats in B&H to the Bosniak majorization...*

And a precondition for such a policy is a new de-Tuđmanisation! Not a direct one, mind you, but one through reform, or better yet, intensification of the Jasenovac myth. Jović claims the following:

*The Prime Minister, five ministers and leading opposition politicians were guests at this year's banquet of the Serb National Council and Serbian Orthodox Church. Krešimir Beljak evoked a new "Brotherhood and Unity", and received the "Svetozar Pribičević" Award, as though Pribičević was a car thief. (Ivica Marijačić reminds us in today's Hrvatski Tjednik that Beljak received the award in the presence of Porfirije Perić – known for singing chetnik songs, while Thompson was pronounced a fascist piece of trash! J.P.) Serbian propagators of the Jasenovac myth also received awards.*

It is only logical then that the calls to the government for "book-burning" no longer refer to the Jasenovac myth, but to lies! On the other hand, the government will increasingly be subjected to accusations of servitude and high treason. After all, we all witnessed yesterday's nervous reaction in Parliament to such allegations, but all the while the involvement of Croatian authorities in the Greater Serbian Memorandum SANU 2 is blatantly obvious. Heads of state are particularly uneasy because they know that there is probably not a Croat around who does not understand the objective of the Jasenovac myth, which the authorities are required to uphold.

I am especially pleased that in a way this book marked 20 years since my own book, *Srpski Mit o Jasenovcu* [Eng. *The Serbian Myth About Jasenovac*] came out, as a polemic response to the work by Milan Bulajić, *Tuđmanov Jasenovački Mit* [Eng. *Tuđman's Jasenovac Myth*]. My book was published by the Croatian History Institute and written by request of the director at the time, D.Sc. Mirko Valentić. It contains an interview I had for Radio Free Europe with Milan Bulajić. Bulajić later raged over the "genocidal ideology of Croatian authors", proclaiming my book, along with Philip J. Cohen's, as the greatest anti-Serbian book in history, to which I replied with the second half of my book. Listeners of the broadcast on Radio Free Europe in Australia organised the printing of my book *The Serbian Myth About Jasenovac* in English as well.

But the defeat on Radio Free Europe clearly demonstrated, as I pointed out, that the same people will have to take over Bulajić's role in Croatia. At the time, these were the Goldsteins. In the book *Holokaust u Zagrebu* [Eng. *Holocaust in Zagreb*], they devoted a chapter to revisionists in Croatian history, and of course, the chief revisionist was Dr. Franjo Tuđman. After the CROATIAN President, they wrote mostly about me and D.Sc. Jure Krišto, who authored the foreword to the book. I wish to point out that the foreword of the book we are presenting today was written by our renowned historian D.Sc. Mato Artuković. I responded by writing the book *Brani li Goldstein NDH?* [Eng. *Is Goldstein Defending the NDH?*]. While my book was still at the printers, in an interview for *Slobodna Dalmacija*, the young Goldstein called for my criminal prosecution on a charge of specific antisemitism, and this being that I "berated and disrespected" him. To reiterate, it is an act of antisemitism to attack Ivo Goldstein.

They did not print my rebuttal, but instead conducted an interview with me when my book was printed.

The Goldsteins returned the ball with an article entitled “Academician Pečarić Persists in His Lies.”

I proved that their response, for the most part, was based on their own lies. They lied about me writing something, and then commented on what I lied about, with the threat that they would impede me from lying any further. Believe it or not.

When the staff at *Slobodna Dalmacija* saw this, this neither wanted (or weren't permitted) to print my response. Threats for my “lies” began to come true!

That is why this book encompasses a number of my texts with “their” headlines on how certain Goldsteins persist in lying.

Of course, we must also highlight that authors D.Sc. Josip Jurčević, M.Sc. Mladen Ivezić, Vladimir Mrkoci and D.Sc. Vladimir Horvat also wrote books about Jasenovac. I also wrote the prologue for Mrkoci and Horvat's, *Ogoljena Laž Logora Jasenovac [Eng. The Outright Lie of the Jasenovac Camp]* (2008).

But believe it or not, in 2012, HAZU – The Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts – wanted Ivo Goldstein appointed an academician!

Seeing as Croatian President Franjo Tuđman was also an academician, it is likely that the members who recommended Goldstein approved of Goldstein's statement from 2002:

*In terms of fables and other inventions, Tuđman could, in some aspects, probably find a counterpart in his colleague Josip Pečarić, also an academician.*

It is a known fact that I opposed such slander, and wrote a book about it entitled *Zabranjeni Akademik – Prijevarom u HAZU!?* [Eng. *The Banned Academician – Fraud in the HAZU!?*] (Zagreb, 2012).

The book consists mostly of texts by Croatian historians who illustrate how lacking Ivo Goldstein is as a historian.

The last section is devoted to D.Sc. Stjepan Razum, and with it we begun this book presented here tonight.

Why?

Even though I consider Goldstein's appointment into HAZU as the first failure of the then Serbo-Communist authorities, the ultimate revelation of the Jasenovac lie at the time was the interview Dr. Razum gave for *Hrvatski List!* Both the Serbian ambassador and former President Ivo Josipović saw this, and tackled Dr. Razum accordingly.

Dr. Razum soon united with Igor Vukić, which led to the founding of the Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society.

The first chapter of the book includes excerpts from my later books, where I wrote about the work and efforts of the Society's members, or included their texts within.

The second chapter contains texts written by Dr. Razum that were not in the first chapter.

Readers can therefore follow the activities of the Society through the first two chapters, so there is no need to speak of it at this point.

For me, the most significant achievement of the Society was the publishing of Igor Vukić's *Radni Logor Jasenovac* [Eng. *Jasenovac Labour Camp*]. After his guest appearance in Croatian Radiotelevision's program *Hrvatska Danas* [Eng. *Croatia Today*], Vukić and his book became the target of slander and criticism. The third chapter contains a series of texts by Croatian authors who stood in defence of Vukić and his book. We deemed it important to have all this collected in one section.

However, supporters of the Jasenovac lies laid the most blame on Croatian Radiotelevision's editor Karolina Vidović Krišto. She is the creator and host of a talk show whose aim is to hear both sides of a story. In a particular episode, she invited Igor Vukić and D.Sc. Hrvoje Klasić, historian and PhD professor from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. Having heard that Igor Vukić would also be in the program, Prof. Klasić refused to appear. He knew he would be disconcerted in his attempt to counter an expert Jasenovac camp researcher. I presume that the staff at Croatian Radiotelevision blame Karolina Vidović Krišto for not foreseeing this reaction. I personally think they are wrong, because how could one know that Klasić was intelligent enough to evade such a confrontation. Or perhaps they were aware of Klasić's insufficient intelligence and disparaged her for inviting an inadequately intelligent historian to the talk show. That is why the fourth chapter comprises texts of Croatian authors who commented on the dishonourable behaviour of Croatian Radiotelevision towards Mrs. Vidović Krišto.

The final chapter is composed of texts that were written after we had already finished putting the book together.

To conclude, I would like to remind us all that Dr. Franjo Tuđman was put in prison for attempting to uncover the truth about Jasenovac. During the Homeland War of Defence, they called our country "Tuđman's ustasha state", and our war defenders "ustashas". Yugo-communist historians labelled Tuđman a revisionist – Croatia's supreme revisionist to boot. And we see all of this today. The only difference is that now the Croatian leadership is involved – a leadership whose heads belong to the very party created by the chief revisionist himself and maker of Tuđman's ustasha Croatia.

And indeed, revisionism is at play in Croatia today – a revisionism of the Homeland War!

It is thus perfectly clear why this book is not dear to them – they even call it pro-Nazi. Anything to continue the revision of the Homeland War!

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**\*English translations of book titles and other publications:**

*Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž [Eng. The Jasenovac Lie Disclosed]*

*Srpski mit o Jasenovcu [Eng. The Serbian Myth on Jasenovac]*

*Hrvatski Tjednik [Eng. Croatian Weekly]*

*Horrors of War: Historical Reality and Philosophy [Croatian: Bespuća Povijesne Zbiljnosti]*

*Ogoljela Laž Logora Jasenovac [Eng. The Outright Lie of the Jasenovac Camp]*

*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – Bilo Je Pravo Ime [Eng. The NDH – Independent State of Croatia – Its True Name]*

*Drugačija Povijest (O Srbu, Jasenovcu, Glini ...) [Eng. A Different History (Srb, Jasenovac, Glina ...)]*

*Slobodna Dalmacija [Eng. A Free Dalmatia],*

*Hrvatski List [Eng. Croatian News],*

*Zabranjeni Akademik [Eng. The Banned Academician]*

*Radni Logor Jasenovac [Eng. Jasenovac Labour Camp],*

*dragovoljac.com [Eng. volunteer\_war\_defender.com]R*

*(Pupovac naprijed, Penava – stoj!) [Eng. Pupovac – Forward, Penava – Halt!]*

*(Zašto Se, Gospodo, Čudite Čoviću?) [Eng. Why, Gentlemen, Does Čović Surprise You?]*

*Tuđmanov Jasenovački Mit [Eng. Tuđman's Jasenovac Myth].*

*Holokaust u Zagrebu [Eng. Holocaust in Zagreb],*

*Brani li Goldstein NDH? [Eng. Is Goldstein Defending the NDH?].*

*Zabranjeni Akademik – Prijevarom u HAZU!?! [Eng. The Banned Academician – Fraud in the HAZU!?!]*

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## Open Letter to Mr. Efraim Zuroff

Prof. Emer. Matko Marušić, MD, PhD  
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SPLIT, CROATIA

to

Efraim Zuroff  
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[swcjerus@netvision.net.il](mailto:swcjerus@netvision.net.il)

January 18, 2019

Esteemed Mr. Zuroff,

I read an article on January 10, 2019, posted on the Croatian portal Index.hr, of your demand that the Croatian Government ban the book *Razotkrivena Jasenovačka laž* [translates to: *The Jasenovac Lie Disclosed*] (<https://www.index.hr/tag/37694/efraim-zuroff.aspx>).

To this end and for the sake of the accuracy of the claim, I quote excerpts from the article on Index.hr: *"The Simon Wiesenthal Center, International Jewish Human Rights Organization, led by the famous Nazi hunter Efraim Zuroff, harshly condemned the Croatian Government for their tolerance of works that negate Ustasha crimes during WWII.*

*In a statement signed by the Center's Director, Dr. Efraim Zuroff, and posted on their website, he forewarns of the promotion of the book Razotkrivena Jasenovačka Laž to be held January 16, 2019 in a church in Zagreb – a work which negates the systematic and mass execution of Serbs, Roma, Jews and Croatian anti-Fascists.*

*The Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society, sponsor of the event, was established to conceal the horrific crimes committed by the Ustasha, which are acts beyond compare in the Balkans. Crimes confirmed in historical documents, witness testimonies, and scientific findings of many prominent historians. Works such as the book Razotkrivena Jasenovačka laž would immediately be banned in Germany and Austria, and justifiably so, says Zuroff."*

*The Simon Wiesenthal Center called on Croatia to ban publications that negate and distort the role played by the NDH in the Holocaust. "As a member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), Croatia should take every pertinent step to prevent all those who negate the Holocaust and misrepresent historical facts. Continued positive focus is placed on efforts to misconstrue and twist Croatian history, contrary to international commitments accepted by Croatia upon joining the IHRA," said Mark Weitzman, the Center's Political Director and former Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.*

Not going into deliberations over historical events of which I am not qualified, allow me to express my cordial but very serious objections to the above comments. It is very important that I do so, as I am a proven and sworn friend of the state of Israel, devotee of the Jewish people, and a Croat who is ashamed of the wrong deeds committed by a certain group of my people, known as the Ustasha and Ustasha regime, during WWII. I also believe that we Croats owe the Jewish people much in this regard, both as a nation and culture, but above all, sincere respect and regard. Also important is the fact that I am a devout Catholic, and thus have even more respect for the Jewish people, for the Lord my God was born unto them. I pray that you never underestimate this, regardless of how you feel about any religion, or lack thereof.

I am a scientist, biomedical researcher and university professor emeritus. Although I do not know much on the history or methodology of historical research, I do know the rules of scientific studies, methodology, publication, communication, and all that must go in stride with scientific analysis, whatever the field of research. I firmly call upon human common sense, goodwill, tolerance of diversity, and upholding the truth, wherever the absolute truth may lie, and how ever near or far it is to us as mere mortals.

Allow me to illustrate with some very simple arguments, and present my deep and unsettling dissatisfaction with your reaction (in the belief that *Index.hr* quoted your statement accurately).

### **1. The lie on the number of victims in the Jasenovac Ustasha Concentration Camp existed and is proven**

In communist Yugoslavia, all school children in every school were taught that 700,000 civilians, mostly Serbs, were killed in Jasenovac. This was written in our textbooks, encyclopedias, and very often in newspapers as well. The figure was not to be questioned, at the cost of severe consequences. For instance, the late Dr. Franjo Tuđman, first President of the free and democratic Republic of Croatia, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the former regime for claiming in one of his books that the number of victims in Jasenovac ranged from 60,000 – 80,000.

Neither Tuđman nor the Ustasha countered the claim of 700,000 deaths, not even Mr. Igor Vukić nor myself. The one to counter it, at the time of the same communist regime, was Mr. Vladimir Žerjavić – a Croatian economist, demographer and UN expert, who estimated the number of Jasenovac victims at roughly 50,000, which was then generally accepted. (It is impossible for me to state all the estimates and differences here, as I do not wish to burden you. I will stand by Mr. Žerjavić's claim, for it was also accepted by Tito and his regime.)

The Jasenovac Memorial Site is a public institution in Croatia (<http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6467>) that lists each individual victim by name, and this figure amounts to approximately 84,000.

The issue has not been resolved to this day, but it suffices to state it in my message to you. Namely, if the lie that was officially taught in schools in the former regime shows a discrepancy ranging between 700,000 and 84,000, I urge you to be just as taken aback as I am, albeit I have all the more reason, for the atrocious lie was ascribed to my very own people (to whom I proudly and wholeheartedly belong). If it was objectively and indisputably proven to be a horrific, deliberate and malignant lie (to darken and disparage my beloved nation), then how, and based on what, can anyone, including yourself, have the audacity to believe this new figure (84,000), without the need for further investigation?

In short: The above example shows that every honest and educated man must persevere in research – not only for the sake of truth, but also to overcome lies as something unacceptable to Man, but especially because of what I am writing to you: to avoid any further disputes, tensions, and disruption of peace among the people.

### **2. Croatian society is torn apart by controversies over the number of Jasenovac victims, and a consensus of prominent experts has recommended the intensification of research and inquiry**

I am referring to a document issued by the (Croatian) Council for Dealing with Consequences of the Rule of Non-Democratic Regimes:

(<https://vlada.gov.hr/dokument-dijaloga-temeljna-polazista-i-preporuke-o-posebnom-normativnom-uredjenju-simbola-znakovlja-i-drugih-obiljezja/23424>)

The Council was established by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, aware of the fact that such controversies disrupt relations in Croatian society. Council members were selected from a number of different political groups, and one such member who signed the *Document of Dialogue* was Mr. Ivo Goldstein, whom I presume is quite well-known to you.

I quote an applicable passage from the said Document:

*“Without going into the question of historical revisionism, one must note that where history is already revisionist, a new revisionism may emerge as a need for the revision of revisionism. A good practice of dealing with the past would be beneficial to historiographic research and others, with scientific exploration of sources, critical inquiry, non-selective choice and publishing of materials. This includes the availability of archival materials and new research to reveal the death toll of undemocratic regimes, as well as providing a dignified commemoration at the place of death and sacrifice. The former manipulation and discrepancies in the number of victims from any undemocratic regime continues to be*

*an impediment in viewing the historical truth, whereas the same goes for facing the culture of dialogue and unfalsified historical remembrance. Here we are not at all referring to conscientious critical and scientific attestation of the actual number of victims, especially in cases where it is confirmed to be exponentially multiplied for political or other reasons.”*

I do not know if you are aware of the existence of this document, but I would like to take this opportunity to kindly request that you take the time to look it over, as it is a document issued by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and co-signed by Mr. Ivo Goldstein, which I believe undeniably proves its democratic character and consensus within Croatian society regarding the question of Croatian historical truth.

### **3. A few words on Mr. Igor Vukić**

At this point I do not know the content of the book you are requesting the ban of, but I know Mr. Igor Vukić, Head of the “Jasenovac Triple Camp Research Society” and his works on Jasenovac. I had the honor of meeting Mr. Vukić myself and reading his works. I do not wish to be his “witness” here, but instead to express my personal and scientific opinion on him and his activities, of which I believe, I am entitled to as a proven scientist and professor of research methodology.

To begin, I apologize to Mr. Vukić (but he publicized this himself) – he is of Serb, Croat and Czech mixed origin, with a predominance of Serbian heredity. Second, he is from a village in the vicinity of the town of Jasenovac. Third, his father was in Jasenovac as a child. Fourth, Mr. Vukić is a very serious, educated and well-mannered man, and anyone who insults him also insults all other educated and well-mannered individuals – including myself. And I am not the least bit pleased with this (insulting). Mr. Vukić is not an Ustashe, nor is he a nationalist or revisionist. He is an intellectual, and one to be desired as a member of the most distinguished and civilized circles. (If you do not have confidence in my words, you should meet him yourself.)

And lastly, Mr. Vukić (and his co-workers) never concealed their findings, nor did they circulate them in secret. They published them as all qualified scientists do. These findings are, just as all other scientific insights, available to the global scientific community for verification and criticism.

I do not know, Mr. Zuroff, whether you or your associates have examined the works before demanding their ban – if you haven’t – I must warn that this is an inappropriate procedure, similar to the manner of Stalin (and Tito) with works that did not suit them. This must not be the practice of civilized and educated individuals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, who ought to feel equal shame when others do the same.

If, on the other hand, you took the time to study the works, no one is more delighted than I! We eagerly await your objective arguments countering them. I am not cheering on Mr. Vukić – we are not playing a soccer game. I am merely applauding the scientific truth. It is something of great importance to me, as I still distress over the claim of 700,000 Jasenovac victims – the reciting of which I received excellent grades in the primary and secondary schools, albeit oblivious to what was actually taking place.

At this point, if you do not know, I must inform you that some of Mr. Vukić’s findings were even accepted by his fervent opponents (forgive me again – by your like-minded contemporaries) Dr. Ivo Goldstein and Dr. Mirjana Kasapović. Upon examination of Mr. Vukić’s evidence, it was no longer disputable to them that Jasenovac was in fact a labor camp, that some prisoners and workers earned wages for their work, that the camp received aid packages from the outside (especially from the Croatian Jewish community) – and I apologize once again, but it was stated publicly – that different performances with singing were held there (we are not sure the names of all), including soccer tournaments.

Dr. Goldstein and Dr. Kasapović criticize Mr. Vukić for not providing evidence of countless executions in the camp, but they do not disparage my claim. I do believe, though, that the number of victims will ultimately be determined through consensus. For now, regarding the figures 700,000 and 84,000, the one that stands out most is the claim of Slovenian researcher Mr. Roman Leljak, who asserts that documents in Belgrade attest to roughly 1,600 victims in Jasenovac, half of which died of disease. I

assume that you will also not take Mr. Leljak's findings as true, and so I kindly ask you to verify this information yourself the next time you are in Belgrade.

(Permit me to suggest that in Belgrade you check the following Serbian newspaper articles published in Belgrade, during WWII (Cyrillic titles transcribed to Latin letters; roman numerals are months):

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>1941, Beograd</b>		
JIM	1941	Komanda mesta Beograd. Jevrejima. (Jevrejski Historički Muzej).
Obnova	22. IX.	Zločini Jevreja, naša nacionalna sramota.
Obnova	20. X.	Naši seljaci i radnici robovi Jevreja.
Naša Borba	02. X.	Jazbina iz kojega su potekla sva zla i sve nesreće.
Obnova	22. VIII.	Raspolitčke pretpostavke za rešenje Jevrejskog pitanja.
Naša Borba	02. XI.	Jevrejski metodi.
Novo Vreme	31. X.	Srbi su najtolerantniji na svetu.
Novo Vreme	07. VIII	Jevreji u Srbiji.
Obnova	03. XI.	Jevreji nikad više neće biti ljekari, apotekari, sudije u Srbiji.
Novo Vreme	19. X.	Jevreji financiraju komunističke bande.
Naša Borba	26. X.	Sa skorašnjeg velikog Jevrejskog sabora u Moskvi.
Obnova	01. X.	Jevrejski rat.
Novo Vreme	25. VII.	Tri Internacionale.
Novo Vreme	11. V.	Rat je posao Jevreja.
Obnova	11. VII.	Jevreji ne mogu da se naviknu na red.
Obnova	01. X.	Nagomilavanje hrane u Jevrejskoj sinagozi.
Obnova	04. XII.	Engleska vodi Judin rat.
Obnova	12. XII.	Pred historijom Rusvelt će ostati glavni krivac novog svetskog rata.
Novo Vreme	29. VII	Stroge mere.
Novo Vreme	25. XII.	Priznanje komunističkog komesara Dr. Levija.
Obnova	17. X.	Ariziranje hrvatske privrede.
Obnova	22. IX	Zločini Jevreja, naša nacionalna sramota.
Obnova	01. X.	Tamne sile.
Naša Borba	02. XI.	Jazbina iz koje su Potekla sva Zla.
Naša Borba	21. XII.	Svedočanstva, Jevreji prema hrišćanstvu.
Obnova	09. V.	Naredba koja se odnosi na Jevreje i Cigane.
Obnova	20. X.	Naši seljaci i radnici robovi Jevrejski.
Novo Vreme	31. X.	Srbi su najtolerantniji narod na Svetu.
Vojna Komanda	IV.	Naredba.
Novo Vreme	11. XII.	Poziv, AUFFORDRUNG.
Obnova	18. IX	Jevreji protiv nas i protiv kolektivnih interesa.
Obnova	09. IX.	Nevidljivi crv.
Novo Vreme	28. VII.	Stroge mere protiv Jevreja i komita u Beogradu.
Novo Vreme	29. VII.	Uredba o predaji oružja.
Obnova	28. VII.	Mi i Jevreji.
Novo Vreme	17. VIII.	U Zemunu je Jevrejima zabranjeno kupovanje pre devet sati.
Naša Borba	26. X.	Sa skorašnjeg velikog Jevrejskog Sabora u Moskvi.
<b>1942, Beograd</b>		
Naša Borba	15. II.	Poštovati samo svoju veru i zakone, a sve druge vere i zakone rušiti.



Naša Borba Obnova	28. VI. 08. IX.	Jevrejski bog i Jevrejski moral. Loža Jevrejska osnovana, 1911 u Beogradu dobila je ime Srbija, čime je osvojena još jedna država.
Novo Vreme Nova Borba Obnova Obnova Srpski Narod Obnova Obnova Obnova Novo Vreme Novo Vreme Naša Borba Noša Borba Srpski Narod Naša Borba Novo Vreme Obnova Obnova	03. I. 22. III. 17. XI. 15. XII. 19. XII. 20. III. 04. X. 26. III. 16. IV. 30. VIII. 28. IV. 15. VIII. 27. XI 26. IV 14. IX. 19. XII. 08. V.	Uredba koja se odnosi na primanje na konak . Jevreji i izbeglice, novac glavna snaga i oružje Jevrejstva. Bolješevićka zemlja domovina Jevreja. Komnolt međunarodnog Jevrejstva. Jevrejski rat. Navala Slovačkih Jevreja na krštenje. Jevrejsko vršenje u Rumuniji. Uloga Jevreja u životu naše zemlje pre rata. Obaveza prijave Jevrejske imovine. Uredba o pripadanju imovine Jevreja Srbiji. Jevrejski Bog i Jevrejski moral. Misli Jevreja i njegovih agenata. Hrišćanski narodi u službi Jevrejstva. Istervanje Jevreja – spas Evrope. Rusvelt predaje američku privredu Jevrejima. Jeveji kuju osvetu. Komplot međunarodnog Jevrejstva.

#### **1943, Beograd**

Novo Vreme Srpski Narod Novo Vreme Obnova Obnova Novo Vreme Novo Vreme Srpski Narod Novo Vreme Obnova Novo Vreme Srpski Narod Obnova Novo Vreme Obnova Srpski Narod	21. XI. 27. IX. 11. V. 20. VIII. 10. V. 11. II. 21. IX. 18. XII. 17. IV. 15. IV. 06. VIII. 06. III. 03. XI. 08. V. 23. I. 29. V.	Nova Entanta u životu srpskoga naroda. Kršćanski narodi u službi Jevreja. Rat je posao Jevreja. Strast uništenja. Golgota po drugi put. Našu su otađbinu razarali paraziti. Nova etapa u životu srpskog naroda. Nesrbi i Jevreji treba da oslobode Srbe. Nalog ubistva. Jevreji – đelati poljskih oficira. Evropski narodi protiv Jevrejskog boljševizma. Američka štampa u rukama Jevreja. Oni mrze mir. Rat i Jevreji. Jevreji su svuda – Jevreji. Juda podnosi račun.
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#### **1944, Beograd**

Novo Vreme Obnova	24. II. 13. IV.	Jevrejski vek. Kobna uloga Jevreja u našem javnom životu.
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#### **4. Documents**

You may not like what you hear, but I must warn you that to date (in freedom from communist undemocratic terror), multitudes of documents have been published in Croatia, which attest to the fact that Mr. Vukić and his associates are right. If you succeed in prohibiting any evidence, you will be compelled to prohibit many other sources as well.

Speaking of documents, allow me the following. Complete documentation on the operations of the Ustasha camp in Jasenovac was kept (in Tito's time) in Jasenovac. During the Serbian aggression against Croatia from 1990-1995, Serb forces occupied Jasenovac very early on in 1991, confiscating all

documentation and taking it to – Belgrade. The decision to submit all documents to Belgrade is indicative in itself, for Serbia claims it was initiated by a revolt of Serbs in Croatia (and that neither Serbia nor its army had anything to do with it). However, rebel Serbs in Croatia declared Knin as their capital, and thus it makes no sense to transfer the documents to Belgrade, does it? Furthermore, one wonders why Belgrade did not react in saying something like: “What are we to do with this? It is a matter between you and Croatia. Keep it in Knin, it is unfair to take away documents that do not belong to us, and by force, to boot.”

I am led to believe that such discrete and sly action perfectly illustrates the fact that the aggression against Croatia in 1991 was committed by Serbia itself, and not Knin Serbs. This, however, is a whole other topic I do not wish to burden you with at this time.

But the saga on the Jasenovac documents is not over! Today, Serbia still refuses to return the documentation to Croatia, allegedly “fearing the Croats would use it to spread further lies about the Jasenovac camp.” I simply cannot comprehend this! First of all, if we are in fact dealing with the original documentation, then one cannot lie. Secondly, Serbia could easily leave copies for themselves (e.g. microfilm) or even the originals, and give copies to Croatia (microfilm). This would prevent Croatia from fabricating the truth – and I trust that you would find this quite acceptable.

## 5. Forensic research

As far as the number of Jasenovac victims is concerned, concrete and full-fledged research has been organized on three occasions in Tito’s time, through commissions and experts as appointed by the then regime. Digging and expert forensic excavations were conducted three times, at the sites of the “most massive and gruesome burial pits”, yielding a total of just under 500 skeletons. I feel it is logical that you (together with Mr. Vukić and myself) propose that excavations be resumed once again. I would be greatly pleased if you and your organization agree to take part in monitoring the said digging activities.

## 6. Jasenovac Research Institute

The story behind the Jasenovac Research Institute in New York is the same as the appalling (albeit proven, see above) lie on the 700,000 victims (JRI stands on 600,000), which I state here for the following reasons.

a) This figure, according to Tito’s expert, Mr. Žerjavić, and the list from the Jasenovac Memorial Site public institution (see above) is an outright lie and shame for humanity, history and all those who participate or uphold it. Even those who keep silent. Forgive me but I feel that you are among this last group as well! I never heard you state that the Jasenovac Research Institute cited inexcusable or erroneous figures (and names), and requested the correction thereof. Yet I am positive you are familiar with it, as it is not the small Jasenovac Memorial Site public institution in Croatia, but rather a major institute in the famous and illustrious city of New York!

b) At the trial of Croatian soccer player Joe Šimunić for cheering the ustashi salute “For the Homeland, Ready” (although he only shouted “For the Homeland”, but *implicite* it was clear what he was referring to), a testimony was given by Executive Director of the Jasenovac Research Institute, Mr. Barry M. Lituchy on the figure of 600,000 Jasenovac victims. His testimony was accepted, and Joe Šimunić was convicted with a sentence that ended his brilliant career as a professional soccer player. You are a world-renowned man, a specialist, and certainly an upright and benevolent human being, and I wonder why you did not intervene in this international affair, concerning a topic in your realm of expertise, and perhaps react by saying: “Honorable Magistrate, it is not 600,000, but 84,000, as is proven (and publicized) by experts from the Jasenovac Memorial Site public institution, who deal specifically and professionally with the issue at hand. I know them, they are honest and skilled people, colleagues of mine: call them to testify.”

c) I firmly believe you are aware that (even without a systematic analysis) thousands of people on the list compiled by the Jasenovac Research Institute as victims killed in Jasenovac actually died in other places. I will state an example closely related to me: In 1943, all the people (just over 100) killed during an allied bombing attack on the town of Kaštela (near the city of Split), when a bomb hit a church in

Kaštela during Mass – are all listed as victims in the Jasenovac Research Institute, even though their graves, marked with their very names and bones, lie in the Kaštela cemetery.

### **7. A short but very important question**

Mr. Zuroff, if you claim that 700,000 people were killed in Jasenovac, despite Mr. Žerjavić's (50,000) and today's official list in Jasenovac (about 84,000), I must express my deepest regret and frustration. I will deem that for some reason (unknown to me, I cannot even speculate) you may an enemy of my people and its state, regardless of what this means or does not mean to you. If that is the case, I would be very unhappy, but then I would not see that it is either sophisticated or democratic to address the Government which you perceive as an enemy. I feel uncomfortable even thinking about it, and only mentioned it you in the name of civilized and dignified behavior.

If, on the other hand, you say you do not know the number of Jasenovac victims, I beseech you to please speak to Mr. Igor Vukić and his associates, among all others, for he declares he has concrete documented data. This requires a scientific research method and ethics, as well as the most basic human earnestness and decency. It does not mean that Mr. Vukić (or Mr. Leljak) must be credited with the truth, but it certainly means that we ought to listen to his arguments and challenge them with better, stronger and more numerous arguments. Allow me to remind you that I, as a proven scientist, am also experienced in the methodology of assessing scientific arguments, their comparison and configuration, as well as the process of attaining human truth, no matter how far away or contrary it may be to that of the Lord's.

### **8. A friendly opinion and counsel**

I am saddened with your treatment of my people and my country. And to that of science and scientific truth, the consensus of well-intentioned and educated people, and the efforts of the Croatian Council for Dealing with Consequences of the Rule of Non-Democratic Regimes, which included the efforts of Mr. Ivo Goldstein (not to list the others). What you are doing is wrong. All people on earth today, including us Croats, are educated enough (free and mainly without prejudice of any sort) to look unfavorably on all bans or restrictions regarding any research topic that does not have full consensus. We see this as not only unfounded and unscientific, but also as something intended to hide the truth and promote lies, and both with dishonorable aims, for what other aims can stand behind hiding the truth and promoting lies?

This, too, does not generate a good feeling.

The action you took, as related by *Index.hr*, brings no good to anyone – not for Croatia and the Croats, not for yourself, nor the honorable Jewish people from whom we have learned so much about wisdom, knowledge, science and respect for the truth – and all for the aim of a better, more peaceful and beautiful world. This is especially detrimental for the much-needed respect and remembrance of the tragedy suffered by the Jewish people during WWII, including all the misfortunes that came before and after. Forgive me for addressing you directly, but this is my honest belief, and I must say: The tragedy of WWII and its most horrific crime against the Jewish nation is so massive and atrocious that it cannot, and must not, be offended or disgraced by any trial or error, absolutely nothing at all! It is already too colossal to be exaggerated, and too dreadful to be seen as anything shy of respect and remorse.

In that name, allow me to personally apologize for all the foul and horrid things members of my people have done to yours in WWII, including everything that came before (Kingdom of Yugoslavia, before WW2) and after (Tito's regime). May the Lord bless and keep both of us, together with our wonderful people, and let us pray that tragedies like this never happen again.

But we two also have the duty to contribute to this aim.

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