

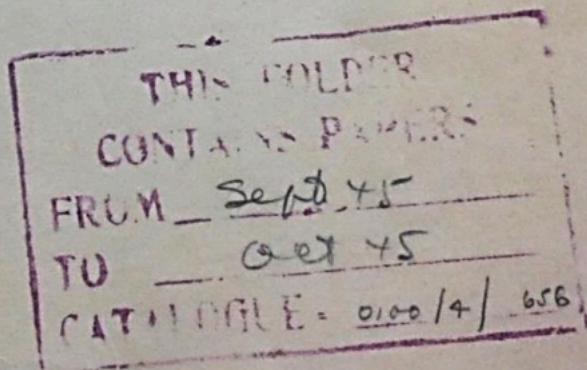
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1996INSPECTION
PERMITTED
UNDER
S 5(4)

OFFICE OF THE SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER'S SECRETARIAT

File Subject: YUGOSLAVIA - BASOVICZA PITFile Number 400.6

M. Ivančič: Fojba laži



R51m

OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT MINISTER
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN,

A.F.H.Q.

9/150/1

24th July, 1945.

To: Chief of Staff
From: Deputy Resident Minister
Subject: Pit at Basovizza.

You will remember that I sent you three telegrams (my telegram to Foreign Office No. 1350, Washington telegram to Foreign Office No. 4988 and Rome telegram to Foreign Office No. 1150) on the above subject.

I have now received a telegram from the Foreign Office, repeating a message from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at TERMINAL. This telegram is to the effect that, in Mr. Eden's opinion, a full investigation ought to be carried out into this matter. The Foreign Office say that this is also the Prime Minister's view and that Field Marshal Alexander, whom Mr. Eden has consulted, also agrees.

Philip Rawson

*File
B/H*

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

sub

AFHQ MESSAGE CENTER
OUTGOING MESSAGE

F-3

SECRET

OP PRIORITY

TO FOR ACTION: XIII CORPS

INFORMATION : EIGHTH ARMY : ALCOM

REF NO : FX 27763

SIGNED : SACMED CITE: FHCOS

Investigation into alleged atrocities at BASOVIZZA
has been ordered. Technical instructions from MGRE follow.

ORIGINATOR : C/S

AUTH: J G SWEETMAN, LT COL

INFORMATION: SACS
RESMIN

CAO G-2
US POLAD ENGRS

G-3
**

G-5

MC OUT 6938 25 Jul 45 SECRET 1152B REF NO FX 27763 md/M/P

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

COPY NO.

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TOP SECRET
AFHQ MESSAGE CENTER

CORRECTED COPY - DESTROY ALL OTHERS

TOO:
 ROUTINE

01/NTCC

INCOMING MESSAGE

TOP SECRET

N 1123/02

N 2110/02

edf/jtc

TOP SECRET

FROM: HEADQUARTERS ALCOM ROME

TO: AFHQ G-5 INFORMATION HEADQUARTERS MAIN XIII CORPS
 SENIOR CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICER VENEZIA GIULIA

REF NO THIS MESSAGE: 2901, 1 August 1945.

Cite ACEXE.

1. It was reported in the Italian press yesterday morning that "The General in command of the British Eighth Army has officially denied the news published by Italian press according to which 400-600 corpses had been discovered in a deep mine shaft in the TRIESTE Zone" and indicating no investigation would be held.

2. We are advised by the British Embassy here that a personal signal from ex Foreign Secretary EDEN was sent on 23rd July from POTSDAM which stated Mr EDEN considered full investigation into report of this atrocity should be carried out and that this was ex Prime Minister CHURCHILL'S view and also that of Field Marshal ALEXANDER. We also understand the State Department takes a serious view of the alleged atrocity and feels that unless full investigation is carried out, the American and British governments will later be accused by the Italians of suppressing evidence regarding Yugoslav terrorists' activities. Both Ambassadors fully share collaboration view and British Embassy have recommended to Foreign office that maximum publicity should be given.

3. In view of the above, we presume orders will be given for an immediate investigation and for a denial of the report referred to in Paragraph 1.

ACTION: G-5 (ACTION CHANGED TO SACS 3/8/45)

INFORMATION: SACS CAO G-2 US POLAD RESMIN G-3 INC
 ENGRS PRO PWB **

MC IN 1454A 3 Aug 45 TOP SECRET 0446B REF NO 2901 md/X

M. Ivančić: FOJBA LAŽI

TOP SECRET

COPY No.

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FX 31943

FHQ MESSAGE CENTER

F-5
1/5/2

OUTGOING MESSAGE

SECRET

PRIORITY

TO FOR ACTION: ALCOM
FOR INFO : XIII CORPS
REF NO : FX-31943
SIGNED : SACMED CITE FHDSC

Reurad ALCOM 2901 of 1 August.

1. Report published in Italian press and also cabled to UNITED STATES that Allies had already recovered large numbers of bodies from BASSOVIZZA pit near TRIESTE was completely false. As you are aware under present censorship arrangements no control is exercised at source over such reports and it appears PRO had no knowledge of matter until reports were published.

2. Denial that bodies had been recovered was issued officially by PRO Eighth Army and by XIII Corps as was most necessary. In fact denial did not state that investigation was not taking place. However, ROME press which published original malicious report also appears to have reported denial inaccurately.

3. Signal from Mister EDEN to which you refer in your paragraph 2 is well known here. Matter has, in fact, been under investigation by XIII Corps for some time. Investigation however presents considerable engineering difficulties. It is hoped these will shortly be overcome when full reports will be made available to all concerned.

4. Statement that investigation is proceeding will not at present be published.

5. For XIII Corps. Your I2 of 1 August refers.

AUTH: J G SWEETMAN, LT COLONEL

ORIGINATOR : DC/S

INFORMATION: SACS G-2 G-5 G-1(B) ENGRS CAO USPOLAD
RESMIN INC PRO PWB **

MC OUT 969 4 Aug 45 SECRET 1100B Ref No: FX31943 js/V/3

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

COPY NO. 2

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D R A F T

TO: AGWAR WASHINGTON for Combined Chiefs of Staff
CABINET OFFICES WHITEHALL for British Chiefs of Staff

This is NAF_____.

Reference NAF 1078.

1. Grabbing operations at BASOVIZZA Pit have now continued for another month. As was expected no useful results have been obtained.

2. Further efforts will not be of value unless mining machinery is imported for purposes indicated in para 4 of reference signal. I am therefore discontinuing operations with present equipment pending your instructions as to whether the two governments require that further measures be undertaken.

3. In event that the two governments do so require would stress importance of transference of responsibility to a civil agency.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

AG 136

SECRET

PRIORITY

17th August, 1945.

TO FOR ACTION: ALCON

FROM: XIII CORPS

REF ID: PX-31943

To: Deputy Resident Minister

From: Chief of Staff

SUBJECT: Basovizza Pit

...lished in Italian press and also
 ...Allies had already recovered
 large numbers of bodies from BASOVIZZA pit near TRIESTE
 was completely false. As yet we were under present
 censorship. We would be very ill-advised to publish
 anything on this subject at present. We have no
 firm evidence that atrocities have been committed,
 and we do not yet know that the engineering
 difficulties can be overcome.

...Army and by XIII Corps as
 was most. You can assure the Ambassador that we would
 be the last to suppress evidence against the
 Yugoslavs.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

Lient-General,
 Chief of Staff.

4. Statement that investigation is proceeding
 will not at present be published.

5. For XIII Corps. Your IP of 1 August refers.

Copy to: SACS ✓ G SWERTMAN, LT COLONEL

ORIGINATOR: DO/3

INFORMATION: HAGE G-2 G-5 G-1(B) ENGINE CAC
 RESMIN INC PRO PM

ALL INFO 999 4 AUG 45 SECRET 11000

13th October 1945.

GBI. 389. 455/31-C.

SUBJECT: BASOVIZZA Pit Investigation.

TO : Lt. Col. J. G. Sweetman, S. A. C. S.

1. Reference S. A. C. S. memorandum 8044 dated 4 Aug. 45 and conversation Lt. Col. Sweetman - Lt. Col. Stepanovich, herewith a short report on the investigations to date, compiled on information from XIII Corps.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

2. The task of investigating the pit was undertaken with a view to confirming allegations by the Italian Committee of National Liberation that between 2 and 5 May 1945 the Yugoslavs threw hundreds of corpses of Fascist policemen and minor officials, collaborators and German soldiers down the BASOVIZZA pit, these corpses being covered by those of approximately 120 German soldiers and the decayed carcasses of horses.

3. Work was started on the 7th of August but due to many 'teething' troubles in the improvised equipment, the complete failure of which on one occasion held up work for two weeks while replacements were obtained, no really satisfactory recovery was carried out until the 21 Sep. 1945.

Material recovered during this period included many miscellaneous items from rubble and Bailey parts to boots containing the remains of feet and one headless corpse. Out of 52 grabs made only 38 had been successful.

Improved and more efficient grabbing was commenced on 22 Sep. and a day by day report of material recovered since then is as follows:-

- 22 Sep. - 1 tunic and 1 human arm.
- 23 " - Grabbing was unsuccessful.
- 24 " - 2 horse carcasses, parts of automatic weapon and one sword scabbard.
- 25 " - Horse flesh and 3 human bodies (one a German WO, another believed German) third believed to be a female.
- 26 " - 4 human bodies, horse flesh and clothing.
- 27 " - Human flesh, horse flesh and hoofs.
- 28 " - 1 human body, human flesh.
- 29 " - Maintenance day.
- 4 Oct. - Human flesh, horse flesh, clothing and 1 boot.
- 5 " - Human flesh, 2 feet, horse flesh, hair.
- 6 " - Human flesh, rubble, timber.
- 8 " - Rubble, 2 feet, 1 boot, British cap G. S. (last believed belonging to member of guard).
- 9 " - 1 body, 2 feet, 1 hand, rubble.

Note: during October reports have not been received every day.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

SECRET

contd.

SECRET

F-9

4. As will be seen some confirmation has been found for the allegations referred to in para. 2. The discoveries made so far are those of horse-flesh and German corpses and it may be inferred that further investigation might eventually reveal the Italian corpses. However it is possible, that these if they exist have now become unrecognizable through decomposition.

5. Meanwhile fresh engineering difficulties have been encountered and the Engineer Commander responsible has sent the attached signal (see Appendix A). The provision of the equipment requested would take several weeks for its arrival from U. K.

6. Further a request by the B. G. S. XIII Corps for the views of A. F. H. Q. on the desirability of continuing investigations has been received (see Appendix B). This request together with reports on the investigations to date have been passed to the Resident Minister's Office at their request for forwarding to the Foreign Office who originally ordered the investigation to be made.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

For the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2.,

N. S. M. Nichols, Capt.
for

EARLE B. NICHOLS,
Colonel, GSC,
G-2(CI) Section.

SECRET

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Supreme Allied Commander's Secretariat

15 October 1945

SUBJECT: Yugoslav Atrocities at BASOVIZZA Pit

TO : Deputy Chief of Staff

1. I asked G-2 to furnish this office with copies of any reports they were making to RESMIN on this subject. They apparently misunderstood me and sent the attached. However, I believe it will interest you.
2. It seems that an enormous amount of further work, including special equipment from the UK, will be necessary before any proof, of a nature acceptable to an international agency, of Yugoslav atrocities can be obtained. Moreover, owing to the advanced state of decomposition of the bodies it is doubtful that such proof would be available even after the undertaking of this extra investigation.
3. When the idea of this investigation came up first of all General Morgan tried hard to stop it. However, somebody got at Mr. Eden at POTSDAM and we received what was practically a flat order to carry it out.
4. I believe you should consider talking to the MGRE, AC of S G-2 and Deputy RESMIN with a view to cancelling the investigations which are now taking place, at least pending clarification of the present views of the Foreign Office.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

J.G.S.

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER'S SECRETARIAT

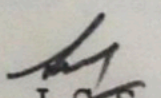
Date 16 October 1945

to: Deputy Chief of Staff

See further signals now attached.

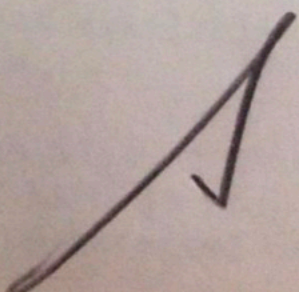
1. There is no trace of an order to make the investigation ever having been received through military channels. It is believed therefore that we would be quite within our rights in stopping unless and until ordered to go on.

2. US POLAD, British RESMIN, G-2 and Engineers (both British and US) are warned for a meeting in your office on the subject at 1000 hours tomorrow.


J.S.S.

M. Ivančić: FOJBA LAŽI

File now



OUTGOING MESSAGE

SECRET

PRIORITY

TO FOR ACTION: AGWAR FOR COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
CABINET OFFICES FOR BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF

REF NO : FX 49765

SIGNED : SACMED

CITE: PHCOS

This NAF 1078.

NAF 107

1. Subsequent to occupation of TRIESTE area by Allied Troops allegations were made by Italian Committee of National Liberation that between 2 and 5 May 1945 Yugoslavs threw hundreds of corpses of local inhabitants, Carbinieri and minor officials, collaborators and German soldiers, down a pit at BASOVIZZA (some 7 miles East of TRIESTE and West of the MORGAN Line) and covered these with corpses of approximately 120 German soldiers and by carcasses of horses.

2. Following advice of political advisers here and because of views expressed by Mister EDEN to Field Marshal ALEXANDER at POTSDAM, attempt has been made to investigate the matter using Military personnel and Military engineering equipment in the form of a grab. Latter has been difficult to operate owing to depth of pit (700 to 1000 feet) and has tended to break up the material in the course of extraction.

3. Material so far obtained shows that human bodies (some identifiable as Germans) and horse carcasses have been thrown down the pit. Otherwise results are inconclusive.

4. If effective investigation is to be carried out it will be necessary to import mining machinery from outside ITALY and install machinery to allow personnel to descend shaft by cage and examine material at bottom.

5. In view of advanced state of decomposition of bodies consider that unlikely any conclusive evidence of Yugoslav atrocities would result from further investigation, even with this machinery.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

MC OUT 1562

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Ben L Jam.
S. BDU

OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT MINISTER
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN,
G.H.Q.,
C.M.F.

47/150/6.

25th October, 1945.

To: Chief of Staff.
From: Deputy Resident Minister.
Subject: Basovizza Pit.

I am informed by the Foreign Office that in the circumstances they agree that operations at the Basovizza Pit should now cease provided the United States authorities concur.

2. The British Chiefs of Staff are, I understand, sending similar recommendations to the Joint Staff Mission in Washington.

A. Russell.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

A. Russell.
for Deputy Resident Minister.

COPYAPPENDIX "B"

SUBJECT :- Investigations - BASOVIZZA.

HQ 13 Corps,
5818/G.

2 Oct. 45.

A. F. H. Q.

1. At Appendix "A" is a summary of results of investigation of the BASOVIZZA Pit up to date.
2. It is clear that the pit contains the decomposed bodies of human beings of both sexes, some of which appear to be German soldiers in view of articles of uniform. Investigations therefore, appear to show that German troops have at some time been thrown into the pit. Further investigations would doubtless produce more pieces of flesh and oddments of equipment, but we should be unlikely to arrive at anything more conclusive.
3. It is requested that we should now have your views as to the desirability or otherwise of continuing the investigation, in the light of the inconclusive results likely to be obtained by further work, the unhealthy and uncongenial nature of the task, and the acute shortage of Engineer troops.
4. If it is decided to continue the investigation it is suggested that the work, which is not of a military character, be handed over to some appropriate civilian organisation. It would then only be necessary for the military intelligence staff to examine uniform, equipment and kindred articles.

T. S. AIREY,

Brigadier.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

For Lieut. Gen.
Comd.

SECRET

AFHQ MESSAGE CENTER
INCOMING MESSAGE

F-15

Filed: 121830B
OF PRIORITY

RESTRICTED

AFSC N 215/12

FROM: CE MAIN HQ XIII CORPS

TO : SACMED

REF NO THIS MESSAGE: 579

12 September 1945.

Cite FHENG.

Subject BASSOVITZA PIT.

5 successful grabs this afternoon. Pieces of horses
and clothing recovered.

AFHQ rep present.

Work continues tomorrow.

ACTION: ENGR(B)

INFORMATION: SAGE CAO C/S MTO G-2 RESMIN USPOLAD
G-3 **

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

Handwritten:
Hra.

MC IN 6437 12 Sep 45 RESTRICTED 2120B Ref No. 579 rht/x

COPY NO.

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POLITICAL ADVISER
to the
ALLIED COMMANDER IN CHIEF
Mediterranean Theater

F-16

October 27, 1945.

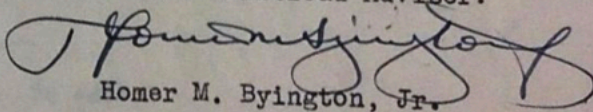
MEMORANDUM TO: General Ward,
Chief of Staff.

SUBJECT: Basovizza Pit

I refer to Mr. Russell's memorandum of October 25, 1945 (47/150/6) to the effect that the Foreign Office agrees that operations at the Basovizza Pit should now cease provided the United States authorities concur. The view of the Department of State that it would be reprehensible to stop the investigation now in process, was contained in my memorandum of October 23 to General Lemnitzer, a copy of which was forwarded to you. Accordingly, we should appreciate your advice as to whether the investigation will be continued.

For the U.S. Political Adviser:

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI


Homer M. Byington, Jr.

HMB:cgf

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER'S SECRETARIAT

Date 20 November 1945

To: Chief of Staff

BASOVIZZA Pit

Attached are NAF signal to Combined Chiefs of Staff dated 21st October - TAB A, note by US POLAD dated 23rd October - TAB B, note by Deputy RESMIN dated 25th October - TAB C, note by US POLAD dated 27th October - TAB D, reply by you to US POLAD - TAB E.

A draft of a signal to the Combined Chiefs for despatch in the event that it is decided to terminate the grabbing at the pit is at TAB F.

M. Ivančić: FOJBA LAŽI

J.C.S.

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of pit (700 to 1000 feet) and has tended to break

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Supreme Allied Commander's Secretariat

MIN 4 page 5

C.S.20 Jan 46.BASSOVIZZA Pct.

Attached is a memorandum of a telephone conversation with Admiral Stone last night.

Attached also NAF 1078 and the reply from CC.S. FAN 64

I have the following comment to offer for consideration :-

1. NAF 1078 para 3 summarizes results of the investigation -
2. These could neither be said to prove or to disprove the main allegation of C.L.N.A.I.
3. The S.A.C. was very anxious that no public statement should be made now -
4. A public statement as "authorised" by FAN 643 ^{with that} wording would probably, if it leaked out, lay SAC open to ^{requests for} ~~produce~~ partial proof of C.L.N.A.I. Allegations -

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

The wording in direction (b) was written

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Supreme Allied Commander's Secretariat

II

by SAC himself when he approved the minutes. A leakage of this statement would obviously be less vulnerable. It was my impression at the meeting when he used the words the "results were inconclusive" he had this in his mind.

(a) + (b) are admittedly not so reassuring to the Italians as the wording in FAN 643.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

✓. ✓

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Supreme Allied Commander's Secretariat

20th March, 1946

Subject : Closing of BASSOVIZZA Pit.

Memorandum to : Chief of Staff.

Reference minute 4 of Minutes of the Meeting of the Supreme Allied Commander's Conference held on 16 Mar 46.

I telephoned to Admiral STONE at 1845 B hours yesterday. He will not make any communication to the Italian Government on this subject until he hears further from this Headquarters.

I read to him the proposed directive as amended. His comment on this was that he felt that Directive (a) should read that 'the cessation of investigations at BASSOVIZZA Pit was due to lack of adequate machinery and the physical difficulties involved. Cessation of investigations did not imply that the allegations made by CLNAI had been proved to be without foundation'.

Admiral STONE felt that without adding the actual statement authorised by FAN 643 the whole point of the discussion was inconclusive, and that Directive (c) had little point as he did not consider an announcement that the 'investigations had ceased at BASSOVIZZA Pit due to lack of adequate machinery and the physical difficulties involved' would materially affect the state of tension in VENEZIA GIULIA. Nor should we then have the Italian Governments concurrence to the nonissue of the complete statement authorised by the Combined Chiefs of Staff as stated in FAN 643 which was the reason the discussion had been introduced.

¹²¹⁸
I informed Admiral STONE that I would inform you of his views and that he would be informed as early as possible of the final decision.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

J. G. Currie
D.C. Currie,
Lt. Colonel, G.S.

FILE
SECRET

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

Office of the Chief Commissioner

APO 394

23 March 1946.

1
AIDE MEMOIRE FOR COMMUNICATION TO THE
ITALIAN GOVERNMENT BY THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER
ON THE CESSATION OF INVESTIGATIONS
AT BASSOVIZZA PIT

As you may know, the Commander XIII Corps, under instructions of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, has been for some time conducting investigations in the BASSOVIZZA Pit for the purpose of determining, if possible, the accuracy of allegations that Yugoslavs had murdered Italians and thrown their bodies into the pit. The work has been exceedingly difficult and with the limited machinery available the results so far have been inconclusive. Because adequate machinery was not available for shipment to the pit head, the Combined Chiefs of Staff have authorized the cessation of the investigations.

I am directed, however, to inform you that the cessation of the investigations of the BASSOVIZZA Pit is due solely to the lack of adequate machinery and the physical difficulties involved and that this cessation does not imply that the allegations made by Italian sources have been proved to be without foundation.

It is understood that, for reasons which were discussed yesterday, no public announcement will be made of the foregoing without the prior approval of the Supreme Allied Commander.

M. Ivančič: FOJBA LAŽI

78/ Ellery W. Stone

ELLERY W. STONE
Rear Admiral, USNR
Chief Commissioner

Copy to: Chief of Staff, AFHQ ✓

SAC to Sec, on return

ma
26/3