

GORAN DODIG

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Split July  
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Conversation was recorded; tape is marked by code

*gdodig1*  
**3,32 MB**

Duration 10:24

*gdodig2*

**825 KB**  
Duration 02:31

Interview was conducted in the city of SPLIT, at the Clinical Hospital "Firule"

**The dictaphone is on. I would like to ask you to introduce yourself at the beginning of the session. Please state your name, last name, date and place of birth, your occupation and your whereabouts at the time war started? How did you become involved?**

I am a Doctor of Medicine, my name is Goran Dodig, and I was born in 1947 on the island of Ugljan. At the time the war started I was working at the Clinical Hospital in Split. I was the hospital director from 1990 till the end of 1993. As the war events started to occur and as Medical staff headquarters were assembled across Croatia – so have we established a Medical staff headquarters here. I took over the function of Medical staff chief for North and Middle Dalmatia. These are general information about me, please let me say the following. So, to answer to your question regarding the involvement of Clinical Hospital Split in war affairs and hospital dealing with wounded people, refugees at the time, and sick people at the time, I need to say... To clarify the matter I need to start with the following fact. Firstly, you have to bear in mind that Clinical Hospital Split was under direct power of Ministry of Health. So, it is a state hospital that, in its organizational and any other meaning, has to execute what we know as government politics. So this wasn't a city or a county level hospital but simply... Through this hospital - and several others in Croatia, off course, but through this hospital – government politics were applied at the time, and not only in applying healthcare but in, explicitly, political direction. And we have functioned in that context precisely, even during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Our relation can be substantiated by numerous documents, so the relation of state hospital and employees of this hospital towards the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina – regardless of their nationality – in a medical sense was absolutely the same. In this other sense, that wasn't purely medical and that could be defined as political, we had extremely positive relations since it was the government towards the Muslim entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We can prove this with numerous donations we made to Muslim addresses. And in contacts with people of

Muslim, in other words Bosnian nationality, we can document that we've given them numerous material assets crucial for Bosnian health system to function.

In this context I can show abroad, in one of our small publication, from several \*\*\*, there was a hospital included in it - a letter of thanks from head of the district in Tuzla.

I'm saying this because I can tell you want to see the relationship through the hospital, the relation of the state towards this problem – especially at the time of completely reversed thesis, political ones.

So, we are not questioning only our relation to the wounded people who we treated according to Hippocrates principles, the same way for Croats as for those that were on the side of the Serbs, but there is another dimension here – we helped those people to handle themselves with those problems they had in a functional way.

All of this couldn't be possible if we weren't, not only the director of the hospital but all employees, aware that Croatia and Croatian entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina weren't in war with the Muslims. We saw them as our associates.

These are the basis of what I can tell you on this subject.

This was the concept that had, like, an entirely different dimension than the medical one. We viewed them as people who share the same mission, the same process of liberation – in no way did we see them as people we were in conflict with. All of this was possible due to the atmosphere that was created because our people, the employees here, who at that time, through direct contact with the medical staff and other people who had been to Bosnia and Herzegovina, had a clear, not only impression but also the facts that we were not in war with the Muslims. Even the military commanders, civil \*\*\*, people involved in civil structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina – especially in Herzegovina with who we had a strong contact – we never, not only have we never heard, but we never thought that they would consider Muslim people as their enemies, quite the contrary. That was the assumption in order to create a climate here, so it was possible that the hospital management had a different attitude. But hospital

management can't treat all the wounded people, can't organize all those donations and can't organize the personnel treatment for those wounded ones if hospital employees, nurses or cleaning ladies see them as enemies. Therefore, hospital employees, from the cleaning personnel to the doctors saw those people as their comrades in a certain way.

**This is the question I wanted to ask you...**

Off course, I know what you...

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**I will ask you for additional specific details. Tell me how it was organized, how did this hospital function? So, you went there to pick up the wounded people, you have worked together with a group of fliers (*pilots*), they were transporting the wounded. How did you organize it? Who decided how it's to be done?**

Well, a scheme was made on how it's to be done. Three people, including me, were taking care of the operational part; Marija was especially organizationally exposed, together with M.D. Biočić Mihovil. We established posts where our war hospitals were located or where the war hospitals in Bosnia and Herzegovina that we were supplying were located, all this was done in cooperation with the Croatian Air Force, mainly with helicopters, helicopter department, we always had well organized contacts where people could come, wounded particularly, even refugees and women, people that were sick. Not only wounded people came here, there was also a large number of women that came here to give birth so we have the exact number of baby deliveries that was done, number of children that were cured here... They would gather at a certain agreed time, it would be organized at a certain post in Bosnia and Herzegovina, then an Air Force helicopter would head there, bring them here, where they were processed, there was a team that took care

of them and directed them around the hospital.

**According to my knowledge, we don't have access to those papers so that we can...**

You'll get it, you'll get it, you'll get it all... Don't worry, you'll get what you need, don't worry.

*gdodig2*

**Here, it's turned on. I'm asking you how ...?**

So, to answer to your question, how it was regulated financially, I'm telling you that there was no way. This hospital did all of this because of the relationship we had with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its citizens; our state and this hospital weren't taking account if it is going to be paid and who will pay for it. We have simply experienced all this as an extremely difficult psychological, politically frustrating period, when we had to take care of these problems and not think about the money. We didn't set up any conditions whether this will be paid - and off course, a lot of it was never paid since it wasn't possible to pay for it. I would like to emphasize one fact: we considered that most of these institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina have to become independent so that they can supply most of their medical care, and from the donations we received here, for our needs exclusively, we sent vast amount of these donations to Muslim addresses.

**Is there any data on the addresses where you sent the donations?**

You will get that. In the donations, here I will mention that part as well; there was some money in the donation we sent. The amounts weren't huge but occasionally people would show up and take several thousands Deutsche Marks and say: we want to donate this to the hospital, to the children at risk, and their families.

The hospital functioned in the following way: we would direct the donor, together with the nurse and the doctor, to the infirmary where the wounded or sick people and children would be stationed. The donor would then, without knowing their names or last names, without knowing the person, he would split his amount to, let's say, twenty wounded men, or sick children, and give it to them. Off course, among these children there were Muslims as well.

GORAN DODIG

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