

= Sekula Drljevi? =

Sekula Drljevi? (7 September 1884 ? 10 November 1945) was a Montenegrin politician and lawyer . Born in the town of Kola?in , he earned a doctorate degree in law and became the Minister of Justice and Finance in the Kingdom of Montenegro before the outbreak of World War I. During the interwar period , he was a leading member of the " Greens " (zelena?i) , a Montenegrin separatist movement . A proponent of the theory that Montenegrins were an ethnic group distinct from Serbs , he also founded and became the leader of the Montenegrin Federalist Party .

Following the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia in April 1941 , Drljevi? began cooperating with the Italian authorities occupying Montenegro . In July , he proclaimed the reestablishment of the Kingdom of Montenegro , but his attempt to establish an Axis @-@ aligned puppet state triggered an immediate uprising . That September , Italian authorities sent him to an internment camp in Italy after the outbreak of an anti @-@ fascist revolt . Drljevi? escaped the camp several months later and made his way into the German @-@ held half of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) . In the summer of 1944 , he created the Montenegrin State Council in Zagreb . Drljevi? moved back to Montenegro in 1945 and agreed to the formation of the Montenegrin National Army with Chetnik commander Pavle ?uri?i? . ?uri?i? and several other Chetnik commanders were later ambushed and murdered on behalf of Drljevi? and the NDH . ?uri?i? 's men later joined Drljevi? 's Montenegrin National Army and withdrew with him towards the Austrian border . In mid @-@ 1945 , Drljevi? crossed over into Austria with his wife , and the two ended up in a camp for displaced persons in Judenburg . Three Chetnik agents discovered them there in November 1945 and slit their throats .

= = Early life and political career = =

Sekula Drljevi? was born on 7 September 1884 in the village of Ravno , near the town of Kola?in . Having finished law school in Zagreb and earned a doctorate degree , he became the Minister of Justice and Finance in the Kingdom of Montenegro in 1909 . His brother Janko Drljevi? was at that time an MP from the loyalist True People 's Party . Drljevi? also became an MP , and also served as a minister in King Nikola 's cabinet during the Balkan wars , and was renowned for his rhetorical skills . During World War I , he was captured by Austro @-@ Hungarian forces and interned at the Boldagason internment camp in Hungary , where he grew strongly opposed to the leader of Montenegro , King Nicholas I. He was released after the war and moved to Zemun and worked as a lawyer there . He also became a leading member of the " Greens " (zelena?i) , a Montenegrin separatist movement which sided with the Yugoslav Federalist Party . During this time , he cooperated frequently with Croatian politicians such as Stjepan Radi? , Vlatko Ma?ek , and Ante Paveli? , with whom he became good friends . In the mid @-@ 1920s , Drljevi? founded the Montenegrin Federalist Party . He quickly became the party 's sole leader and foremost theoretician . He expressed support for the unity of Yugoslavia and stressed Montenegro 's loyalty to Serbian nationhood , but argued that a nation did not necessarily need to be part of a single state and hinted that he would support the restoration of Montenegro 's independence . Consequently , the " Greens " demanded that Yugoslavia 's internal boundaries be organized to match the borders of the Balkan states as they were prior to 1918 .

Drljevi? and Mihailo Ivanovi? had first attempted to found the Montenegrin Party for the 1920 election of a Constitutional Assembly , but were unable to do so due to a lack of time and resistance by the authorities . Drljevi? ran unsuccessfully for the Montenegrin Federalist Party in the 1923 elections in both the counties of Nik?i? and Kola?in . He ran again in Kola?in in 1925 and was successfully elected to the National Assembly . In 1927 , Drljevi? was elected representative of the Zemun District on the electoral list of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) . Afterwards , he helped solve a political rift between Radi? and Serb politician Svetozar Pribi?evi? , resulting in the formation of an HSS ? Democratic Party coalition . The following year , Drljevi? unsuccessfully attempted to dissuade Radi? from attending the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs , Croats and Slovenes prior to his assassination by Serb politician Puni?a Ra?i? .

= = World War II = =

= = = Montenegrin leader = = =

On 6 April 1941 , Axis forces invaded Yugoslavia . Montenegro was invaded by the forces of Germany and Italy , with the Germans attacking from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Italians from Albania . The Germans later withdrew , leaving the Italians to occupy the area . In the western portion of Yugoslavia , Pavelić , who had been in exile in Benito Mussolini 's Italy , was appointed Poglavnik (leader) of an Ustaše led Croatian state ? the Independent State of Croatia (often called the NDH , from the Croatian : Nezavisna Država Hrvatska) . The NDH combined almost all of modern day Croatia , all of modern day Bosnia and Herzegovina and parts of modern day Serbia into an " Italian German quasi protectorate " . NDH authorities , led by the Ustaše Militia , subsequently implemented genocidal policies against the Serb , Jewish and Romani population living within the borders of the new state .

The creation of an Axis puppet state known as the Kingdom of Montenegro was proclaimed on 12 July 1941 . The state was to be headed by an Italian regent and led by Đorđević and his supporters . By 13 July , this proclamation prompted the outbreak of an anti Italian uprising in Montenegro led by local communists (Partisans) and Serb nationalists (Chetniks) . Having assumed power the previous day , Đorđević established the Provisional Administrative Committee of Montenegro , a collaborationist entity which was a territorial component of the Italian Empire . He also organized his followers to fight against Montenegrin Chetniks and the Yugoslav Partisans . In September , he was dismissed from office by the Italians . Believing that his life was endangered by the revolt , they sent him to an internment camp in Italy . The idea of an independent Montenegro was abandoned , and the Italians opted for a military governorate . Several months later , Đorđević escaped and smuggled himself into the German controlled area of the NDH . With the surrender of Italy in September 1943 , he moved back to Zemun . Here , he became the administrator of the German run Sajmište concentration camp . In the summer of 1944 Đorđević relocated to Zagreb , where he created a Montenegrin State Council in the NDH with the assistance of the Germans and Croats . He also published a pamphlet in Zagreb titled Who are the Serbs ? (Croatian : Tko su Srbi ?) . In it , he blamed supposedly " aggressive " Serb policies for all past and modern problems in the Balkans , presented ethnic Serbs as a " degenerate race " and pointed out their similarities with Jews . Đorđević had become a proponent of the theory that Montenegrins were an ethnic group distinct from Serbs following the Axis occupation of Yugoslavia . As early as 1921 , he had stated that Serb and Montenegrin " mentalities " were diametrically opposed . He stated : " The mentalities of Serbians and Montenegrins are irreconcilable . The visage of the former was speckled with [Ottoman] slavery ; liberty gave the latter a new visage . " It was not until 1941 that Đorđević advanced the notion that Montenegrins were not Slavs at all , but Dinaric people descended from the ancient Illyrians . He wrote :

Races are communities of blood , whereas people are creatures of history . With their language , the Montenegrin people belong to the Slavic linguistic community . By their blood , however , they belong [to the Dinaric peoples] . According to the contemporary science of European races , [Dinaric] peoples are descended from the Illyrians . Hence , not just the kinship , but the identity of certain cultural forms among the Dinaric peoples , all the way from Albanians to South Tyroleans , who are Germanized Illyrians .

= = = Retreat and death = = =

In the spring of 1945 , Đorđević visited parts of Montenegro held by the Chetniks of Pavle Đurić . It was here that Đurić made a safe conduct agreement with Đorđević and with elements of the Armed Forces of the NDH . Although the details of the agreement are unknown , it appears to have been agreed that Đurić and his men were to move into the NDH and cross the Sava River into Slavonia where they would be aligned with Đorđević as the Montenegrin National Army , with Đurić

retaining operational command . Suspicious of Drljević 's intentions , ?urić tried to outsmart him and his forces by sending only his sick and wounded across the Sava , keeping his fit troops south of the river . Following his defeat at the Battle of Lijevče Field , north of Banja Luka , and the defection of one of his sub @-@ units to Drljević , ?urić was forced to negotiate directly with the leaders of the NDH forces about the further movement of his units towards Slovenia . This appears to have been a trap , as he was attacked and captured by them on his way to the meeting . On 20 April , ?urić , Petar Bačović , Dragiša Vasić and Zaharije Ostojić were taken to the Stara Gradiška prison , near Jasenovac . The Ustaše gathered them in a field alongside 5 @, @ 000 other Chetnik prisoners and arranged for Drljević and his followers to select 150 Chetnik officers and non @-@ combatant intellectuals for execution . ?urić , Bačović , Vasić and Ostojić were amongst those selected . They and the others were loaded onto boats by the Ustaše and taken across the Sava River , where they were killed either in the Jasenovac concentration camp itself or in a nearby marsh . Both the NDH forces and Drljević had reasons for ensnaring ?urić . The NDH forces were motivated by the mass terror committed by ?urić on the Muslim population in Sandžak and southeastern Bosnia while Drljević was opposed to ?urić 's support of a union of Serbia and Montenegro which ran counter to Drljević 's separatism . Left without a leader , the majority of ?urić 's men were integrated into Drljević 's Montenegrin National Army and withdrew with him towards the Austrian border .

In the second half of May , the troops of the Montenegrin National Army surrendered to the British and were quickly turned back into Yugoslavia and into the hands of the communists . Drljević managed to evade capture , and he and his wife sought refuge at a camp for displaced persons in the Austrian town of Judenburg . On 10 November 1945 , three of ?urić 's followers discovered them there and murdered them by slitting their throats .

= = Legacy = =

In 1944 , Drljević rearranged the lyrics of the Montenegrin patriotic song " Oj , svijetla majska zoro " to celebrate the creation of the Montenegrin puppet regime that had been established in July 1941 . He was declared a war criminal at the Nuremberg Trials in 1946 . When " Oj , svijetla majska zoro " was chosen as the national anthem of Montenegro in 2006 with Drljević 's additions intact , many Montenegrin Serbs and unionists protested the selection due to its alleged fascist connotations .

= = Works = =

Borba za carinsku , vojnu i diplomatsku uniju između Crne Gore i Srbije (1914) (A battle for a custom , military and diplomatic union between Montenegro and Serbia)
Centralizam ili federalizam (1926) (Centralism or federalism)
Balkanski sukobi 1905 ? 1941 (1944) (Balkan conflicts 1905 @-@ 1941)
Tko su Srbi ? (1944) (Who are the Serbs)