

War in the Balkans

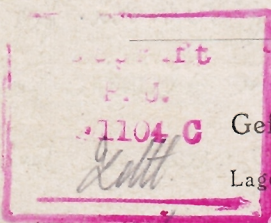
On April 6, 1941, the armed forces of Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria invaded Yugoslavia, and forcibly dismembered the federation, annexing part of the conquered territory to the victorious neighboring Axis countries, and imposing a vassal Ustashe fascist government on Independent Croatia (which incorporated Bosnia and Herzegovina). A German military occupation force governed Serbia. In early July 1941, a popular uprising against the Nazis occurred in Serbia. Communists led by Josip Broz Tito emerged as the leaders as the revolt spread to all parts of Yugoslavia. Tito created a guerrilla fighting force of 200,000 to 300,000 men known as Partisans, which in 1943 engaged twenty German divisions. Despite the harsh conditions of war, Tito's forces provided every assistance to Jews fleeing the Nazis. The Partisans liberated Belgrade on October 20, 1944.

A September 19, 1944, return portion of a prisoner-of-war lettersheet from Zagreb, Croatia, to a Croatian POW at a Nazi forced labor camp in Norway, censored upon arrival.

Kriegsgefangenenpost
Rückantwortbrief



An den Kriegsgefangenen Josip Mlatinec

 Gefangenenummer: 1048/303.

Lager-Bezeichnung: **Feldpost-Nr. 01 104 C**

Gebührenfrei Deutschland (Allemagne)

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