

# KRSTA NOVAKOVIC

Krsta (1899-1973) was the eldest son of Ljubica and Novak Novakovic, a merchant of imported crystal and fine utensils, and brother of Jevrem (priest, father of humorist Novak Novak, journalist, screenwriter of the famous TV series Theater in the House), Kosta, Smilja, Ruzana and Zorka. He finished elementary school and high school in Krusevac and the Faculty of Pharmacy in Zagreb, and then went to Vienna where he attended various vocational courses and learned German. After graduating in 1925, he returned to Krusevac and opened his pharmacy.



Krsta Novakovic

He began politics in 1928 by joining the Radical Party.



Krsta Novakovic Pharmacy, today's Top Tavern

His first turnout was successful and he became the Mayor in 1931 until 1936, then he was elected two more times, in 1941-42 and 1942-43, in the most difficult and dramatic years of our history.

In two terms, he was elected, with the most votes, as a deputy in the Assembly of Yugoslavia.



After the capitulation of Yugoslavia in 1941. and the introduction of the German military administration in Serbia, like all other prominent people, he was arrested and imprisoned in the District command building. The confidential report of the delegates of the Commissariat for Internal Affairs states: "Krsta, as the most respected person from Krusevac, should be engaged. Since he refused, he should be forced to cooperate "(report in the Krusevac Archive). After consultation with the detained fellow citizens, he accepted the offered position and become Mayor (district commandant was a professor at the University of Freiburg who lived in his house. This contact later allowed him to positively influence events, but for the court of the new communist government that was the irrefutable evidence of cooperation with the occupier).

He succeeded to get rid of that function very quickly, complaining about his poor health, but remained active as chairman of the Refugee Housing Committee, organizing and sending packages to our captive people in Germany, managing to help the Partisans and more and more Jews in Krusevac. It was remembered that, as Mayor, he managed to prevent the recurrence of Kragujevac in October (a massacre committed by Nazi Germany units on 19, 20 and 21 October 1941 over the civilian population of Kragujevac and surrounding villages, when about 3,000 people were killed, of which 300 Kragujevac students and 15 children between the ages of 8 and 15) after one partisan

action in which about ten Germans were killed. In Slobodiste 76 Roma were shot dead. Several hundred more hostages were rescued by Krsta, he was begging, promising that it would not happen again and finally kneeling.

He also managed to rescue the only Krusevac Jewish family of widow Rebeka Tajtacak. The street where Rebeka lived with her four children and where she kept a boarding school for students from the surrounding villages is today called Rebeka's street.

With the departure of the Germans in October 1944 and the entry of the Partisans in Krusevac, the attack on more prominent people in the city began. One of the first to be shot was Krsto Novakovic's brother, priest Jevrem Novakovic, without trial and proved guiltless. Krsta was soon surrendered to OZNA.

His trial was held in Krusevac on June 5, 1946. In the already established scenario, in addition to the judges and lawyers, there were also "people" in the courtroom, who were occasionally shouting "Death to the traitor". The testimony of a group of citizens who had been rescued from Bagdala after the death of a group of Germans in 1941 didn't help, nor the statements of peasants and warlords that Krsta had saved from prison, not even the statement of Rebeka Tatjacak. The court declared him a national enemy and the first verdict was death by shooting. On appeal, the first verdict turned into a pardon, and that pardon implied a 20-year sentence. After serving a sentence of 12 and a half years, he returned to his family in Belgrade. He was forbidden to return to Krusevac.

After leaving the prison he worked as a representative of Zagreb's Pliva for Serbia.

Krsta Novakovic died in Belgrade in 1973 and he was buried in the New Cemetery. At that funeral, former Serbian Patriarch German with 15 priests did service. Several thousand people attended the funeral.

Krsta Novakovic has two children, a son, Bratislav Novakovic, who is a lawyer and lives in Belgrade and a daughter Ljubica, married Kacanski.





In 2003, the Jewish organization "Yad Vashem", posthumously, honored Krsto Novakovic and three other most deserving citizens for saving the Tajtacak family, declaring them "Righteous among the Nations." The acknowledgment was received on 4 November 2003 by his son and daughter from Israel's ambassador in Belgrade Yaffa Ben-Ari.