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The Intruder

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SWITZERLAND WITHOUT AN ARMY

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The Photo on the Cover Page by Jože Suhadolnik ©

This

is the last issue

of the intruder.

More than that:

in September,

we dissolved

ourselves as

the Ljubljana

Peace Group.

This is the end

of a long story.

Our peace group came into existence a decade ago. From the beginning it was intimately connected to the democratization process in Slovenia and played an important role in it. The democratization in our country was initiated by the new social movements among whom the peace movement was, for some years, the most articulated and publicly exposed. In tandem with environmentalists, gays, feminists, youth subcultures, human rights groups and other civic initiatives that emerged in the mid-eighties, we started gradually to create a democratic civil society and a new political culture.

The other aim of our activity, as a part of this civil society, was to establish a pluralist political society and a legitimate and accountable state, a state respecting and guaranteeing human rights, and bound by law. All this was effected, sometimes in unpredicted ways and often falling short of ideal solutions. As result of the achievements of the democratization process in the eighties, the fall of the communist rule in Slovenia was not a shock but a rather smooth transition. Our activity contributed to such a favourable development.

As a peace movement, we not only struggled for general democratic aims. This is not how it worked. One of the differences between the struggle for democracy in Slovenia and the other Central East European countries was that, in Slovenia, we lacked a general democratic movement, a sort of democratic headquarters, which would then pay attention to particular issues and concerns; we did not deduce our movements and initiatives from a general idea of democracy. On the contrary, it was a plurality of struggles for a number of concrete, everyday, particular, specific issues and concerns which construed the general democratic interest.

As a peace movement, our main concern was to create a culture of peace and nonviolence. First of all, we had to rehabilitate the idea of peace, for "peace" was, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, a word abused by the official ideology. More specifically, we ran lectures and »

discussions, held stalls, wrote petitions, protests and statements, campaigned against war toys, organized workshops for children, demonstrated against the last parade of the Yugoslav People's Army and against the Yugoslav arms trade. The action which attracted most attention, official fury and public support, was our campaign for the recognition of the right to conscientious objection and for the introduction of an alternative to military service. We questioned, without even intending to be radical, the central and most sacred institution of the Yugoslav old regime, the People's Army, which precisely in 1985 began to effectively take over control of power in Yugoslavia. In reply to the Army's most unreasonable reaction, we focused more and more on the problems of militarization and demilitarization of society. Together with feminists, we opposed the plan to extend military service to women. When a show military trial was staged in Ljubljana, in the Summer of 1988, which was understood as an attempt to crush the democratization movement in Slovenia, we helped to organize a successful social resistance which gave the impetus to the transition to a democratic system.

From the beginning of our activity, we participated in the international peace movement. We established contacts with peace groups in the Alpe-Adria region; our representatives were sent to END conventions and we involved ourselves in the European Network for East-West Dialogue. We took advantage of being able to travel freely to Eastern Europe and, in the mid-eighties, started to work on an East-East peace dialogue. Our representatives took part in the "historic" seminars in Warsaw, Budapest and Prague. In this networking, we insisted on the link between peace and human rights and stressed the importance of the creation of a democratic civil society for any lasting and meaningful peace. This of course is history now.

The continuing war in former Yugoslavia has changed our lives. None of us has the illusion that it is possible to continue to work in the ways we used to work. This would not be logical any more. The situation in Slovenia has changed. Many of the aims of our movement have been achieved. However, those forms of action which we developed under communism are of little use today. One cycle of the new social movements has definitively come to an end. Our attempt to get a representative of the social movements elected to the new Parliament

failed. The popularity of the project to demilitarize Slovenia suffered a set back after the short war of independence in Summer 1991. What seemed to have been within reach before the Yugoslav military intervention, can now only be sustained as our long term goal. With the influx of refugees first from Croatia and now from Bosnia, the greater part of nongovernmental social activity has shifted. Its principal aim now is to provide help and support for the refugees. The events in Croatia and Bosnia have had a profound impact on us. The war by far exceeds our worst expectations of what could happen and the boldest imagination of what is possible in human society. However, as horrifying as the war is, for us as a peace movement, an even more shocking thing was the reaction of the international peace movement to it. A couple of exceptions aside, it failed completely. It failed first to recognize and acknowledge the danger of war in Yugoslavia and then to do anything within its power to avert it. We feel all the more bitter about this as we, from the Spring of 1988 on, toured Europe trying to explain what was going on in Yugoslavia and sending warnings, but nobody listened.

When war finally broke out, it was in the nature of things that the peace movement could not do much to stop it. Yet there was, in those years, much hectic activity. While old networks started to dissolve, their remnants continued to be active and some of them formed new organizations. We are afraid that all the work has not brought about much good. We must say that we are concerned that some of these international organizations lack a democratic basis; we question their right to present themselves as representative of international civil society; and we are deeply concerned at what appears to be an inappropriate and wasteful use of resources on actions and conferences that do little to challenge the fundamental basis of this war or relieve humanitarian suffering, but rather generate confusion and misunderstanding, nationally and internationally.

We are convinced that the real problem lies with the ideas that determine the framework of much of Western peace activity. We have begun to be more and more concerned with the insufficiencies of the ideas and ideals, of the conceptual basis of the Cold War peace movement (which are, again, imbedded in the Western peace tradition.) They seem to be conducive to a blind and blinding activism that engulfs us in almost as da-

maging ways as the war. We have resolved not to participate in such an activism any more. We have decided to seriously think through the war and to rethink the ideas and concepts on which our peace movement was based, and the international peace movement of which we were a part. In our view, this is a necessary condition on which alone it may be possible in the future to formulate new strategies for peace. We are not abettors of the idea of "starting anew" for its own sake. New things are not necessarily better than those they have succeeded or replaced. We are convinced, however, that it is time to part with ways which lead nowhere. Just because of the horrors of this war we feel that what is needed is clear thinking and analysis, not the unthinking continuance of a "knee jerk" activist response.

That is why the decision to dissolve our peace movement was complemented by the decision to continue to work as the Ljubljana Peace Institute. Our hope is that in the years to come a network of people will be created who recognize the need to rethink and reevaluate the Western traditions of peace thought and action, and to search for ways in which peace and nonviolence could be conceived of and asserted in the 'new world order.' These are the people we would like to work with.

Ljubljana, October 1, 1992

AN EUROPEAN DREAM BOSNIAN NIGHTMARE

By Tomaž Mastnak

When the Yugoslav People's Army intervened in Slovenia and the war broke out in Croatia, I still tried to understand the attitude of the West towards what was happening here as one of, basically, "honest stupidity." Yet the slaughter in Bosnia has lifted the veil and these words of a great English writer proved to be inapplicable. Undo-ubtedly, there is much stupidity involved on the part of the West, but no honesty. And I do not mean this in moral terms solely. The dishonesty I particularly have in mind is intellectual. The whole in-tellectual endeavour of Western governments and NGOs alike, with very few exceptions, was, and continues to be, a struggle to uphold their racist prejudices, ideological dogmas, selective political blindness and cosmopolitan parochialism, and to cultivate an intense "psychic numbing." All this made it possible for them not to act in any way which might have stopped the killing and destruction.

A customary illusion has been that the West does not have sufficient, or reliable enough, information about the events in ex-Yugoslavia. Yet all the information needed to comprehend the situation clearly (and possibly act differently) have been, and still are, easily available. The Westerners do not want to take note of them and many are not published by their media (and still others, like reports on the Serbian concentration camps, happened to be hidden in drawers of pro-Serbian high UN officials - of European origin, I guess.) The Westerners have struggled heroically to remain ignorant. With brilliancy to be admired they have refused to know. It is, of course, true that at the "end of history" every democrat has the right to freely chose such an attitude, and Westerners are powerful enough to be ignorant. Their power stands for knowledge. This power is all that counts and to preserve it is all that

matters. Any different view of the slaughter in Bosnia would necessarily either presuppose, or result in, a change of outlook on the part of the West. Any different understanding of what is going on in Bosnia would imply a questioning of the West itself, would call into question its innermost identity.

Two things, more than anything else, determine the behaviour of the West in the Bosnian war. One is fascism and the other Islam. Fascism.

The West has never been able to effectively confront fascism. In World War II, at a very late stage, it defeated it militarily. Yet it has never deconstructed and destroyed fascism symbolically. This is why fascism continues to exist in the West, lingering in its petty and humble forms in everyday life or making more dramatic appearances in election campaigns, public demonstrations and street violence. Faced with Serbian fascism, the West seems to be paralyzed. Reasoning, if there is any, is used to deny that the power which had designed this war, imposed it (so far) on Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, and is carrying it out as a war of extermination, is a fascist power. There is a refusal to recognize this. The cant about Serbian "communism" and "bolshivism" is much more comfortable. This cant is a real consolation, for we know that communism has historically collapsed and is bound to die off in Serbia, too. The mission of those in the West who flatter themselves that they think about what is happening in Yugoslavia (this notion has not been given up) appears to be to suppress the specificity of Serbian rule.

The light of their reason is creating the night in which all cows are black. It is consolatory to righteously distribute the blame for the war among all the parties involved. A special intellectual achievement is to convincingly blame the victim. However, as the idea of equal justice has

its limits, one has not only to distribute, but to displace, the blame and detect fascism not in Serbia but in Croatia and, possibly, Slovenia. And so the just and powerful are looking for shivers in Slovene, Croatian and Bosnian eyes in order not to see the beam in the Serbian - and not to realize that they themselves are blind.

Croatian fascism is a child of serb and grandchild of european Everything has been done not to confront Serbian fascism as fascism. Consequently, Serbia has not been really confronted at all. For Britain who now has the lead in Europe, Chamberlain & Halifax and their peace-making with Hitler seem to have become a customary law. As for Chamberlain, to find a just modus vivendi with fascism appears to be the leading idea of European policy towards "Yugoslavia." And as Chamberlain could declare that he had "a clear conscience," so will his heirs today for they have done all that European countries could do to establish peace. Indeed, they have taken some measures to appease the conscience of the public in their home countries, and they have not taken any measures which might have been a threat to the establishment of peace - with Serbian fascism. As seen from the inside of the parts of ex-Yugoslavia which are not dominated by the Serbs, the West has, so far and de facto, acted as a society for the promotion of fascism.

Not only is the West as far as ever from the symbolic destruction of fascism: it now even lacks the will to defeat it militarily. This may become one of the messages of the "Yugoslav War:" fascists only have to make war and theirs will be kingdoms on earth.

The Making of Muslims

One reason for not confronting Serbian fascism is that any confrontation with it on the side of the West would necessar-

ily require the confrontation with the fascism in the West, and with the fascism of the West. The other reason for not confronting Serbia effectively is that Serbia is fighting an European war, to be precise: the European war. Since Europe existed as a self-conscious entity, war against muslims has been its permanent concern and obsession. Europe has never been able to construct its identity autonomously, positively, relying on, and referring to, its own powers and potentials. It could only form its identity in opposition to an external enemy, and it could only exercise its powers and develop its potentials against such an enemy. Moreover, whenever Europe searched for unity, whenever it tried to "integrate," it needed a war on its margins, a war against the enemies of Christianity, culture and civilization. Muslims are the Inbergriff for the enemies that Europe kept inventing in order to be able to be Europe. Muslims represent the symbolic enemy of Europe, the Other whom Europe has only known to destroy. The most enlightened and liberal European minds dreamt about "chasing muslims out of Europe" ("et mme de l'Asie et de l'Afrique," as the meek abbe de Saint-Pierre was inclined to add.) This dream is still very much at work in the European unconscious.

Serbian fascists are fulfilling the European dream. If the dream is too dreadful for Europeans to live it themselves, it is nevertheless their dream. If it is coming true with the help of Serbian fascists, this only gives to Europeans a double pleasure: the pleasure of the fulfillment of the dream and the pleasure of not having the blood on their own hands. They have the pleasure of realizing their barbarity and, in the face of it, preserving their civility. While their wildest political imagination is set on work, they can at the same time sustain the position of horrified critics of this wild life. Their racism can, in this way, take a sublime and respectful turn: they condemn the wild Balkan tribes. However, no condemnation has yet been strong enough to cut off the communication with the leaders of Serbian fascism. The role given to the Serbian Führer in Bosnia, Karadjic, is symptomatic. Whatever happens on the ground there, Karadjic is asked by Western media to give a statement or make a comment. And yet I am not surprised that this war criminal has been given the publicity which far exceeds the one given to the legal Bosnian government. He is speaking out precisely what the West desires to hear. He is not so much the spokesperson of the rebel Bosnian Serbs as the spokesman of the European unconscious, the herald of the European truth. The fact that this warmonger is a psychiatrist equips him well for the role he is destined to play: he is the Führer, not because peo-

ple in Bosnia have gone mad, they have not, but because he is clever enough to successfully make fools of Western leaders and much of the public. He cannot be reproached with neglecting his clients while making war for he has made the West his client. However, the impression that it is Serbian fascists who are carrying out all the dirty business for Europeans while these are standing passively by the side, would be misleading. It was Western politicians and media who made "muslims" out of Bosnians. First of all, the European Community invented the "cantonisation" of Bosnia and Herzegovina and imposed it as the solution on the legal and legitimate government. The European political elite instituted the ethnic division of the country as the leading principle and thereby authorized the Serbian war against Bosnia. Up until very recently, the EC had been offering, as the peaceful solution, the very same model that Serbian military and paramilitary have been putting in practice by a genocidal war. Serbian fascists have at least been honest and clear about what they have been doing, and continue to do, while Europeans talked peace and Croatian extremists were sneakingly taking for themselves the part of Bosnia and Herzegovine they were offered by the West. As soon as Bosnia and Herzegovina was ethnically divided by the Western diplomats whose alleged aim it was to prevent "ethnic war," the legal government was, for them and by them, dissolved. They treated Bosnian Croats who were represented by that government, and active in it, as a separate entity. In this way, the government could be declared a muslim government, for Serbian warmongers had previously withdrawn from it. (After they had lost the political battle they decided to fight the legal authorities by terrorism and war.) The Bosnian government was thus, by the West, made a non-government and a mere representative of Bosnian muslims. The elected government was set on equal footing with the self-styled Croatian leaders, and both with Serbian terrorists and war criminals. Instead of treating the latter as outlaws, the West started to treat the government as a "warring faction."

Again, the plans of Western diplomacy and Serbian fascists coincided. The former were destroying the legal government ideally, in their heads, the latter materially, on the ground, both treating it as a warring ethnicity: as warring muslims. No serious attempt was made in the West to explain that Bosnian muslims are all but islamic fundamentalists; that Bosnian society was a largely secularized society; that Bosnian towns which are falling victim to the urbocidal Serbian mob were historical centres of cultural pluralism and tolerance. On the

contrary, what was generated by the joined European and Serbian political forces and by the Goebbelsian Belgrade media and "objective" Western journalism alike, was precisely the image of the warring muslim, this original fear, the Urangst, of the Christian, cultured and civilized West.

The New World Order

The two moments: the inability of the West to fight fascism, and its inability to cease fighting the imaginary muslim enemy, may help to explain the nature of the war in Bosnia and of the Western reluctance, or rather refusal, to stop it. Apparently, the war contradicts the central values and achievements of the Western civilization (and European integration.)

Serbs who fight this war - from the leading Belgrade intellectuals who designed it, to the political power elite which adopted the design, the people who support it, the military establishment who executes it, and the brigands who do the slaughter - are hostes humani generis, the enemies of humankind. It is not only that they have chosen not to resolve disagreements and conflicts by civil and political means but rather resorted to war. They have, moreover, trespassed everything which has since the early modern times been declared the "laws of war." There seems to be no war crime known from history which has not been committed in this war, and new ones have been added to the list. This is not a war properly speaking, it is an unbounded killing, plunder, torture and destruction.

("Latrones bellum non gerunt!") This is a war which tears apart the very fabric of the international order. This is a war which purposefully and systematically annihilates culture and civilization themselves. And yet, the engineers of the war are regarded as, basically, equal members of the international community, and they are held in higher esteem than their victims. Most respectable Western diplomats keep shaking the hands of men who have already been identified as war criminals, thereby soiling their own hands with blood. There are two alternatives: either the West has lost the capacity to make peace and war, or it is complicit with the ideas and action of Belgrade based fascism. As the West has recently demonstrated that it is able to make war, the latter possibility is more likely to be true. If this is so, the war in Bosnia does not contradict the world order shaped by the West, but actually contributes to the creation of the "new world order." Serbian fascists are the architects of our common future, and the new Europe is based on genocide and destruction. ■



Photo by Jože Suhadolnik ©

THE SO CALLED "INTERVENTION IN BOSNIA", OR "MILOŠEVIĆISM" ON THE LEFT AND ON THE RIGHT

By Tonči Kuzmanić¹

In the eyes of international observers, specially those who affirm to be seriously interested in the future fate of this part of the world, which used to be called Yugoslavia, the question of Bosnia arises only as a question of the so called intervention. It seems that different subjects break a lance for the intervention and Bosnia and its inhabitants remain in the role of "non-existing" subjects or, even better, in the role of "experimental rabbits", on which the operation of the intervention should be exercised or not.

Nationalism, Fascism, ... Cubism

However, the arguments of the pro and contra intervention sides are well known, so my intention is only to show a small part of the background to the present situation which is, in my opinion, the result of the relatively long pro-cess of Yugoslav disintegration. In this regard at the very beginning I would like to put four basic points:

1. Quite uniform, almost worldwide (American, Soviet, left, right...) the dominant standpoint from the very beginning was that the status quo and Yugoslav statehood should be preserved. It is, of course, selfunderstandable that, also in politics, inertia in a way use to play a sort of the "basic law of gravitation". But quite surprisingly was the fact that approach to the conservation of the previous Yugoslav state was so strongly emphasised that during last year very often one could hear statements such as: "Yugoslavia should be preserved at any cost"! Exactly from that "analytical" starting point all other, more or less, simplistic views that I am going to put in a form of short chronological way, can be taken.

2. First, there was "The Slovenian case". In accordance with the already mentioned

presumption that the status quo should be preserved in Yugoslavia (more precisely, that Yugoslav territorial integrity must be preserved), the general understanding of the Slovenian situation can be approximately described as: There is nationalism with the light elements of fascism in Slovenia. From the state-forming standpoint it is, in fact, the classical case of separatism. Slovenians, who identified themselves with their state (all Slovenes were identified as nationalists, the Slovenian regime has become the same as the Slovene state as such...), were told by the international observers, that they should examine all the possible consequences of their secession from Yugoslavia, since several forces, led by the Yugoslav Peoples Army, promised to defend Yugoslav statehood. In that sense it was said to Slovenes: "If you want to dance with the devil, you will have that dance, but you will dance alone!"

3. In the second, "Croatian case", the diagnosis of the observers was quite similar, but simultaneously reversed at the very decisive point: it is the case of fascism (regime, Croats, and Croatia under Tudjman became the same!), which can be hardly hidden behind the "nationalistic rebirth" cover. In this regard, Croats desire to be bitten by the Army since it is at the same time the defence of the Europe and World against fascism.

4. In the, for now, last case-Bosnia (if we do not count Albanians in Kosovo, Muslims from Sandjak and other Non-Serbs in Vojvodina, Montenegro...), the worst possible combination happened. First, there was the nationalistic: Slovene element" in the form of still "not-fascist" Croats, "non-extremist" Serbs and "honest" Muslims. Then, secondly, other subjects appeared: different fascist organizations and groups, like Paraga's HOS, Šešelj or Arkan's groups,... and, finally, the Muslim mudjahedins. What follows is the commu-

nist army of the last communist Milošević. Last but not least, Turks and Islam play another specific and actually the most important, role. Exactly "the Islamic danger" took a decisive matrix of "thinking". Namely, it was that element which gave to all prior elements (nationalism, fascism, communism ...) a certain ideological sense in the meaning that all of them together started to play a quite known "historical" (racist) role, which can be in its ideological and historical potentials understood only in the terms of European traumatic history.

European "Bosnian Bestial Games"

The "world meditation" around the Bosnian picture is still going on. In this picture all the bogeymen of Europe, America, the old and the new world ... , are finally boiling in the same, hellish Bosnian pot. Here, in this bestial game, all animals are caught: Nationalisms, Fascisms, Communisms, Fundamentalisms, Islamism, and the "Turkish danger" are presenting again... In other words, why not leave them all in the boiling pot, and all these infernal seed would be finally boiled and destroyed for ever. What could be more useful that to leave all of them, to allow selforganization of their self-killing, to destroy their "evil seed"? It seems, in short, that America and Europe have finally got a splendid opportunity to get rid of all Evils from their common historical past.

Milošević's Perspective of Democracy?

From the short sketch of the dominant matrix of understanding of existing situation in Bosnia, a slightly cautious reader could make a quite simplified and wrong conclusion. Namely, that all these pictures and interpretations comes from the "western world", from the side which, by definition, could not understand the "real problems"

of the Balkans. But that sort of conclusion could be a wrong one. Why? There is no serious doubt that Milošević is one of the essential ingredient of the Bosnian boiling pot but nevertheless, his policy and totalitarianism can be taken as the basis from which comes any of the mentioned ideas about ex-Yugoslavia already referred to.

ad. 1. Is it not the case that "nationalism with light elements of fascism" which is primary a cover for "secession from the sovereign state in the Slovenian case", is taken exactly from Milošević's ideological arsenal and repeated by Europeans, Americans ...? Namely, speaking within the European language, it was the same movement for secession in Slovenia as in the Basque country, Ireland, Scotland, North Italy and Corsica. And, it is, of course, legitimate to stop such separatisms, even by force, is it not? In this sense Milošević is implicitly doing a good thing, perhaps solely with a some "little exaggeration".

ad. 2. Do not they, both - Milošević and "the West" - see Croatia as a fascist state, which tries to hide itself behind the cover of legitimate nationalism? So, then is it not right and legitimate to bomb, destroy, occupy and abolish fascism? And, finally, who invented a slogan that Croats are by their blood and genes fascists, if not Milošević?

ad. 3. Further, where did an idea about "Bosnian Vietnam" or "Afghanistan", which could happen after the intervention in Bosnia to American or European soldiers, come from if not from Milošević's and Karadžić? Was not Bosnian soil in this context marked as Milošević's "hunting territory"? What could be drawn from the whole picture at the end? At least one conclusion. Most of the "Western" manner of thinking (official or oppositional, right or left) about Bosnia was in fact produced in Eastern Europe, more precisely, in Serbia itself.

Bush-the Leftist and the Pacifist

To put in a language of "symbols" one could also underline that president Bush has for more than one year been Milošević's spokesman and Lautsprecher of his post-imperial policy. This is not such a surprise for many of those, who are dealing with such issues. It is much more surprising that the so called "European left" and "European peace movements" see also in President Bush as their Lautsprecher and "order-giver" at the same time. But how does one sustain that argument?

I will not speak about Yugoslavia and its disintegration as a basic problem since it is clear that the traditional left simply can not accept it as such. Yugoslavia just functioned as the last left European utopia, and it looks like that it is very hard for the so called left to survive without any serious help from a "concrete utopia". Defending their own "concrete utopia" (Yugoslavia as idea and possibility of freedom but first of all as a compact territory), both, the left and those on the peace scene therefore helped to create an argumentation in the Slovenian case for Milošević's policies. It was even worse in Croatia. Namely, the defence against fascism and nationalism was quite "obvious" in the Croatian situation. In regard to Bosnia all analyses of the left or of the peace tradition were anyway identical with Bush's arguments, including the ideology of Non-interventionism in that region!

War is Peace

Is there any common point in these almost unified ideas and views on Bosnia, which can be recognized between so diverse elements or subjects: Miloševićism, Bush's policy, UN and EC actions to the great extent and on the so called European left and European Peace-makers? Space dictates that a relatively simplistic answer has to be furnished. It is such a point, which can be named WAR. The core point of all "observers" is namely the fact that they do not dare to combine two words: YUGOSLAVIA and WAR. They rather speak about conflicts, fights, ethnically cleaned territories ... And when it comes to the point, under the pressure of everyday's facts, and they are forced to admit that a war is going on, they add immediately that "it is not a true war". For this at least two reasons can be given. The first one is taken from the historically determined vision of the war as a frontal one and the second one was produced after the "skirmish" war in Slovenia, when it became clear that it was rather a skirmish than a true war.

However, all these findings do not mean a lot to Bosnian people, who are playing the horifing role of the object of genocide. The Serbs who make up around 30% of the Bosnian population now occupy more than 70% of the territory of the internationally recognized sovereign state! Serbia with its serfs in Bosnia, has at the moment its eastern border less than four kilometers from Sarajevo, not to mention even many of the zones or "Krajinas", placed little more than ten kilometers from Zagreb. From the data, available at the moment we can draw a conclusion, that for each wounded or killed Serb, there are ten Muslim or Croat casul-

ties (mostly civilians), not to speak about refugees, almost all of them Muslims.

The World Turned Upside Down

How it is possible to accept all these horrific things, happening in Bosnia, including concentration camps, which no doubt remain us of the Hitler era? Probably quite easily with the slogans as: Peace, Brotherhood, Coexistence, One State, Yugoslavia, and so called non-intervention. All observers have the same view, namely that intervention would produce war in Bosnia! For them it seems that in Goražde, Tuzla, Zenica, Sarajevo, Kakanj, Tešanj, Mostar, Vlasenica, Višegrad, Jajce ... at the moment Peace exists.

It is therefore not the question and the state of (Non)Intervention but the state of the genocide over the Bosnian people. Discussion about intervention is only a good cover or excuse which seems to mobilize only the left and the peace movements. In reality it is clear to every-body that such sterile discussions only help to remove all traces of blood in Bosnian total destruction. If we are allowed to judge things, that happened until now, it seems quite possible that Intervention will eventually occur, but that will only happen when it becomes clear that the Bosnians are able to take the initiative in their liberation war against the aggressor. A clear need will be born, namely that they should be buried and abolished finally and completely.

In that sense, the situation will remain the same for the Bosnian people. As Non-Intervention at the moment means damnation for them (international prohibition to sell weapons to Bosnia is, of course, an intervention par excellence and it has existed from the very beginning of the conflict) since they have no means to defend themselves. The ultimate coming of it (Intervention) will mean the same - the final destruction of Bosnia. Why? The answer is simple, although it is not easy to understand it. Such Intervention would be directed against Bosnians because they will be finally able in the not too distant future to fight, defend and liberate themselves.

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THE GREAT FIASCO OF "WESTERN" PEACE THOUGHT "THINK LOCALLY, ACT GLOBALLY"

By Marko Hren

In this paper I want to argue the following:

1- the principles of sovereignty of states and inviolability of borders must not only seriously be challenged but should be observed as potentially the main bias which contributes largely to conflicts, wars and human suffering.

2- in the analysis of the Yugoslav crisis, we seldom find an analysis of military power. Military industry and military institution are main causes of the war itself. Without taking military power - a core institution of a "sovereign" state - seriously in consideration we can not approach any discussion about more peaceful world order. The discourse of nationalisms and national interests in the case of Yugoslavia is not sufficient and is even misleading. The lack of anti-militaristic type of analysis contributed largely to the failor of international diplomacy in Balkans. Yugoslav Army was a 7th republic of Yugoslavia. A power on its own and a main actor in all Yugoslav wars.

3- western civilization and "Western peace thought" have to be reconsidered. Europe has to admit that it is not and should not play a leading role in human civilization. Imperialism, military industrial complexes, exploitation, racism, ecological destruction - the main problems of humanity are all children of this very western civilization which pretends to be enlightened and progressive. The 500 years celebration of Columbus, the most perverse wars in southern Europe, growth of racism and apathy concerning the hunger in Somalia are enough reasons to rethink western civilization.

The conclusions that could challenge the minds of the reader would be:

Ad. 1. The international law should be based on the principle of sovereignty

(protecting states) only and only until the very sovereign state respects human rights. When human rights are violated, international community should protect the sovereignty of the people.

Ad. 2. The drastic demilitarization, abolition of national armies, conversion of military industries and international control over national armies should be most seriously put on the agenda.

Ad. 3. Western civilization has to bow before Islamic, Arabic, American - indigenous, African, far-eastern etc. civilizations in order to be able to learn, share, tolerate and cooperate beyond the imperial attitude of "help" and "teach".

No Comment

"We have probably reached a stage in the ethical and psychological evolution of Western civilization in which the massive and deliberate violations of human rights will no longer be tolerated". This is what at-that-time UN Secretary General Pérez de Cuellar declared only few months before "intolerable" manifested on the crossroad between Bruxelles, Rome, Vienna, Budapest and Athens ... And when "intolerable" already happened, the very same Secretary General declared "I have no comment", when asked about events in former Yugoslavia in August 1991.

"No comment - this is an inner-Yugoslav problem" was a general view during pre-destruction period of Yugoslavia. Yet, there are observers who would vichemently announce that the recognition of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia successively led to destruction and wars. They are particularly waried about the role of Germany in this process. It could be argued the contrary - the absence of

the recognition of the right for self-determination triggered wars in Slovenia and Croatia (the case of Bosnia is different for many reasons, since a lot of it has to do with the moment of inertia after the war spread over Croatia and the YA had to "escape" to Bosnia). Today, the principle is challenged on the case of Kosovo - an inner affair of Serbia, or a possible trigger for Balkan wars. The secret principle of state sovereignty has ruled over human rights in the illuminated Western political thought. The attitudes of ignorance and biased support of The Yugoslav State by all international bodies were without doubt amongst key elements leading to wars in former Yugoslavia. When Mr. Egelburger, the author of US policy towards Yugoslavia has recently declared that he "was misled by Belgrade politicians" such confession seems real and honest but yet it tries to mislead a naive reader. Mr. Egelburger was not mislead (confessing would mean that he is not mislead any more). Mr. Egelburger was led very well by the interests of his own and of his state. The principal interest of US and Europe was to keep stability in Balkans. Mr. Marković - a former Yu-prime minister - was offering stability and gradual reform. Mr. Marković was given full trust and support - and all other political options were ignored. When the federal army under the auspices of federal government acted in Slovenia (June 1991) the chain reaction of the involvement of military started. Today the story of "misleading" repeats. Belgrade regime and the associated armies involved in Bosnia and Hercegovina had won additional time to perform in peace their scenarios of ethnic cleansing, just because all hopes are invested into Mr. Panić, a new prime minister of new federal Yugoslavia.

International law grants a right for Self determination for all nations, renounces genocide and apartheid and brings clear standards for human rights. Yet, people in former Yugoslavia suffered denial of the right of self-determination, suffer genocide, suffer apartheid, suffer violations of human rights on largest scale possible. Slovenes were left alone during desperate negotiations with federal government in Spring 1991, Bosnians - the most innocent ones - found locked in genocide and are even deprived the right to defend themselves, Albanians are told today, that nobody would support "sovereignty option". Too often, Western observers - and peace-politicians and peace activists - are locked in neutral stand, deriving from theories of conflict resolution which are supposed to exclude "taking sides". Too often Western observers get self-satisfaction accepting the thesis of "civil war", inter-tribal, inter-ethnic, internationalists warfare. Too often the same people find themselves more concerned about Germany playing a leading role (recognizing republics) then about Belgrade regime performing most terrible crimes. Too often even antimilitarists fail to understand that the most real and most simple-to-describe is the unequal confrontation between militarists (totalitarians, generals, madman, criminals from all over the world, war profiter's etc.) and powerless people. Finally the fiction of inter-ethnic and inter-religious warfare will become true - after a drill will prove successful - and the real responsible will be hidden away.

While the international law on war crimes is clear, while war crimes have widely been proven in Slovenia, Croatia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Hercegovina, the war criminals - many of their names have been listed by Helsinki Watch - keep being invited to talks in Rome, Paris, London, Bruxelles etc. instead of being put on trial. They have cynically violated dozens of "peace treaties", "cease-fires", promises and agreements and are repeatedly invited to sign new ones. War criminals are - with such attitude - only given time and recognition. This is why a short insight into the role of military institutions will be given in the next part of the paper.

A Peace of a Story

The conflicts in former Yugo have often been reduced to Serbs- Croats pattern or lately to Serbs - Croats - Muslims pattern. The declaration of independency of Slovenia and the aggression of YA in

Slovenia late June 1991 are important for at least two reasons and since the case of Slovenia is often kept forgotten it might be useful to repeat the following:

1. the declaration of Slovenian independency (after all negotiations with federal institutions and particularly with Serbian leadership failed in Spring 1991) did put the issue of sovereignty of former Yugoslavia most clearly on the agenda.
2. Yugoslav Army (YA) openly became active and could never stop since. The aggression of YA in Slovenia in June 1991 was a result (and the conclusion) of a decade long intense involvement of YA against the democratic movement in Slovenia. Even more. YA was a main mover of anti-Slovenian attitude of the regime in Belgrade. The collapse of federal institutions (the collapse of Yugoslav sovereignty) and the YA which became wild and on its own, should alarm international community at least after the war in Slovenia. If the freeze of air space would have been agreed in July 1991 most of destruction could have been avoided. It is to stress at this point that the low-intensity warfare and terrorism was inevitable - and this was clear already after elections in Croatia in Summer 1990. But the warfare would be limited and localized if the federal army would be put at least under partial control.

Let us, at this point have a little -telegraphic style - insight into the role of YA during 80ies in Slovenia:

- 1980 - military intelligent services follows closely the appearance of youth subculture and alternative movements; they tend to discredit them as fascists;
- in Slovenia peace movement campaigns against military parades, against recruitment of women, for the right of CO, against war toys and weapons trade etc. gain bigger and bigger public support;
- 1984, 1985 military intelligent services report to their authorities about counterrevolution going on in Slovenia. As protagonists of counter-revolution one can find the antimilitary movement on the top of the list.;
- during those years several authors expressing criticism of YA are threatened to be put on court or even prosecuted. Amongst them Janez Janša (present defence minister of Slovenia) and later Tomaž Mastnak. In both cases the public pressure was strong enough for the verdict to be removed or the investigation interrupted;
- following the reactions of YA political branches, the movements in Slovenia

- lunch discussions including issues of demilitarization, role of civil society versus the state, democracy, demilitarization of political institutions, deideologisation of military and similar;
- 1987, military makes plans to suppress the democratic movement;
- 1988, democratic movement in Slovenia gets into possession of secret plans according to which (estimated about 170) core activists would be executed; YA envisaged large peaceful demonstrations in Slovenia - as a reaction to persecutions - and issued orders to prepare military units to act accordingly in order to "defend constitutional order and the property of the military";
- at the same time slovenian democratic movement express solidarity with Kosovo Albanians. Particular issue was a request to ban the involvement of Slovenian police troops in Kosovo; this provokes massive anti-Slovenian demonstrations - rallies - in Serbia, led and supported by Milošević companions;
- Slovenian democratic movement is getting its shape - a network between diverse groups involved is being created through the process of drafting the Declaration for Democracy;
- May 1988; 4 activists imprisoned in Ljubljana, amongst them Janez Janša, who was a core liaison person of the Declaration. HR movement in Slovenia unifies hundreds of institutions, movements and thousands of individuals. The main point is that the imprisonment was directed from Belgrade and performed with a support of Slovenian hard liners. 4 prisoners were delivered immediately to military authorities and put in solitary confinement in a military barrack in Ljubljana;
- August 1988- military trial starts in Ljubljana; Slovenian population is homogenised around the issue. The movement is led by Committee for the Protection of Human Rights, where the representatives of cultural, students, social, educational, media and other institutions participated and consciously run a non-violent resistance campaign. The trial "Against Four" proved that the YA is able to violate all basic human rights - even in front of the international public. The trial was under veil of secrecy, no right for civil attorney was granted, civilians were put on military court and under military jurisdiction. A clear cut human rights case;
- Military trial was held in Serbian language in the middle of Ljubljana (official languages in Slovenia were - and still are - Slovenian, Italian and Hungarian). This triggered a national dimension of the problem. The movement - which until

then was predominantly human rights and democracy oriented - turned instantly to a movement for national liberation;

-1989 democratic movement wins; slovenian CP decides to step on the side of local population, they get rid of the hard-liners within Slovenian CP and widen the gap with Belgrade. CP in Slovenia declares democratic elections for 1990 and decides to compete on free elections. CP in Slovenia survived the "between the hammer and the anvil" deciding to identify with the anvil. The reflection of this decision we found today in the person of the president of Slovenia - at-that-time a president of Slovenian CP, Mr. Milan Kučan; CP is the first federal institution to collapse. Yugoslavia is dead. The spirit is disassociated but the flash struggles for survival. Threats are coming mainly from YA officials. In Sarajevo, the group Nadrealists (Surrealists) composes a video about Sarajevo wall (when Berlin wall falls, the Sarajevo wall was simultaneously visualised), in Slovenia, The Mladina journal shows a map of Northern and southern Yugoslavia. Sarajevo is found on the borderline.

The process displayed here is unique in Slovenia. Nothing similar would happen elsewhere in Yugoslavia.

-Elections in Slovenia are held in April 1990 and democratic coalition wins the government. But the CP wins a presidential seat on direct elections for the president. The government in Slovenia starts adopting and performing the measures which would enable sovereign governing on the territory of Slovenia. The conflicts with Belgrade are bigger and bigger. Late 1990 Milošević's party wins elections in Serbia. The interests of Milošević (to keep in power), YA (to keep the control over territory in order to feed their privileged needs) and Serbian extremists (to perform a great Serbian plan) come together. The regime in Belgrade - encouraged by international community which keeps a blind eye on developments in Yugoslavia - decides to keep control over Slovenia for any price. It is not willing to negotiate let alone to compromise. A first incident happens in October 1990 when federal troops occupied the headquarters of Slovenian Territorial Defence Units.

The issue of defence was the hot issue in 1990 in Slovenia. There was an absolute agreement that Slovenia should decide about its defence as a sovereign country. On one hand there was a large public and political support (including president

Milan Kučan and several political parties) for the idea of Slovenia Without an Army, on the other hand the Government was getting ready for the final confrontation with Belgrade regime. The first training of Slovenian Territorial Defence troops started in May 1991 and the reaction of federal military which surrounded the Slovenian training center with tanks, led to a first victim - a civilian smashed by a tank. Attention! At that time we still speak of Yugoslav Army (the institution of former Yugoslav state) and nobody would speak of Serbian (national) army.

Hope enough keys were given here to make the reader think about the necessity to think about the wars in former Yugo also from an anti-militaristic perspective.

What was the Role of UN

UN is a union of sovereign governments and not a union of nations. It should be renamed to United States or should change radically its structure. Despite of the fact, that the right for self determination can be found in the preamble of all fundamental documents ratified by member states, the one protected is a sovereign state and not the nations. This is symbolised by the already-mentioned "no-comment" made by Mr. Peres de Cuellar as late as in August 1991, after the aggression in Slovenia and after the war in Croatia has already spread.

When even "new" Yugoslavia did change symbols already in May 1992, after not being recognised by any international GO or by any other body, the flag of former Yugoslavia waved in front of the UN palace in NY as long as until late September this year. We can not speak about any active role of UN in Yugoslav crisis. All activities (peace keeping in Slavonia, humanitarian aid in Bosnia, sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro) were a very late reaction to fait-accompli. It is not possible to accept the very common argument that UN has acted according to its charta - giving priority to regional organization (in this case CSCE and EC). Besides all other arrangements and principles, the Article 14. of The UN Charter allows "General Assembly to recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin,..." CSCE and EC possesses no such provision. The UN has much more power to intervene than any regional interGO institution. To transmit all activities to European institutions was a great mistake of UN.

Daniel Warner; Geneva Institute for International Studies defined a problem during the Conference on The Challenge to Intervene- A New Role of UN" organized by Upsalla Life and Peace Institute: "There is a lack of an effective mechanism to decide when and how to take over certain functions for governments which are unable or unwilling to do them." Elizabeth Ferris from life&Peace Institute in Upsala continues: "The question is not whether intervention is good or bad, or whether it should or should not take place, but rather whether the time has come for interventions to be regularized, codified, monitored, evaluated, and recognized as a perhaps inevitable consequence of living in an interdependent world." Is there any additional story needed to argue such approach besides the story of former Yugo.

The Intruder. did bring quite some articles on interventions. In particular, it was campaigning for an early stage - active - intervention as opposed to "too-late" reactive intervention. What did really make me think during the past months was the banality of discussions about interventions. Most of discussions were locked in polarity between pro and against military intervention. The context of intervention is much much wider. Recent Helsinki Watch report on Bosnia provides a good overview on the issue - without even mentioning military intervention. Interventionism of course requests taking sides and this is where most of observers failed. The main problem - as I can see - for undecisiveness concerning clear taking-sides is that the problems in former Yugoslavia were interpreted in very subjective language using group-identities (ethnic groups) as a framework. It would be much easier to achieve agreement if military-power holders would be targeted (i.e. Milosević's regime in Belgrade, paramilitaries of Arcan, Karadžić etc. in Bosnia) as opposed to now-prevailing generalized image of "Serbian" troops.

About the Role of NGOs

In general, the attitudes of NGOs abroad were very vague (trying to be neutral), abstract ("we oppose war") and sollution-less (because of very low level of understanding the complexity of Yugoslavia). An outstanding positive example is the recent report of Helsinki Watch (American branch of Helsinki federation for human rights) on Bosnia and Hercegovina. This is a detailed analysis of situation, resulting in clear and necessary

"taking sides" and finally in a number of concrete activities to be undertaken. All those who want to lobby, watch-dog and do pressure work should get themselves a copy.

The power of NGOs after the crisis happens is of course very limited and the priority action-field is on GO level for several reasons.

1. GOs are permanently involved in mutual relations (and interventions on different levels, i.e. economy, diplomatic talks...);
2. civil societies in the areas of crisis are usually weak, low-option, desorganized and with little maneuver space. Even if civil societies abroad would mobilize, they would not find a relevant (powerful) partner in the areas of crisis to work with.;
3. crisis itself generates a need for specialized NGOs locally and it is normal, that NGOs needed in crisis do not exist or exist in a very weak and insignificant level;
4. The civil population in former Yugo was confronted to strongly armed military institutions, wild and out of any civic control. No peaceful demonstration of force could stop them.

This is why it was not to expect that NGOs could play a major role in order to stop the war in Croatia and Bosnia. The main role NGOs abroad could play would be three-fold:

- 1.- to help the creation and the development of local NGOs appearing as a reaction to the crisis; this is of course very marginal activity which proofs results only in course of time. Many ambitious NGOs do not possess sufficient patience and energy for such involvement.
2. - to lobby and watchdog their own governments; a lot of knowledge is requested for such work and most NGOs did not possess one.
3. - to cooperate in humanitarian aid. NGOs from abroad former Yugo were largely involved in this activity since it allows neutral position. But the fact again is, that the needs are so enormous that GO intervention is absolutely essential in the field of humanitarian help and it would be necessary for NGOs to press their GOs to supply humanitarian aid parallel to the efforts to provide

aid in their own, usually very limited capacities.

The Great Fiasco

The fiasco of Western peace thought on the case of former Yugoslavia manifests clearly in the fact that there is no sense of unity between "peace" groups. If in reaction to cold war a solidarity slogan "peace and human rights are indivisible" unified movements in the East as well as in the West - there is no single word that would appear as a reflection of common understanding or common attitude towards the crisis in former Yugoslavia. Is it because we used to live in a glamour of 1989 successes? Is it because European thought is far too limited to react to experiences that go beyond its borders? Or is it simply because the analysis in 80-ies was just too weak? Something is clear, we were used to simplify and generalize. The issue of human rights and democracy seemed to us universal. Now it is clear that the human rights norms and the principles of democracy might be universal but the application of both vary due to complexities of particular micro-cosm. In the Yugoslav crisis a great part of "Western" mind could not escape the old habit of "generalizing" and "overall solutions", while understanding a very narrow angle of perception. It seemed as if the good old new age slogan got converted into "think locally act globally". Seminars are held about the New World Order, while the mind got completely stuck on the Balkan case representing a hologramic structure of the World disorder and injustice.

We are Living, We are Dying

The peace movement in Slovenija collapsed because it could possibly not satisfy the (local and global) demands of time. The expectations were high (locally and globally) our methods and knowledge far too limited. The movement had to dissolve in order to allow necessary change in approach.

Last but not least, the discontinuation of lives of beloved Petra Kelly and Gert Bastian personalises the controversies of Western pacifism. The period of creativity and active-enthusiasm of eco-pacifism in Europe is over. Chief Seattle declared once "The real life is over now. The struggle for survival begins!" Petra did not survive the difficult transition between creative (global) mind and painful, patient (local) struggle on the margins of public eye. She did not sur-

vive the transition between articulation and manifestation of the ideas. Spontaneously, we would wish Petra was murdered by racist terrorists. Then we could think it as a heroic, victorious sacrifice of "our" struggle. But there is no "our" struggle at the moment. There is no "Western", no "European" cause. Petra died in privacy, without any public message. No declaration, no final word. Our minds are left free to contemplate and think about what does that mean for all of us. I feel Petra died within each one of us. Petra, great idealist, protagonist of "think globally act locally", Petra trying to get involved a little bit everywhere - finally faced with incredible difficulty to remain active in Germany, in her party, in her very close, local environment.. I can feel Petra has died to remind us, what has to be buried in order to survive. Let her soul rest in peace.

Hope many others will survive. Many people come to the region of former Yugo and do a silent, modest, valuable job that hardly some people know about. They don't have neither time nor intention to sell their story to the media or to self-promote themselves. Yet, many people still play the game of media-campaigns and promotion. In the case of former Yugo the difference between the effectivity of both is evident. ■

VOIVODINA THE FORGOTTEN PROVINCE VUKOVAR THE MODERN DAY DRESDEN

By Brendan Keaveney

Mr. Brendan Keaveney is a fellow researcher at the Peace Institute, Ljubljana coming from the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

When the topic of fragmenting Yugoslavia arises much is heard about Bosnia and Croatia however Voivodina tends to be largely ignored. My introduction to Voivodina came when I took part in a peace camp in Subotica organized by The Hungarian Peace Association in August. Knowing nothing of the area I arrived (like the others who were drawn from many countries) with a host of questions, which included such as

- 1 is ethnic cleansing occurring?
- 2 are minorities catered for?
- 3 do all join the YNA?
- 4 if not how do they resist and at what consequences

and finally as Vukovar lies close to Voivodina, being in fact if not in law, under Serbian control I was determined to use the visit to see for myself the extent of the carnage it had suffered as a result of the long siege. Despite conflicting claims the answers to questions 1 and 2 were gleaned through meetings held with the areas political parties and the federal justice minister.

MINORITIES AND ETHNIC CLEANSING

At our first meeting The Democratic League Of Croats (hereinafter DLCV) began by giving their numerical strength in the area, which according to church

figures total some 160,000 or 10% of the population, although official statistics put the figure at 74,000 or 5%. In Subotica they say that while officially they number 16,000 the real figure is 33,000 (again church figures). The discrepancy arises as many are afraid to declare themselves. They produced documentation which detailed attacks on Croats going back to 1988 and they cited a case (3-8-1992) where two of their number were murdered. 17,000 Croats they state had fled in the last year. This if true represents a loss of 22.5% in their number.

Croats they say suffer in the cultural and educational spheres as a result of the loss of the statute of autonomy (1990). They stated they and others have seen their cultural institutions abolished. Since 1990 all organs of the media, are in Serbian hence in the print media, difficulties arise for Croats, who will have to adjust to the unfamiliar official Cyrillic script. Further in public employment all correspondence is in Cyrillic, hence Croats that wish to gain employment are also disadvantaged. In education Croats are now being taught Serbian history/culture as Croat schools are now closed.

The DLCV stress that their goal is not one of union with Croatia, their aim is simply one of obtaining cultural rights, they stress that they are loyal to the state. However as long as cultural genocide

and ethnic cleansing continue they fear their position will deteriorate further. Ethnic cleansing they say not only means the loss of many Croats it also means a corresponding influx of Serbs.

In our talks with the Socialists we found that they could provide few answers to Croat claims.

What it did provide was the information that in Subotica no group was in a majority (numerically speaking). We were told that the areas population was 160,000 and that Hungarians composed 42% of that figure. If one accepts the official figures it can be seen that the Croats (16,000) represent 10% of the total, this means that all ethnic groups in Subotica are indeed minorities. The spokesman stated that his party was cross-ethnic (he being a Serb), when pressed on this, and asked to give an ethnic breakdown of the membership he refused.

Regarding inter-ethnic relations he said that there was no ethnic cleansing. Ethnic co-habitation continued as before. Terrorist acts he stated were the work of ethnic Croats. In an effort to justify his claim he stated that they had recently carried out a number of attacks in the area. However he conceded (on hearing that some of us knew different) that the attacks were the work of the Croatian army.

Asked about other minorities he said that in the transition period the state was learning about democracy. He did not concede that the group lacked cultural protection. He clung to the fact that Croats and Serbs use the same language, and he seemed unaware that the use of different scripts could lead to Croats encountering problems. As for education he stated that Croats and Serbs shared the same history and that there should therefore be no problem. When confronted with the Croat documentation of alleged attacks he without looking at them dismissed them as propaganda. We felt at the end of this meeting that many questions had been evaded, and that socialists were more interested in casting Croats in the role of a disloyal element than in anything else.

The ethnic Hungarians upheld much of the Croats claims. They stated that a policy of ethnic cleansing was ongoing which to date (12-8-1992) had resulted in an exodus of some 30,000 Hungarians (this claim repeated on Croatian Television (3-9-1992). The manner in which this cleansing took place was similar to that pursued against Croats, in that Hungarians were "invited" to enlist in the YNA. This left them with the same option ie enlist or flee, given this choice many opted to go leaving the door open for ethnic cleansing.

As for education they stated that many of their schools had been closed by the authorities as a result of a policy of Serbianisation. (Later verified with the Hungarian ministry for ethnic Hungarians, who say that the number of Hungarians not being taught in their language had risen to 47% since the 70's), this lends credence to Croat claims and would entail similar consequences for the preservation of Hungarian culture. Downgrading of the language 23-7-1991 also they felt will have an effect, and will mean that many seeking public sector employment will have to comprehend Cyrillic. Indeed some made the point that in place street names now appear in Cyrillic only, where before this was not the case.

Our last meeting was with the minister for justice Mr. Varady (ethnic Hungarian). However the minister a law graduate knew his onions. Thus although conceded that the killings that the Croats alleged had occurred and that other attacks also took place, he said these were isolated cases. What else he did concede was the belief that future legislation concerning minorities would have to be meaningful, as at present this was not the case, although he reminded us that

minorities as such were not his concern. He also informed us that he wished to see legislation introduced that would provide amnesty for draft dodgers, (this he hoped to see become law in September, this however has been delayed) On the issue of whether ethnic cleansing occurred, he stated that no such policy was being pursued. We left the meeting with the opinion that the minister had simply endorsed Croat claims.

Although I have not given a verbatim account of the meetings it is true to say that we had begun to conclude the Croat and Hungarian arguments were the most believable. They unlike the Socialists spoke to not at us, they endeavored to answer all our questions in a constructive fashion, and evasive they were not. Further the Croats had provided us with written allegations that were they incorrect could have easily been refuted, and despite the contemptuous attitude they received from the Socialists they were in large measure verified by Mr. Varady. Furthermore Mr. Varady conceded that present minority laws are far from perfect. Finally we did not get the impression that the Croats and Hungarians were trying to mislead us or that they were economical with the truth, the same could not be said about the socialists, or indeed as we were to find the mayor of Vukovar. For these and other reasons it was hard for us not to conclude that minorities were suppressed, and that ethnic cleansing (although subtly applied) did occur. If such conclusions are correct it means that the Croat and Hungarian population of Voivodina has fallen by some 47,000 in the last year, this in turn will obviously alter the political balance in the area.

These conclusions however did not begin to form only as a result of the meetings, they were strengthened by talks we had with others. In which some individuals made it clear that many Hungarians and Croats did flee rather than face the prospect of armed service. We were told that usually the draftee would depart prior to his enlistment papers arriving. I learned of one case where an individual expecting his papers soon and had planned his "escape" accordingly. Another individual stated that many enlisted were ethnic Hungarians and members of that groups political party.

TRESNJEVAC

Having gained answers to the first questions it was time to find what are the consequences for those that refuse to join up but stay in the province? Is there an alternative to gaol?

The villagers of Tresnjevac (Hungarian) found that on May 5th some 200 (10% of the population) received their call-up. The village women regardless of their fear of the police decided that something had to be done. Thus they organized a protest demonstration for the 10th and the police were informed. The demonstration took place in the yard of a local pub where the men, their families and friends gathered (1400 in all) and determined to stay until the call-up was aborted. The police did not intervene, and it was left to the military to enforce the law. This they attempted to do by showing their teeth. On the second the villagers found that they were encircled by 92 tanks. The amazing thing was that they took no action and, after two days they swiveled their turrets which had been trained on the town and left. The demonstration lasted for 62 days, during which all the protesters stayed except four who left after 3 weeks. It has to be said that the protesters received help from surrounding Serbian villages. Later the draftees reported to the military stating that they were not going to join and to date they have encountered no harassment.

One might ask why this is so? It might have to do with the fact that BBC radio was quickly onto the story, or it might have been that the authorities were wary of evoking sympathy for the protesters among local Serbs. Most likely however it was a combination of both. Also it was the first time the authorities had been defied in such a fashion. Whatever the reason the protest proved that when people stand on their hind legs they can defeat tyranny.

VUKOVAR

Even though my prime concern was in Voivodina, and in gaining an insight into how the first four questions posed could be answered, I was determined being this close to Vukovar to see the city for myself. Could all the Croat claims and all the TV footage I had seen last autumn really be true? During the course of our visit we were given the chance to gain the answer to that question when a trip to the town went ahead, and I found that Osijek by comparison must have

been only a tea party, and that no amount of TV footage could even begin to adequately describe the scale of the carnage.

On the way to Vukovar we continually scanned the countryside to see if the war had left its mark. Little however seemed amiss. The only sign that something was wrong was the obvious absence of traffic and humanity along the route. Otherwise tranquillity and normality seemed to reign, the military, apart from an UNPROFOR presence at a bridge near Vukovar, was noticeable only by its absence.

Once Vukovar was sighted the sense of normality was eroded. Everywhere destruction seemed to reign. Our route into town took us through a residential area, and nothing it seemed had been spared. Where once apartment blocks had stood now only blackened and burnt out hulks bearing the marks of both small arms fire and the effects of long range bombardment remained. In many cases the apartment blocks had been leveled. It was hard to believe people still lived in these shells of what had been once proud buildings. The full impact of what the war had meant for the town however still awaited us. As we progressed to the hospital it quickly became clear that Vukovar had been decimated, over 85% of the housing stock had been destroyed, and that which remained was in various states of repair, and what could be repaired had been marked. Vukovar once a thriving industrial city is the Dresden of the 1990's. None of the industrial infrastructure remains, everywhere there is only destruction. Shops, houses, the harbor, the train terminal all to some degree bear the scars of war. In this town once home to 84,000 souls, it is probable that no more than a few thousand now remain. The only sign of normality was the presence of two boys amid the rubble (which lay everywhere) carrying a fishing rod towards the river.

When addressed by the mayor (a Serb), he conveyed to us facts that were at best misleading. Vukovar he said was 53% Serbian, with Croats, and others making up the remainder. This runs counter to figures supplied by Croats who state that they were the largest group, composing 43.7% of the total, and the figure they give for Serbs is 37.4% (1991 census). The mayor also said that the destruction was the responsibility of Croats whom he stated flouted their national aspirations in the face of Serbs and had started the affair, and they had undermined genera-

tions of inter-ethnic harmony. As to allegations that ethnic cleansing occurred he insisted that this was not so, he stated that Croats that had left had done so from choice. If however returning to the figures we accept that he was refereeing to the present then one has to ask what became of the Croats? Surely they did not opt to leave collectively, could ethnic cleansing be a cause? He also said that Croats found in the hospital were well treated, this is at odds with the claims of Amnesty International (1992) The mayor continued to feed us many facts mostly about the repairs that were being carried out at the hospital which also had failed to escape the effects of the siege. However when confronted with awkward questions he shunted them aside with haste if not with tact. His demeanor was one of a man cornered looking for an exit, and to be honest he was far from convincing. Vukovar as already stated resembles Dresden at the close of the war, the unfortunate thing is that while last year it was unique in doing so, today one can find many Dresdens in the Balkans. The dogs of war have been unleashed and it will be no easy task to cage them once more, hence it seems many more Vukovars will occur. In the interim, it matters little if the Serbs hold Vukovar or if the Croats regain their terra irredenta, what is there to hold or regain but rubble?

Much more could and should be written about Voivodina and Vukovar, however space dictates otherwise. Hopefully others will fill in the all too many gaps that I have left and furnish answers to questions such as are the sanctions biting and victimizing further the people of Voivodina, many of whom want no part in the war. It however should be clear why we formed the impressions we did. Ethnic cleansing is occurring, minorities are suppressed, Vukovar to all intents and purposes is no more, a pyrrhic victory if there was one. The people of Voivodina are as much victims of war as are the Croats, Bosnians etc, unfortunately this is a fact that is often overlooked. Tresnjvac proved to be the one ray of light, it can only be hoped that sufficient will follow that lead and help end the madness. ■

NEWS FROM ANTIWAR CAMPAIGN CROATIA

By Vesna Teršelić

The Osijek Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights has been busy with organizing several workshops for nonviolent conflict resolution. During the summer and autumn workshops have been given by Adam Curle ("Quakers, Peace and Service") and Katarina Sanders ("Bund für Soziale Verteidigung").

With the help of Herb Walters from "Rural Southern Voice for Peace", U.S.A., active listening projects have been started, dealing with such burning issues as tensions between the peoples who stayed in the city during the war, and the ones who left. Osijek a city with a prewar population of 115,000 now sees only 80,000 remaining / returning. At the height of the siege however only 10-15,000 choose to remain. A relative small group of "heroic defenders" are now making life very hard for all those "frightened refugees" (who fled) coming back into the city. The smoothing of tensions between these two groups is one of the very important long term tasks for the Osijek Center.

The active "peace brigades" began work with frightened people. On the call of person being in the fear of violent attack "peace brigades" are coming and sitting with the frightened ones during critical stages. There are so many calls asking for support that the group is not able to support everybody in their need.

In July and August the first working camps for playing with refugee children were organized by the Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in cooperation with Service Civil International. Croatian and international volunteers playing cooperative games brought some fun to the refugee centres at Savudrija, Pula and Gašinci. The first camps have been successful in helping children to overcome horrific war experiences. The interest for such work in Croatian refugee centres seemed to be enormous.

Therefore a decision to organize more camps has been taken. In September the Sunflower Center was established with the aim of devoting much time to working camps and other activities for support of refugees. Volunteers coming from different European countries are now finding a place in a beautiful house on the brinks of Sljeme mountain. The Sunflower centre is overcrowded with work, running three parallel working camps in three different refugee centres every moment, but it still far from fulfilling the urgent needs for the majority of children. Children make up a large part of more than 600,000 refugees and displaced persons living in Croatia. Their living conditions differ very much from one refugee center to another. Some children are even not going to school. "Sunflower" is trying to organize regular lessons for them. At present about 160 Croatian volunteers and 200 international ones try to make the children life a bit easier. Many more would like to take part in activities but at the moment it is not possible to organize more parallel working camps because of logistic problems.

The Zagreb Centre for Peace and Nonviolence and Human Rights is currently as of now turning its attention to the issue of human rights and its dysfunctionality owing to the present situation. It is the intention of the Center that all human rights violations should be catalogued, studied, and forwarded to relevant authorities and international organisations. It is further the intention of the Center to support a people whose rights have been violated and offer the help to ones who fear for their rights.

In September have been established a team of professionals giving support to educating the first Croatian trainers for nonviolent conflict resolution. The team began translating and editing some peace education handbooks.

The Center is also searching for possibilities to establish a satellite telephone line

for the citizens of Sarajevo. About 300,000 people surrounded in Sarajevo are searching for the communication with the outside World. They can not use any of the lines installed so far.

The Rijeka Movement for Peace has been occupied with activities in refugee centres on the Istria peninsula. During the summer group organized many activities to support the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. ■

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DON'T COUNT ON US!

Those who colour gray with gray; who turn classrooms into torture chambers; who boast they don't know how to work but know how to fight; who turn platforms into loopholes; who make winners the losers, turn rivers into sewage systems and garbage cans into shops; who turn ice-cream parlours into military headquarters, streets into shooting lots, villages into ashes and the whole country into a killing field; who deliver out loved ones only from the mortuaries — let all of them know we shall not be silent and peacefully suffer their crimes.

We know who are the ones who are out to get us. We clearly see who are the ones who lie, loot, beat and kill; who force the unarmed civilians into shelters and send the armed ones to the front; who turn the frightened into refugees. We clearly see who has pushed us into conflict with our neighbours, other nations and the whole world. We know who are those who want to turn us into a mindless mass, compliant herd and cannon fodder — all in the name of universal Serbian salvation.

We are SICK of those "saviors" and "liberators" of ours!

Let the messengers of death hear our sorrow and anger, let them listen to our music and remember our words. Let the uniforms see our bright colours. Let Beograd, Serbia and the rest of the world see our devotion to life and liberty.

We count on ourselves!

Beograd, April 22 1992
Center for Anti-War Action
Centar za antiratnu akciju

THE 2nd SEMMINARY FOR PEACE EDUCATION IN ALPE-ADRIA REGION

By Sašo Gazdić

The friendship among different peace groups from Austria, Italy and Slovenia which have been acknowledged on the many years lasting process of personal contacts, official meetings and peace camps, finally brought to the common educational project. The necessity of superstructuring the influence of initiatives and ideas (developed within and among peace groups) by institutionalization and their introduction in schooling systems brought to organization of the 1st Peace Seminary in the year 1991. ACLI-CEPAS from Udine, Alpen Adria Alternativ from Villach and Peace Institute from Ljubljana drew this year to organization of the 2nd International Seminary for Education for Peace. also some individuals from Croatia.

The seminary was held in Koper-Capodistria from the 19th to the 25th of July 1992. 66 participants from 4 countries and of 6 nationalities had an opportunity to learn much about their common characteristics and problems, about differences between them and about the ways of they could come together. The Mediterranean environment of Koper-Capodistria was a perfect area for such a discovery. The idea of multiculturalism, which was one of the basic ideas when we have initiated the process of peace education in the Alpe-Adria region, found in the natural, cultural and political situation of this area a perfect ground for its further growth.

Devastation of nature, as a common problem, was the reason for several participants for working together on exploring possibilities for the use of alternative sources of energy. **Workshop on ecology** was exemplary for joining people of

different nationalities and cultures in solving their common problem. **Workshop on cooperative games** showed techniques for overcoming (psychological, linguistic, cultural...) differences and misunderstandings by listening to man's inner nature.

The other source for building up confidence was found in children's approach to the world. In the workshop named **Peace Values of the Youth** Croatian children's thoughts from their short compositions about their vision of the future were presented and the work on further analyze of their values was pledged. Another workshop tried and succeeded to produce understandable message for children. **Making a children's book** was named the effort to combine impressions of disbalanced relation among a man and a nature (from the journey) on one hand and creative and cooperative techniques on the other in order to produce the book for children. One story for children was drawn and written in four colors and languages.

Generally, large attention was paid to the problem of language. We tried to respect all languages of the participants equally and to use English only in cases where there was no other possibility. This principle was also one of our basic goals when we have started the process of peace education. Equal right of using the language was considered from other points of view too. The commune of Koper-Capodistria with its bi-lingual model, inhabitants of four nationalities (Slovenes, Italians, Croats and Muslims) and neighborhood of two state borders was a perfect starting point for discussion about possible solutions for this problem.

Aurelio Juri (the mayor of Koper-Capodistria) and Augusta De Barbina (member of Friulli's parliament) have spoke to participants about this and other problems concerning peace in our region. The **problem of refugees** appeared as one of them. A special workshop have worked on it. The situation was presented by different speakers and the working group, the largest on this seminary, visited the refugee camp where some personal and official contacts were made in order to help in finding a solution to this problem.

It must be said that the participants were mostly teachers or pedagogical workers. Therefore they were also able to prolong the work started last year - comparison of school systems of their countries and possibilities for introducing Peace Education in these systems. One of the important successes of a process is surely a big interest of school authorities of Slovenia for practical application for Peace Education in their schools. Such seminars are also of the essential meaning for an exchange of ideas and knowledges among teachers. Therefore it would be very good if next years seminary will really take place in Croatia, as it was offered by Croatian participants.

There was one more important group of participants although not so numerous - children. It is not significant only because of friendships they made and things they learned about each other, but also because of their specific contribution to the work in working groups. Their involvement in the work of the seminary is a result of successful cooperation with the so called "Peace Kindergarten" which was developed in previous years within the frame of the Movement for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.

There were some other interesting and more or less spontaneous activities, like an evening of the Theater of the Oppressed or an evening of anti-war poetry. But even if all spontaneous are not mentioned, I surely forgot some, the main conclusion of this seminary must not be forgotten. It is: Peace Education is the joy of discovering of the common in the different. For teachers as well as for children.

SEMINAR REPORT

Peace Institute Ljubljana and EPU Schlaining

By Doroteja Lešnik

The Peace Institute and the European University Center for Peace Studies again succeeded to add another joint venture to their list of common projects. Namely, EPU-ers decided to come to Ljubljana in October in order to find out more about the peace movement and other so called new social movements in Slovenia, refugee situation, human rights and about wars in ex-Yugoslavia, specially in Bosnia.

The Peace Institute organized four panel discussions where relevant participants: activists, researchers, politicians, experts ... expressed their sometimes quite different views and understanding of the problems.

The first "panel" was named as a reflection, evaluation and perspective of the Peace movement in Slovenia, where (ex)activists and researchers participated. Why Slovenian Peace movement disappeared and was even dissolved recently after the failure in trying to prevent the war and promoting the idea of demilitarized Slovenia? What could be a perspective of peace activists in a Slovenian post-war period and are there any perspectives for the peace movement at all? How to understand the interconnecting between the civil society, nationalism, war, the nation state and the peace movement? These were the questions which did not get any final answers. What we perhaps all gained from the discussion was therefore the idea of the complexity of the situation, where peace movements were not able to resist to the growing populist Yugoslav nationalisms and militarisms in late?

The discussion about new social movements in a post-war and post-socialist era continued with the next two "panels". First "Violence and Psychiatry" tried to

show how a certain type of a totalitarian violence centuries ago became a very essential part of every society, which usually legitimates its "normality" with putting "different" people away, mostly to hermetically closed spaces. Every activity for the protection of madness within psychiatry or outside of it is therefore by definition anti-system oriented. Such civic activity - Association for protection of madness was founded also in Slovenia and its goals and work were presented in "panel" too.

The second round table joined researchers, politician, refugee and journalist in a discussion about human rights and refugee situation in Slovenia and ex-Yugoslavia. The main attention was directed to the possible integration of the refugees in the Slovenian society, its political, economic, social, ethnic and cultural aspects. The last discussion was dealing with the wars in Yugoslavia, with a special focus on the Bosnian situation. Since one of the guests was also a journalist who reports from Bosnia for the Western press. The discussion proved that the Bosnian war or better military terrorism, as the reporter named it, offers only very dark scenarios for the future of Bosnia and even for the Balkan region. Among other dilemmas, the fate of Muslims or better Bosnjaks remained opened. We all hoped that not for the "final solution", which seems to happen already.

What left for "peace makers and peace researchers", according to journalist, who witnessed the horror of Bosnia, Vukovar, Dubrovnik ... is a hard and very concrete work, namely, a collection of all possible testimonies of crimes, which happened during the war. Human rights, constitutional state, minority rights should be again the core themes of the European peace movements.

THE BANALITY OF EVIL

From The Interview with Silva Mežnarić by Melita Zajc

First published in weekly The Mladina, Ljubljana, October 1992

SILVA MEŽNARIĆ, Ph.D., Migrational Sociologist, who lectured last year at the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and at Claremont College in California, holds that the riots in Los Angeles, the holocaust and "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Herzegovina have a common denominator: the banality of evil. That the "ethnic clean-sing" of Bosnia is not Auschwitz, while Europe, as opposed to the USA, is currently going through an identity crisis.

MLADINA: The migrations in Yugoslavia could reach unforeseen dimensions. You stressed this in an interview for Mladina one year ago. From this I gather that experts in your field are hardly surprised at the current developments. Or are you?

S.M.: Many peoples anticipated an increase in the number of immigrants from these regions, be it political or non-political, especially among the highly educated portion of the population. However nobody anticipated such an exodus from Bosnia and with such circumstances. It has come as a surprise not only to Europe, but to the whole world.

MLADINA: Because these are not economic migrants, but refugees of war, and this also places the countries receiving them in an entirely different position.

S.M.: Above all, the reasons behind this exodus are what are important, that is, the "ethnic cleansing." Europe must make a stand against such acts of barbarism. A great shift in the general attitude to the lives of individuals and the basic needs of human beings in highly civilized surroundings must happen in Europe. In my opinion, this shift will not happen in the international organizations, the humanitarian organizations, the United Nations, or in the European Community. Nor will it happen in the domain of economy. It must happen in the social and philosophical attitude towards crime, holocaust, Europe's own murderous past, which must be formed anew, right down to its foundations. Until now, holocaust to Europe meant Auschwitz. It was, according to the words of a Social Philosopher of the Frankfurt school, a technology of destruction, built on the foundations of a philosophy of destruction, of very precise, systematic destruction. The

propensity for this was not only inherent in Hitler and his environment, but also within the dimensions of the philosophy on the individual, life and death in European civilization. The systematic rationale within this civilization has the potential to function both as an incredible expansion of good, and as an incredibly precise, technologically perfected systematic destruction. This means Auschwitz. Now we are faced with something else and do not know how to come to terms with it.

MLADINA: What you are saying then, is that what is going on in Bosnia is not Auschwitz, but that certain parallels can be drawn. Why so?

S.M.: Historians, journalists, movie-makers, the average person in the street, use the same expressions when speaking of the holocaust as they do now, when speaking of the suffering of the people in Bosnia: "The peak of inhumanity," "This goes beyond the wildest nightmares," "How could this be happening in this day and age?". There are also certain similarities in the initial solutions: the public and the media in Europe, similarly as in 1939, were "struck dumb". Although faced with mass destruction for the second time in the past fifty years, the entire continent is behaving like a sensitive, middle-aged lady and sending its marginal peace-makers in to attempt to solve the situation. There is another similarity in the fact that the slaughter in Bosnia, just as in the holocaust, defies all simple explanations. Ascertaining the number of victims, crimes, murderers and plunderers is to describe, not to explain. There is no answer to the questions: "How is all this possible?" "Today?" "Neighbour against neighbour?". The social structure prior to the outbreak of the carnage is also bears similarities. As in Germany during the 1930's, important groundwork was

also laid in Serbia among the Serbs: all mental blocks were done away with. The so-called "meetings" and [e]l] functioned as catalysts. Still, analyses of the Holocaust show that doing away with mental blocks is not necessarily tied in with anti-Moslem, anti-Croatian, or anti-Serbian propaganda. It can totally be down to a matter of technological: simply the killing, plunder and deportation of people as a military exercise. It seems that the former Yugoslav army has taken to carrying out this "technocratic" aspect of the Holocaust in Bosnia in order to differentiate itself from the "non-technocratic", i.e. paramilitary formations and the Chetniks. In parallel with this, the Serbian military circles and Milošević are channelling the killing and plundering into Bosnia, on the basis of empty concepts, such as duty, loyalty, honour, patriotism and protecting the nation. Dialogue with similar empty concepts are being established in the international arena, such as on: human rights, sovereignty, cease-fire. Resultantly the responsible factors cannot be pinpointed. For this reason, all hopes of a Bosnian equivalent of the Nürenberg Trials ever being held are naive.

MLADINA: This, then, is what makes the situation in Bosnia different from the Holocaust?

S.M.: The actions of the principal players in the Bosnian holocaust are not those of individuals, but are interconnected. This is the main difference. These intertwined protagonists: Europeans, Šešeljs, Miloševićs, Bobans, Karadžićs and so forth, are in touch with each other on day to day decisions. The "master plan", is more of a myth than a reality, as this is also developing from day to day. It would be naive to perceive that there is a grand plan such as Himmler's behind this carnage. It is ludicrous, that the senile bab-

bling of the old men in the memorandum of the Serbian Academy which we laughed at when it was published could represent a grand plan of destruction. That a group of trembling old men, such as Professor Mihajlo Mraković, or, God forbid, Kanazir and Tadić, could, together with Milošević and Karadžić, be put on trial before an international jury? That is why saving Bosnia is dependant on how and where the interaction and links between the partakers in the carnage can be weakened. These ties must be weakened while they are within and not outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Above all it is necessary to define the nature of this evil, however the difficulty lies in its banality and not in any superiority. If the banality of evil is to routinely slaughter, kill and plunder under orders to do so, just as one would carry out any other job, such a day-to-day lifestyle must be obliterated totally. This could be achieved by enabling the sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina to defend its citizens with the aid of its legal institutions, such as the police and the army. It would also entail the destruction of the Serbian army and the giving of material, expert and military support to the formation of a Bosnian and Herzegovinian army and police force. All other intervention is only additional meddling of more or less anonymous protagonists, which for all its anonymity is no less dangerous.

MLADINA: As a rule, refugees are taken care of in refugee camps, while in this case, even people in Bavaria have offered them shelter in their own homes.

S.M.: As have people in Slovenia. Former citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who now have Slovenian citizenship established a base for those who took flight. These families acted as host families, with rules of their own. At first, the refugees fled BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA by the old 'underground' routes leading out of Bosnia, into Slovenia, Germany and Austria. Only later, when refugees who had nobody awaiting them at the other end of the journey started to arrive, were refugee centres necessary. The last such exodus swept Europe during the 1950's - and also originated in part from these territories. Tens of thousands of people left Yugoslavia then. Yes, we also had our own "boat people". Entire settlements left for Italy by boat. The difference is that this occurred at the time of the iron curtain, and these refugees were mainly political, refugees by their own choosing, and there were not yet any family ties which could have facilitated international migration in the late sixties.

It is due to these hidden, informal ties that Euro-pe has not begun to feel the full impact of this most recent exodus of the population of former Yugoslavia.

MLADINA: You have lived and worked as a university lecturer in California, where there are also refugees. What happens to these people, once they enter a foreign land?

S.M.: The situation in Southern California is similar to that in Europe. There are refugees from Nicaragua, El Salvador as well as Cambodia; all countries that have known similar wars, although these have been labelled civil wars. Waves of refugees coming from El Salvador via Mexico arrived in America in 1978. The first to leave were those closest to the front line, like our refugees from Bosanska Posavina (the Sava river basin), i.e. those civilians engulfed directly by the war. The last to leave were people from the urban regions, because these regions are always the most protected regions. The people from these regions who do not flee immediately, leave in the second and third wave and also find their way easier. The multitudes that arrive in the refugee centres can live there. Provided these people are permitted to carry on activities such as trade and handicrafts, they can live for years on end in the same way and on the same level, as if they were in a refugee camp. The refugees from El Salvador have been living in such a way since 1978, and only recently has large-scale repatriation been organized. Few have received citizenship. Most received only a form of working permit allowing only specific work. They live in enclaves, which are always under strict surveillance in any country. They gained some access through these permits, but were under surveillance because of the high crime rate in these enclaves, which brought them into contact with the social service and the police. Among the first wave of refugees from El Salvador were soldiers and wounded and those who did not wish to fight any more. I think this will also be the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among the refugees from El Salvador were entire generations who had grown up in the forests; children that known little else apart from how to handle a Kalja(nikov effectively and who are incapable of adapting to any other way of life or of earning a living other than the only one they know: a military life. Psychologists have found that people who were small children at the outbreak of war and grew up during wars, fought in them and then returned to so-called civilization, are not only psychologically, but also loco- motorically handicapped.

Simply their fingers are unskilled in any other work than handling weapons. Such difficulties are also to be expected among the future generation on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

MLADINA: This is only the first wave of refugees, then?

S.M.: Probably. The next phase to be expected is the militarization of life in Croatia and in BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA. This will lead to the outbreak of new conflicts, and new waves of refugees, which we will be unable to receive, neither philosophically or socially. Nor can we respond to such waves with pressure, as the policy implemented on the southern borders of the United States has taught us. No matter how highly developed the means of repression and surveillance are, there is no way to stop a young El Salvadorean who is determined to flee his country to save his life.

MLADINA: Slovenia is currently facing the problem of educating the refugee children. Does this mean integrating them into the surroundings they currently live in?

S.M.: In my opinion, the problem is primarily of a logistical nature. These children need education and not any kind of haphazard education will do. We are a part of an educated Europe and the young generation in Bosnia is also educated. Here we are not dealing with people from remote villages, but children with a more or less similar school system and teachers who must be encouraged to organize schooling at least at the level these children were previously used to. From this viewpoint, pressure must be exerted on the international financial systems, as what must be done here does not involve patching up some kind of backwater education system. This is not Kurdistan, but Central Europe and the refugee children must be given the opportunity to acquire a correspondingly high level of education, naturally in their own language. I think it unwise to leave the children to play and do nothing all day in the refugee centres. It would also be a bad move to set up schools as a temporary measure. A school, which is not set up as a real school i.e. with the necessary criteria, text books and all that goes with it, is just a poor surrogate. I do realize, that many Slovenians as well as Austrians and Germans would be reluctant to accept the idea of setting up a quality education system for the refugees, as it might be seen as direct encouragement to stay by the refugees. On the »

other hand, much is to be gained by motivating the best segment of the population to adapt to their new environment.

MLADINA: How did they approach the problem in America?

S.M.: The situation is comparable only if we speak of the people who fled to the U.S.A. due to war in their own countries. If the southern states of the U.S.A. are prepared to receive them, to integrate them into local society or, as in this case, they are interact with the local community via the existing enclaves, they are naturally also provided with education. The Koreans and El Salvadoreans live in their enclaves and education is organized correspondingly: lessons in local schools even though the official language is English are conducted in the language of the enclave population. These schools are naturally indispensable in achieving social mobility. Thus schooling is segregated at the lowest level, but organized, and this situation is accepted by American society. Here, in Europe, we have little choice but to get used to the idea that the refugees are here to stay for some time to come and that in certain regions we shall even have entire classes in which the lessons will be held in the languages spoken in the regions from which the children in these classes come - all organized within the framework of the national educational system. This will be difficult in Slovenia, as it is a small state, but we already have some experience in such matters at our disposal. The second difficulty is how to prevent a typical problem from developing as a result of such a segregated school system. Closed-off social environments breed dissatisfaction and a high crime rate. This has become a reality in Southern California. For this reason, America, as a federal state, has developed the so-called policy of affirmative action. Starting from President Johnson's reign in office in the 1960's, this policy has been implemented in the federal education system and public administration. In this system, society determines which groups are at a disadvantage (women, black Americans, XXX), and then offers them special support, financing and sets certain quotas aside, i.e. a certain amount of scholarships and job vacancies reserved for the members of such minority groups. During the past year, the United States have been going through a phase in which objections are being raised to such a system. Even those who have benefited from this affirmative policy have had second thoughts on the matter, as they maintain that affirmative

action is of a political nature and as such, deals out privileges and encourages those who are career oriented; i.e. it creates a situation in which not the best, but those best at elbowing their way up are given the opportunities. There is much truth in this, but this is a sophisticated phase of such a policy, reached after 25 years of implementation in which people have gained a certain amount of experience in "elbowing their way up", while we shall have to implement a policy of affirmative action over the next decade

MLADINA: Aren't refugees already, by definition, too far removed from society for the implementation of such a policy?

S.M.: This is exactly why such a policy should be implemented. Europe will sooner or later have to face the fact that it can not keep them separate from the rest of society. Many of the refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina are used to a society in which progress is achieved also through education. For this reason, the children of the refugees will also not accept being kept on the sidelines of society. Pressure of this kind, to be included in society, is something that Europe will have to take into account.

MLADINA: There are also scientists, poets and writers, movie directors and musicians from Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo among the refugees. Already last year you mentioned that Europe was preparing to receive this influx of "brain power" within the framework of the COST project. Nevertheless, it has been said that Europe is afraid of them. The Humboldt Fund, for example, has reduced the duration of their scholarships. What is going on?

S.M.: The decisions regarding such exclusive scholarships must not be generalized. The fact that the Humboldt Fund has decided to issue scholarships lasting only six months is to be ascribed to their own internal policy. The same decision has also been made by Fulbright. This, I would say, is more the result of chaos than of pressure being put on people, although it is true that one of the requirements for obtaining a Fulbright scholarship is that you sign a certificate stating that you have no intention of returning to the United States within two years after the expiration of the scholarship. But this has always been the case. As far as the relation between refugees and "brain power" is concerned, the fact remains that the "brains" of war-torn regions become refugees at a certain point. Usually the moment they

take flight in order to save their lives and at this point there is no difference between the "brains" and the ordinary refugees; in the eyes of Europe, they're all the same. The highly educated are usually no more adept at solving the every-day problems of (refugee) life than the average person, although they do have better perception and sources informing them when a crisis is about to break out. To an intellectual, crisis sets in the very moment he/she can no longer purchase a certain publication. Intellectuals can survive without gasoline, deep freezers and other items, but as soon as they detect the beginnings of censorship, they conclude it is the beginning of the end and time to leave. The stretch from this point up until the point at which one's life is in danger is a long one. The "brains" of Bosnia and Herzegovina currently abroad have probably insured themselves against pressure, as they are a part of the international cosmopolitan scene. I personally believe - this is a very personal comment - hold it against them that they are doing too little for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Especially the rock stars, who could broadcast much abroad, starting with music cassettes and songs, and acts showing, I won't say the suffering, but all that is being destroyed by this war. The "brains" that remained in Bosnia are now just as bad off as the rest of the people there. The third, those, who are a part of the wave of refugees, of whom there are also many in Slovenia, should be activated - above all for the benefit of the refugee groups.

Mladina: You say the riots in Los Angeles are comparable to the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. How is this so?

S.M.: During the trial against Eichmann, Hannah Arendt wrote the paraphrase which tells it all: the banality of evil. This means that evil is constantly within us and in our routine, everyday lives. This is what took us all by surprise. Even today, one hears people say: "How is this possible. Yesterday we were Godmothers, Godfathers and neighbours to each other, and today they are killing us?" The same occurred in Los Angeles. People were destroying and torching their neighbours' homes. This banality of evil, which grows in the face of everyday contacts, makes the two situations comparable. The outbreak of violence that grew out of this is also comparable. True, there was a motive for this in Los Angeles, but this same motive had been around for one year already and nothing had happened, until the banality of routine destruction rose up around it.

Expressions of surprise and questions of how is this possible only show that we are not aware of the fact that such evil is also inherent in us; that nobody is exempt and that nobody can say: this is not my war. The two situations are also comparable in that new associations developed almost overnight, along with the emergence of new enemies. The conflict in Los Angeles was not a racial conflict. It was not a conflict between blacks and whites, but an anti-Korean and partially also an anti-El Salvadorean conflict. This is an entirely different situation to that of the black revolt in the 1960's, which was a conflict between Huck and Jim. The black American population was at that time on the path towards integrated society and today are a part of it. Although they form a part of the marginal population, black Americans are definitely recognized as a part of civil society - at least in California, where immigrants from abroad, newcomers, will form up to 40 percent of the population by the end of the century. On the other hand, the other newcomers are successful Koreans and more or less inventive El Salvadoreans. The southern Koreans are small business owners, unassuming family men, who have been successful right from the very start. Apart from this, California is becoming a part of the Pacific circle. Its economy is increasingly oriented to the markets of this circle: Japan, Korea and the Philippines. There is serious talk on the possibility of the secession of the West American coast. Both the economy and tax policy there differ entirely from that of the rest of the U.S.A. George Bush was criticized for discussing only the saving of the eastern automobile industry. The economy of the entire West Coast has a different bent to it. Seen in this light, the conflict in Los Angeles is a sign of new underlying paradoxes. This is the future conflict in America - the conflict between "yellow" or "anti-yellow" policy and the domestic population; not between blacks and whites.

MLADINA: And the new associations?

S.M.: The day immediately after the riots broke out, the black leaders of local gangs - the chiefs, wearing masks, sat down to peace talks around the negotiating table in a town house. Apparently the organizers of the riots against the Koreans, who were nothing but gangsters, were acknowledged as a legitimate part of civil society. Only through their cooperation could a bridge be established so rapidly to the destroyed quarters and also through negotiations with them could the agreement on a cessation of

hostilities and talks with the representatives of the Korean population take place. All at once, America saw a new association between the local politicians (with the federal administration in the background) and the local gangsters. Already, by the next weekend, the representatives of the elite quarters of Los Angeles literally came down from their hill and personally organized the cleaning up of the burnt down quarters. This was a civil and social action, led by the representatives of the white elite following the slogan: Show the world that L.A. is a community. To get back to the beginning of this conversation, Europe will similarly first have to understand the holocaust being perpetrated against the Moslems and Bosnians in Bosnia and Herzegovina and come into the clear with itself what kind of a community it actually wants. Only then can it go into action. In Southern California this occurred in a couple of days. True, chaos is a common state there and life is dangerous. People's lives there are also threatened daily, just like in Derventa. Still, they also have mechanisms enabling them to live with the banality of this everyday violence. In order to organize a community, one must first envisage what one wants to organize. Europe still has no such vision.

MLADINA: Can you describe these mechanisms that cope with the banality of evil?

S.M.: I spent six months in California: from January 15th, to June 15th. During the course of these six months, Southern California experienced two catastrophic floods, two catastrophic earthquakes and the riots. Every other community would be shaken to the roots for the next few years by just one such disaster. Not only owing to its plentiful financial resources, but also to the feeling that things must be resolved on a community level, this state always manage to pick itself up and go on. When disaster sets in, the average citizen starts functioning as a member of a civil society in which certain things are regulated and must be respected. Apart from this, they have also developed a way of getting across to the people that "community" also includes the violence in the community. What shocks a newcomer to California most is that, despite the multitude of events occurring the world over, the first few minutes of the news are always reserved for reports of who knifed whom and who was raped where. This can be shocking at times, but it also means getting used to living with the banality of evil. Now that Europe has lost

Eastern Europe, which it formerly regard as the residence of all evil, it does not know how to cope with this problem.

MLADINA: Maybe because it also lost a common denominator along with Eastern Europe? The catch-phrase of Europe '92, which was to be the common denominator, can no longer serve as such for the entire continent.

S.M.: Now it has a new common denominator: Bosnia. Bosnia is of course a figurative, rhetorical aid for defining the common denominator. The fateful division which Europe gave in to in 1945 is over, and with it also the ideas of a Western European community. A new image of the European community will have to be formed and at least three dimensions will have to be taken into account in the process. The first is trust and partnership. Even the smallest of the European nations must be regarded as a partner within the community. Possibly we may never meet its members, but what is important is that the West European of today trust the act of reaching out to the East Europeans. The second is respecting the borders of the individual communities. No more savior nations; nations that regard themselves as the embodiment of humanity. The third dimension is sovereignty and pluralism. The multicoloured aspect of the population of Europe has increased with the entry of Eastern Europe into the community and even simple things have become complicated. How can a West European trust an Eastern European who has lived in another age and does not know about contracts and all the obligations inherent in such transactions? How to respect different borders of difference, if one state, the Serbian state, proclaims its inhabitants as urban, and heavenly, in order to justify slaughter and "ethnic cleansing"? The fourth dimension is that sanctions must be carried out against all those who do not respect the rules of the first three. Especially when such disrespect poses a direct threat to the community. A community that sees itself as such, is aware of what poses a vital threat to it. The fact that Europe has not yet realized that the Serbian attack on Bosnia and the division of Bosnia are a strong threat to the entire continent, shows that Europe has not yet formulated a vision of what it would actually like to represent as the new community of the former West and the former East.

NETWORK FOR REFUGEES

A Project by The Association of Preventive and Voluntary work

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By Gorana Flaker, The President of the Association

Background

The Association for the Development of Preventative and Voluntary Work was registered in June 1991 as a non-political, non-governmental and non-profit autonomous organisation. The members of the Association are professionals whose aim is to respond creatively and where possible, with preventative measures, to the negative developments in our society such as the rise in juvenile crime, drug abuse and racial discrimination.

The staff of the Association include one full time employee on a minimum salary; 40 professionals are working on various projects on a part-time agreement and 210 voluntary workers.

The present projects of the Association are:

- Youth Workshops as part of a crime prevention programme for youth of 13-14 years old, in seven centres in Slovenia.
- A Social skills project for the rehabilitation of offenders.
- A network for the prevention of drug abuse.
- A Gypsy project working for integration.
- Refugee projects (see below)
- A Bulletin containing relevant evaluations, reports, and relevant papers.

Recently our work has expanded to cope with the massive influx of refugees. We immediately created a **Support Network** and a **Project to Provide Psychosocial Aid**. These projects are carried out by 80 volunteers and one staff person on minimum wages (provided by the Department of Health and Social Security). In spite of the essential nature of this work and the fact that we have now accumulated a year of expertise in responding to the needs of this group, the financial situation of the Association and of the refugee projects in particular, is precarious. The purpose of this paper is to secure funding for the secure continuance and development of the work with refugees.

The Role of Civil Society:

It is important to stress the significance of such an initiative coming from civil

society. The fact that we are a voluntary and informal organisation does not mean that we lack professional skills. For the most part we are lawyers, social workers, psychologists and students of these professions. Moreover our 9 months of working experience with Croatian refugees and 6 months with work with refugees from Bosnia has allowed us to develop these skills further. However the fact that we are based in civil society has a number of important advantages.

Firstly it has facilitated the development of trust and communication with the refugees who are understandably suspicious of the established authorities. It has established a model for ways in which they might develop their own projects and initiatives. We are now in the situation where many of our volunteers are refugees themselves and their expertise and knowledge of their own country increases the value of our work.

Our informal standing has made it easy to develop good relations with all the civil society groups on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Thus we have been able to maintain links which, at governmental level level have been broken by war. This good communication will be invaluable in promoting the safe return of refugees throughout the region.

We have also been able to foster good communications with other institutions and organisations, both at home and abroad. We have good working relations with the camp administrations, the relevant ministries, the government office of refugees and the international agencies, all of whom regard our work as essential in coping with the nonmaterial needs of the refugee population.

A final crucial role that we play is in fostering good relations between Slovene society and the refugees. The fact of Slovene and Bosnian volunteers working together in the camps and the community has helped to breakdown stereotypes and prevent misunderstandings. Our network is in a good position to chal-

lenge the rise of xenophobia and the scapegoating of this population that is likely to occur if economic conditions do not improve. Moreover if as seems likely at the present time, a proportion of this population are unable to return to their homes and must remain here for the long term, a network based in civil society can play an important role in helping integration.

Current Situation Regarding Our Work on Refugees

The Association began its work with Croatian refugees in October 1991 in two Collective Centres for Refugees (CCR) and by providing some assistance to refugee children living outside the centres.

Since April 1992, while continuing our work with refugees from Croatia, we have been faced with the critical situation created by the arrival of large numbers of refugees from Bosnia and Hercegovina (BIH). Currently there are 67000 registered refugees. One third of these are housed in 58 centres throughout the country. Much of the accommodation is in ex Yugoslav Army barracks. It is extremely spartan and crowded and some facilities are still not properly heated for the winter. Some centres only have room for eating and sleeping and no additional space for other activities of any kind. In others the volunteers have been able to obtain some rooms for activities but these are very poorly equipped. (For example no tables) Two thirds of the refugees live in private accommodation. They are mostly with Bosnian families who are in the lowest socioeconomic class, with many material and social problems of their own. As the crisis continues and winter comes (removing the relief of outdoor space) many can no longer accommodate refugees, who are now on waiting lists to go into the camps. In addition there are at least 25000 unregistered refugees, who will face problems with their legal status when their visitors permission expires. 50% of the refugee population are under 16, 35% are women and 15% men over 60.

As a consequence of this influx we have

expanded our programmes to serve this population. Basic material needs of food shelter and health care should be met by the international agencies and the governmental organisations. We have seen our task as addressing the non-material but equally important needs. These are psychological, social and legal. This service began in an ad-hoc form but has become more established as the demand has grown. We are now in the situation where it is essential to develop a more comprehensive system to meet the growing needs of victims of conflicts. In addition the experiences of working with refugees over the past nine months has resulted in our acquiring expertise in the field of refugee services which could of great value to other organisations faced with similar problems.

The work of the association is coordinated with the Parliamentary Group for Refugees of the Republic of Slovenia, the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and Ljubljana's Coordination for Refugee Work (This group was formed by the local authorities in order to coordinate services to refugees). MOST (Voluntary Services of Slovenia) is providing assistance in the form of international connections and an exchange of volunteers.

In addition we are currently working closely with similar voluntary groups in Zagreb and are in contact with groups in other territories of former Yugoslavia.

In planning and implementing the project we work in close cooperation with the following institutions:

- The Department of Psychology, University of Ljubljana,
- The School of Social work, University of Ljubljana,
- TEMPUS PROGRAM: Community Mental Health Studies
- The Centre for Mental Health, University Clinic Psychiatry, Ljubljana
- The Students' Organisation from Bosnia and Hercegovina,
- The Peace Institute, Ljubljana,
- The Department of Sociology, University of Ljubljana.

Currently we are engaged in the following projects:

- A. A Support network for refugees
- B. Professional assistance to CCR
- C. Psycho-social help to refugees from BIH
- D. The Centre for Mutual Aid

Support Network for Refugees

Project activities are located in the CCRs in and around Ljubljana. The aim of our work is not only to provide assistance to the staff of the CCRs but to try to enhance the lives of refugees by relieving their stress and helping to provide the optimum experience possible. The activities offered are designed to empower the refugees in regaining a sense of control over their situation and to begin the process of rebuilding their lives.

The staff includes cca 100 volunteers who are of various ages, and come from different occupations and experiences. They are led by a team of 11 professionals (psychologists, social workers and a psychiatrist who provide supervision, advice and support.)

The volunteers work in five groups. Their work consists of providing recreational and educational activities, particularly for children and social support, for example assistance in orientation to the new environment and in self-organisation. The volunteer's focus is on empowering the refugees in problem/conflict solving as well as the important task of detramatising their current situation. The groups are led by group leaders and supervised by professionals. Each week there is a task oriented coordination meeting and a supervision meeting for each group. We consider group supervision an essential component of the work. It provides an opportunity for the volunteers to share problems, get support and advice, resolve conflicts and educate themselves. It is compulsory for all volunteers to attend a supervision group.

Volunteer Work Aims:

- To contribute to bettering the lives of refugees in the CCRs
- To provide assistance to existing personnel in the CCRs
- To organise activities such as a nursery, school, handicrafts, etc.
- To organise cultural events
- To organise self-support groups (mothers with young children, teens, etc.)
- To provide personal assistance and counselling to individuals
- To collect materials needed for refugees and the centre as a whole.

This results in different programmes being offered in different centres. For example:

- Nursery schools and educational programmes occur in all centres.
- Specialised programmes such as drama,

photography and dance occur in centres where there are skilled volunteers in those individual areas.

- Activities/events such as a cultural-exchange group, lectures on drug-abuse/prevention, and topics of more general interest and slide presentations are also offered.
- The most popular programmes with the refugees are activities for children, handicrafts for women, and language studies.

In an effort to sensitise the local community to the refugee problem we have organised:

- a variety of cultural presentations using theatre, dance, and music groups in the centres and outside.
- we plan a children's art exhibition to be shown in various public places in Ljubljana.
- we plan to publish a book of children's art and essays with commentaries by various experts.
- we are in the process of organising the sale of handicrafts by refugees in order to raise funds for necessary medical supplies and other materials needed for continued handicraft work.

Professional Assistance to Other Centres in Slovenia and Neighbouring Countries

There is an increasing demand for the Association's expertise. We regularly receive calls from the other centres in Slovenia and from abroad asking for our help in their efforts to involve civil society in CCR and to organise voluntary work. While we appreciate their need and are willing to do what we can, such work requires additional financial support.

Aims :

- to sensitise the public to refugee's problems
- to involve civil society in the work with refugees,
- to help other organisations to organise activities in the CCRs,
- to support these organisations in their work in the CCRs.
- to advocate for civil society groups and to give assistance in communications with local authorities and other organisations working in the field.

We would like to create a team of four persons, including experienced foreign volunteers, to work on this project. The contribution of volunteers from abroad with organisational and public relations skills would add a new perspective and »

enhance the work that we do.

The teams' work should consist of:

- publishing articles in local newspapers and working with other media,
- preparation of small leaflets and other publications on the plight of the refugees, explaining their situation, and highlighting particular problems,
- counselling organisations and other groups willing to work on refugee matters,
- providing training and supervision for newly established teams of staff and

volunteers
-providing assistance in fund raising for their work.

-production of a training manual

The team should work in close cooperation with other organisations involved in refugee matters, both in Slovenia and abroad.

Psycho-Social Help to Refugees of BiH

The experience gained from our work to date shows that this population has

- particular groups in the CCR that need special and more intensive support (women, particularly widows and mothers with young children; adolescents; men refusing military service; the elderly);
- refugees living privately have special needs that go unnoticed and are difficult to assess;
- the problems of return, experience from Croatia shows that Refugees are not given the information or organisational skills they require to cope with return.
- conflict: Those refugees able to return

mp or living privately is the source of endless conflict- with other families in the tiny space,with the authorities who are not meeting needs, conflicts between those who live out and those inside the camp.

The large amount of specialised work required to cope with these problems is beyond the capacities both of the camp authorities and the host country, and at present our volunteers do not have the necessary preliminary education to deal with these problems. In response to these specialised needs the Association has decided to embark on a program of education and practise. The proposed project will unite home and foreign institutions, specialists and organisations from relevant fields.

Our Aims are to educate large groups of refugees and volunteers to qualify them to work with refugees both in the CCRs and the community and in their local communities after their return. The program will focus on the following areas:

- **Mental Health:** the identification and management of mental health problems affecting refugees, with special attention paid to understanding the psychological and social impact of experiencing war and dislocation.
- **Organisational skills:** setting up self help groups, understanding the functioning and availability of domestic and international aid to refugees, understanding community organisation.
- **The Law and Human rights:** to provide a basic understanding of the domestic and international law as it pertains to refugees with particular regard to their obtaining their rights.
- **Conflict resolution:** providing concrete negotiation and mediation skills, and an understanding of the psychological and emotional processes that feed conflict; explaining group process, and ways of increasing confidence and a sense of empowerment so that individuals feel able to deal with difficult situations nonviolently.

The educational work will be coordinated with the establishment of a network of self-help groups and an information exchange.

Methods of training: workshops: experiential/educational work in small groups, guided self-help groups, individual counselling, seminars, lectures, action research.

Our initial plan is to establish an ongoing series of training workshops and seminars as follows:

I. Meeting of the civil society groups working with the refugees in areas of former Yugoslavia: sharing of experience, definition of the problems and solutions. Formation of working groups for different actions/domains.

II. Three four- day workshops run by specialists from relevant areas listed above.

-The first three topics of Mental health, Social welfare, and Human rights will be covered in each workshop. the fourth workshop will be devoted solely to conflict resolution.

-Participants: volunteers and refugees, preferably with some working experience.

-In between workshops participants will be expected to lead self help groups in their fields of interest, under supervision from specialists for a period of approximately three months. During this time they will also be expected to: plan their work, evaluate results, correct plans, and to define aims of their future work. The idea is that the three workshops will provide specialised skills and knowledge which can then be practised and reevaluated.

III. - Conclusion of the project, analysis of the results, future planning.

- Formation of specialised groups to focus on special needs (eg women and children) or particular topics, eg legal aid. Aspects of this project are already underway. Volunteers have already received a preliminary series of talks on the mental health needs of refugees. Volunteer lawyers are already establishing a legal counselling service.

The Centre for Mutual Aid

This project is should be seen as the institutionalised form of our ongoing work, described in the projects above. The reality of the situation is that a large proportion of the refugee population will remain in Slovenia long term, although numbers are hard to estimate at this point. Their needs will continue to be specialised and it is unlikely that established institutions will be able to develop the extra capacity to cope. Our hope in establishing a Centre for Mutual aid would be to service some of the complex and changing needs of the refugee community, both of those hoping to return and those wishing to remain. Our civil society base will we believe make us more acceptable to this population and help foster integration.

The Centre would draw on the experiences of all of the aforementioned projects. We hope that these projects would allow us to gain necessary experience and knowledge and skills, increase our understanding of the situation and the complexity of both current and future problems, select the appropriate people to do further work, and make realistic long term plans that will maximise our assistance to people in need.

The basic aims of "The Centre" are to provide services, training and support for volunteer networks in four main areas:

- Mental Health
- Legal aid
- Social Support
- Conflict Resolution and mediation

We would hope that the centre could also provide resources and information to other groups in the region and abroad in the form of library workshops, information exchange and reflection-evaluation process.

CONCLUSION

The war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia has already had devastating consequences for some millions of people in this region. the material costs are already evident. the psychological and social costs are just beginning to emerge. Yet it is this psychological and social damage-the trauma of war, the disruption of family and community that may be the most difficult to heal and that provides the fuel for continuing and future war. The aim of the Association is to do what it can to minimise some of these harmful effects, at least in this country, and to provide a model for others working elsewhere.

Yet although the need is clearly recognised it is extremely difficult for us to get funds available for this work. Thus we are appealing to all governmental and non-governmental organisations, institutions, and corporations to participate in our projects by supporting our efforts with professional knowledge, material and financial support. The Budget Specifications for all projects are available on request. ■



Photo by Jože Suhadolnik ©

particular problems which require specialised attention. These problems are:

- psychological, arising from the trauma of war, flight, resettlement and the continuing uncertainties over the future;
- social, for example concerns over education and employment;
- legal, regarding their continuing status and rights as refugees;

may have to renegotiate possession of their houses from others in occupation and rebuild relationships in their communities. Those unable to do so have to find a way of integrating into their host countries. Attitudes towards refugees are likely to deteriorate as economic conditions grow worse and the war continues. all of these factors are a source of conflict. Simply being a refugee- in a ca-

REFLECTION ON REFUGEES TRAUMA

By David, international volunteer working in Ljubljana during summer this year

Trauma of War

1. Actual Physical traumas. Things refugees have seen or have had done to them. Brothers, sisters, parents, friends murdered before their eyes. Homes burned, direct threats against them by soldiers/paramilitaries. Being forcibly uprooted and the fear and trauma of their flight to safe places.

2. Permanent fear and worry for relatives, friends. Many people are disappeared, communications are very difficult and unreliable, such is that refugees live in a permanent state of dread and stress.

3. "Psychological" terrorism. Which was such a big part of this war. How they were psychologically as well as physically manipulated-conditioned-coerced into being drawn into the conflict. The stories they heard, threats they had against them or their people, propagandas they were fed. Which in addition to the physical assaults, tortures, murders, serves to twist their minds and make them think horrible things about themselves and the "enemy" ie Serbs.

Trauma of Homelessness

To be without a home, without identity, and without a strong feeling that they will return to their homes. For many of the refugees, especially the older ones, the desire only to return to their homes is their strongest/only wish, and with every day and every report from B-H, their dream becomes more and more hopeless. Hopeless view of the future.

Guilt

The refugees have fled from their communities and homeland, while many of their people stay behind to struggle to save their country. The refugees here

feel a tremendous guilt at being safe and "useless" here while their people struggle and die down south, many refugees regret having flown, however valid their reasons for flight (ie children, etc), but cannot at this time return. There is also guilt and sometimes even aggression directed towards the few men in the camps/etc who have chosen to leave Bosna and not take up arms against the aggressors.

Camp Life

To be torn away from previous life in city, village, etc, and now to live in a former military lager. They are in a new communal situation, powerless over their communal, familial and personal lives, and this creates such a stress.

Boredom: They have to spend their days in excruciating boredom, for the most not allowed to leave the camp, unable to work for a living, with a lack of activities and/or pastimes for them. Perhaps many of them have a problem coming from a culture/community structure where activities are assigned and people do role things, and don't have to depend much upon self-initiative, and this is disrupted.

Living So Close Together: Families, singles, etc, share small rooms for up to 6 people, or live in barrack-style dormitories. Noise is constant: children, families, camp activities, general life etc. There is nowhere for people to get peace or isolation.

Living Under a Microscope: The refugees are "guests" in the centers, and there is a fear of expulsion if they make trouble, or even perhaps for criticizing camp rules, officials. Refugees must follow rules of centers, for example, not being allowed to leave the camps without permission. The centers are often visited by visitors (officials, journalists, interna-

tional delegations) who often display a callous us-them zoo mentality.

Disruption of Community/Tradition: Traditional power relations, roles and ways of keeping order, resolving conflict, etc., that people (especially men and older folks) are more used to, are fractured by the chaos and new situation of life in the camp. Cleavages between young and old, men and women, difficulties coming from religious-cultural-patriarchial norms come out as people begin to adapt to the new situation of life in the camps. Introduction of new set of "Western" (ie Slovene/international) norms, authority figures and institutions. Disturbance between those who adapt to new norms, etc, and those who strive to hold on to traditional social structures.

There are terms like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder which try to diagnose or put a label on some of the trauma-related issues that refugees are going through. Most, if not all, of the refugees have experienced great traumas and continuing traumas/pressures in the camps. It seems clear that it should be a responsibility of the volunteers and social workers in the camps to work with refugees to address these issues and try to deal with them. But just how to make this approach is unclear. Most of the volunteers (both international and Slovene) are not acquainted with psycho-social symptomology, diagnosis and treatment strategies; and anyway, there are debates between so-called experts on precisely the issues of PTSD diagnosis and treatment, and the relevance of psycho-psyche literature to the situation in the refugee centers. So a first question that the volunteers face is how to approach the issues of trauma in the refugees. But before that, is it possible to address the issues of the traumas that the refugees are going through while

they are still experiencing a time of terrible trauma? After all, the term PTSD is "Post-", it is clear that the traumas of this war will continue, and most likely will continue to mount in the future. It will be wrong to treat the refugees as if they have already gone through their traumas and life ahead will be peachy.

PTSD is but one part of the problems that the refugees face. We will make some discussions with so-called experts at some of the camps and in the refugee politics situation to try to get their views on the psycho-social issues that the refugees face in the centers. We want to see what these social workers, experts, etc are thinking about issues such as PTSD, mental health issues, conflict resolution, preparation for repatriation, and crisis interventions etc, and what sorts of steps and approaches are being made towards mental health in the camps.

Most of the international volunteers at this time, though, are not strongly involved in mental health/psychological issues. Their experiences do lie in other important areas, for example one volunteer brings experiences working with warring communities in

Belfast N. Ireland; another in organising women's autonomous politics; another in political organising with homeless people in USA. They have no clear notions of exactly what they would like to accomplish. They want to learn much about the refugee's situations, and build trust among them, organise activities with the refugees that the refugees themselves are interested in,

and the like, but further, they would like to make some sort of effort to work on peace-related issues with the refugees.

For example, conflict resolution. There are such stresses among the refugees in the camps, and conflicts which happen along many different lines, from person-to-person to group to group, young and old, women and men. The volunteers have skills to work to build communication between groups in conflict and help to develop conflict resolution skills among the people which they can carry with them into the future. Work in conflict resolution brings up many issues and problems. In the refugee centers it is now a time of turmoil

and change in traditional norms, values, power relations and hierarchies, etc. This creates a dynamic where 1. New conflicts come out and are present on many new cleavages; 2. There is an opportunity to make some progress at identifying and changing elements of the power structure, norms, etc of the refugee community, ie sexism, racism, religious-ethnic intolerance, etc; while at the same time. ■

Photo by Primož Predalič

AZRA DRAKULIĆ - HAMZABEGOVIĆ

REFUGEE
FROM
SARAJEVO

My life

as a working, married woman and a mother is ending here and another

one begins. With me are my 11 year-old daughter and two daughters of my brother, 16 and 9 years old. Today we became refugees and we do not know what will happen to us.

We had to escape from Sarajevo, the city of our life, love and work. Our way led us to Slovenia through Belgrade. We travelled through the country where people that shot on us at home come from. At the airport in Belgrade people ask us: "Did all the Serbs leave Sarajevo?" And we were terribly afraid of such questions. It seemed that they strongly believe that all non-Serbs coming from Bosnia are either "Ustash" or "fundamentalists" and "mudjahadins". Suddenly those people do not think any more, they just believed what they were told with an obvious blindness. There is no awareness of the horrible things that are going on in Bosnia, no awareness of the fact that also in Bosnia people live; people who suffer so much. It seems that in Serbia only one thing is important, this is their myth of a great Serbian

state, and everywhere you can feel their closedness and xenophobia toward others, different, non-Serbs. What is also visible is their fear that a revenge could happen and that in the near future, they could be on the side of the victims too. Fear everywhere.

In front of my eyes were pictures of Jews in the second World War, their horrible suffering and persecution, escapes from their homes and countries. I feel that our situation is the same. Perhaps only people who experienced the horrors of war could understand us, being in the similar situation after 60 years. I can hardly understand and accept the fact that the international community is not able to stop the war, killing and suffering of all people, specially Croats and Muslims.

On this soil people lived, whose first guidance was that man's name and ethnic origin is not important, what counts is only his personality and characteristics that distinct him from an animal. Those people came in front of the national parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo to ask for peaceful resolution of the ethnic and political conflict. And it seems that nobody really understood their inten-

tions and their strong belief that conflicts among nationalist political parties and ethnic divisions can lead only to war. And at that time, they shot on the those who dared to come to Sarajevo and asked for peace. At that day probably all hopes were lost.

This country was a special one, since people really lived in a multicultural way, our differences made this country richer and more interesting for foreigners. There were a lot of mixed marriages among Serbs, Muslims and Croats. And then politicians started to divide people upon their religion, ethnic origin, cultural background and names. Now it is evident that the people who came to power after the first free elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina were never able to understand the spirit of Sarajevo and multiculturalism as a way of living. With the first "democratic" elections, new issues were brought to the political agenda of different political parties. These were issues of nationalist rights and identity, political violence and divisions. Europe responded only to the idea of a "cantonisation" of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and nationalist plans became legitimate in the international frame too.

With the escalation of the armed conflict it became clear that the aggressor could be stopped only by the military intervention of the international forces in Bosnia. Namely, only such intervention would stop a complete devastation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and would perhaps create a space for living for people that want to live in this republic and remain its citizens.

All other interventions and help, humanitarian for example, can only prolong the pains and suffering of Bosnian people. People who stayed there in the middle of the fighting and destruction couldn't care less whether they die hungry or not. They couldn't care less also if they have all the necessary medicines or not. All possible humanitarian help cannot change their situation, which is totally hopeless. No medicines can cure their pains and fear and their feelings of being forgotten and sacrificed in a infernal political game.

A lot of people from Sarajevo believed in a peaceful resolution of a conflict among different ethnic and religious political parties and entities and they resisted to the nationalist madness with protests and demonstration for peace and for united Bosnia, until Sarajevo was attacked by the Serbian military groups and Yugoslav Peoples Army. Even at that time, the Bosnian people still believed that the presence of UN peace troops, European observers and the International Red Cross in Sarajevo could prevent an escalation of the war. But this was not the case.

Observers left, the International Red Cross moved out of Sarajevo, and the majority of people had to stay.

We refugees from Sarajevo tried to save our children and their future by escaping to Slovenia and other countries, but now we can not resist to a strong feeling that we are traitors, and that we are safe and our men, parents, brothers are suffering and fighting for our country.

We left everything that ever meant something to us and we are becoming more and more hopeless that we could ever go back to Sarajevo. We lost our life, our schools, friends, streets, our identity, our future.

Every day I am listening to the Radio of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and tremble when they start to speak about names of those that died. And when I watch TV and see Sarajevo in ruins, then I start to

cry because I know that it will never be like it was before. We lost our country. What left for us is the status of a displaced people, comparable only to the suffered by the Jews.

At the moment there are 1,700,000 people who were forced to leave their homes and families, more than 60,000 people have died, 100,000 Bosnian people are in concentration camps; the numbers of those that were raped, tortured or those who became disabled or went mad is unknown. I wonder how it is possible that the civilized world allows such things to happen, and there are no ways to prevent them.

Dr. Radovan Karadžić, the leader of Bosnian Serbs, a psychiatrist, used his knowledge and profession against the people of Bosnia. He invented a hellish scenarios for the destruction of Sarajevo and Bosnia. In his plan are concentration camps, bombing, grenades, shelters, death. Thousands and thousands of killers and murderers found themselves in his infernal plans. His vision became reality.

I am aware of the fact that there is no ideal solution for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but I am also positive that cantonization and division of it into ethnically pure territories can never be a solution. It would mean a total genocide over the Muslims and people who do not have ethnically pure identity.

I am not trying to make an appeal to the governments or politicians, that they should make military intervention possible since I realize that the fate of the Bosnian people is not an important factor in the international high political games.

Therefore, I am asking people and citizens of all civilized countries to help us by putting pressure on their parliaments, non-governmental and other organizations to create a favourable public opinion for our situation.

Please, help us to get jobs, to educate our children, to create their and our future. Help us to get our families, our fathers and sons back. Help us to become people again.

Editor's footnote: Azra was on October 28th 1992 informed that her husband, a member of Sarajevo defence forces, was killed. ■

SWITZERLAND WITHOUT AN ARMY

This Autumn G S O A the group that is agitating for a military free Switzerland state celebrated its 10th birthday with a large international meeting on the perspectives of the peace movement in Europe. Among the 500 people who attended the meeting was Vesna Teršelič from Zagreb who was an invited speaker.

G S O A in many diverse ways enjoys an extraordinary position in the unfolding history of Europe's new emerging social movements. When this body was originally founded by some 100 Swiss nationals who were drawn from such groups as the Socialist, Green, Pacifist, and Feminist movements among others, almost no-one took this body seriously. At that stage the armed forces in Switzerland enjoyed a special position in society, being looked upon almost with the reverence a sacred cow enjoys in other societies, hence G S O A who desired its abolition was regarded by many (among them elements of the official press) as being cranks and or also of being mad fundamentalists. Furthermore the peace movement in Europe at that early stage as a whole concerned itself solely with the missile question and was not then ready to reflect on the military question in its entirety,

Nonetheless despite these difficulties G S O A began its long campaign to attain

the achievement of the goals it had set itself, and did not for a moment retreat from the fray or allow itself to be diverted from its task. Its basic hypothesis being - that wars no longer can solve the problems that beset Europe, and that being the case the military itself by its very presence is now one of the largest problems to be overcome if a lasting peace is to be realised. The existence of the military, G S O A argues diverts away from us the resources that are needed in order to establish a global peace policy that offers equal life chances to all, and provides a means by which people will become educated in such a manner that recourse to violence in order to solve conflicts will no longer occur.

In the political sphere G S O A adopted an original approach. As a first step the body established a grass roots structure with groups in place in all areas of the country. In March 1985 G S O A launched an initiative to amend the federal constitution, and to this end the organisation set itself the task of gaining something in the region of 1 million signatures to bolster their argument that the army should be abolished. This action of theirs provoked many debates during the course of which it was possible to discern another face of Swiss society which was totally at odds with the official face that had so often been portrayed. By November 1989 no less than one million of the Swiss electorate

(35.6% of the total) did in fact vote for the abolition of the national army.

G S O A by that stage had a membership of 13,000 and they continued to pursue the goal they had set themselves. Their work at that point had taken on a European dimension, G S O A as a result helped to constitute not only an antimilitaristic network but also a citizen movement for a European constitution with direct-democratic citizens rights. This was done because for G S O A it was clear, that only direct democracy, which bestows more power to the people than simple representative democracy, enabled the Swiss opposition to show to the official political elite that one third of the population desired a peace policy devoid of an army. This Spring G S O A made another effort in pursuit of its goals, and in only one month it managed to attract 500,000 signatures opposing the governments decision to purchase 34 F/A - 18 tactical aircraft at a cost of 3400 million Swiss Francs. This record making initiative gave G S O A a new impact in Swiss politics - beside gaining for it 8,000 new members - which gives us hope that the second decade of G S O A's existence will be as fruitful as was the first. ■

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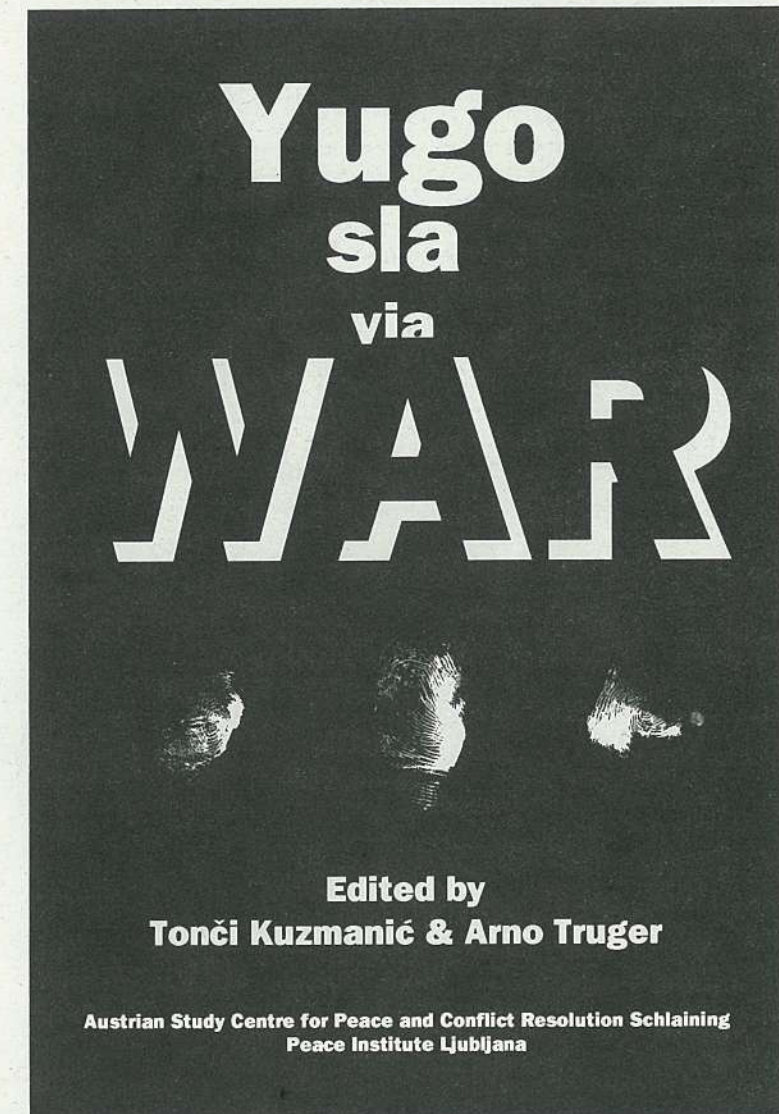
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"With the transition from communism/socialism to "post-socialism", instead of the "society" of a large, communist deprivation, which has contained numerous small privileges for exceptional large parts of the population, "yugoslavs" have a society of one large, national liberation which contains numerous small deprivations of an extremely large share of the population! And this "situation" was the breeding ground for the "conflicts", for "disintegration", for War(s)..." *Tonči Kuzmanić*



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Recommended Publications in English on anti-war activities in former-yugo:
Peace News, published in coop. with WRI, Dawes Str.55, London, SE17 1EL, tel. +44-71-7037189.
War Report, previo known as YUGOFAX, published by Institute for War & Peace Reporting, 1 Auckland Street, London SE11 5HU, tel. +44-71-7937930.

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