
Interview: Zarko Domljan

'It is genocide going on against Croatia'

This interview with Zarko Domljan, the president of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia, was conducted during a conference of the European Democratic Union in Paris Sept. 11-13. Mr. Domljan was one of the invited guests at this international conference, which brought together the heads of 24 Western, especially European, parties and many ministers and heads of state, along with President Peterle of Slovenia, and President Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The majority of the leaders of the newly formed eastern democracies had also been invited, among them: Prime Minister Jozsef Antall of Hungary and his foreign affairs minister; Vice Prime Minister Baudys of Czechoslovakia; the prime minister of Slovakia; Prime Minister Jan Krysztof Bielecki of Poland, and the presidents of three parties of the Baltic states. Russian President Boris Yeltsin also sent a representative.

The conference devoted the majority of its time to how to increase aid to the former U.S.S.R. and to the new democracies of the east, and the civil war in Yugoslavia and how Europe could intervene to resolve the crisis.

"One cannot force people to live together when they don't want it anymore. And we cannot tolerate, like today in Yugoslavia, for instance, that in the name of the principle of non-intervention, we allow massacres to be perpetrated without intervening," stated former French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac. Chirac called for a U.N., Western European Union, or CSCE political, humanitarian, and "eventually a military" intervention in the name of assistance to peoples in danger.

At the press conference of all the heads of parties, Domljan called on the international community to immediately support the independence of Croatia. It is as if we are in cage with a wild tiger, he said. Either we are allowed to open the door and leave, or else the European Community removes the tiger from the cage.

EIR: Can you give us an update of the present military situation in your country?

Domljan: The situation is complicated, because the Army is supporting the rebels in Croatia, and those rebels are supported by Serbia! Part of the Serbian population in Croatia is against the freely and democratically elected institutions in Croatia. They don't accept the Croatian Republic as their

homeland. They want to belong to "Greater Serbia," and it is impossible because they are far from Serbia; they live in Croatia and not in Serbia. So we insist that the borders cannot be changed by force.

At the same time we are prepared to give all the rights and privileges to Serbs living in Croatia according to European standards—and not only to Serbs, which make up about 12% of the population, but to all ethnic minorities. We are willing to give them cultural and political autonomy, the right to participate on all levels of government according to their percentage of the population, and even to guarantee local self-government in areas where the Serbs represent a majority of the population.

EIR: At the press conference of the heads of parties, you said genocide is being perpetrated against the Croatian people. Can you elaborate?

Domljan: We are exposed to open aggression from the Yugoslav Army, which is a declared communist army, and they want to reestablish communism in Yugoslavia. They are against multiparty elections; they say that the multiparty system is destroying Yugoslavia, and that capitalism is entering and occupying Croatia and Yugoslavia. They fight in the name and ideals of socialism; they defend socialism and the socialist system in Yugoslavia, and that is absurd in today's Europe. I talked about genocide because there are many villages which were destroyed completely, and the population either killed or expelled from their homes. Also cultural monuments, churches, kindergartens, and nursing homes were destroyed.

It really is genocide. We are not armed and we can't fight against the Army, which is one of the best equipped armies in eastern Europe after that of the Soviet Union. This is why I used the metaphor of the tiger—to be clear. We are put together in a cage with a wild tiger and the outcome of this battle is clear. We are not strong enough to defend ourselves, so either we open the door and leave the cage or we ask Europe to take the tiger out of the cage.

EIR: Are you asking for military assistance from Europe?

Domljan: Of course, but according to international law it is impossible before Croatia and Slovenia are recognized as independent states. So, we think that the only way to stop the aggression, and it must be stopped by all means, is the recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia.

EIR: How do you explain the reactions of the Europeans and the West in general who have refused to give support to the independence of these two republics?

Domljan: That's a question of policy and diplomatic maneuvers, and we are against it. We are completely unsatisfied with the behavior of the European Community in general, and not only with the 12 [EC members], but more generally with the international democratic community, which only gives verbal and decorative support to Croatia.