

Glasgow press conference exposes brutality of Serbian aggression

by Our Special Correspondent

On Aug. 6, the Schiller Institute and the Glasgow-based "Scots against War" called a press conference on the Balkans war, in collaboration with several Scots groups and individuals opposed to present British policy in that area. Chaired by Keith Bovey, an Edinburgh lawyer, among the speakers were Michael Hare-Duke, Episcopalian Bishop of Perth; Dr. Norman Godman, a Labour Member of Parliament for Glasgow; and Anton Lasic, a Scot of Croatian origin who has been sending relief convoys to the beleaguered Bosnians and Croats.

The conference was prompted by the tour to European capitals by "Anna" of Vukovar, a Croatian woman who lost her husband during the siege of that city, and whose son disappeared after the Serbians evacuated the hospital there. Anna, who cannot be identified more precisely due to the danger to her son who is in Serbian hands, was the first to address the 50 or so journalists and representatives of relief, political, and religious institutions gathered in the Copthorne Hotel.

A shattering story

Journalists wept as she told what had happened to her friends, her husband, and her son, under three months of pitiless bombardment, during which they could leave their basements only at night, and then only at risk to their lives. She said that all the city's pet animals tried to flee to what they thought was safety in the cellars, because that is where the people were, but there was no room for them; even the canaries flew into the cellars and hid in people's hair from fright.

Her son had been one of the 600 people who at night, would creep out of the cellars and search for food and water throughout the city to restore the besiegeds' strength; when he was hit by shrapnel, over 30 shards remaining in his body, the hospital—it too was operating out of its cellars—could not take him. After the city fell, the Serbians looked for the 600 Samaritans to make a terrible example of them, put them on buses, and stole them away. Nothing has been heard of them since. Anna had taken her son to the hospital the day before the city fell, thinking that, as a wounded non-combatant, he would be protected by the Geneva Convention.

Instead, on Nov. 20, 1991, Serbian Maj. Vesenin Slivanchin seized 247 men and women from the hospital, including Anna's son, and took them for a bus journey to a destination which remains unknown to this day.

A Serbian documentary celebrating the fall of Vukovar, and broadcast on Belgrade television, inadvertently showed

the awful truth: A Swiss International Red Cross (IRC) official is seen, haggard with grief and pale as death, impotently pleading with Slivanchin to respect the agreement signed with the IRC the night before, namely, that no military should go anywhere near the hospital, and that the IRC should be solely responsible for evacuating the wounded. Instead, men at arms and Serbian Red Cross officials are shown strutting through the hospital, bundling the wounded patients onto Major Slivanchin's "short bus ride" from which they have not returned.

Carrington turns deaf ear

Anna concluded: "I lived through World War II, and its horrors were not one percent of what now goes on in the Balkans. On the 10th of January 1992, I returned to Vukovar and begged the Chetnik leadership, which rules over the ruins of our city, to let me search for my son. They said they had no information on my son, and that I had to leave. Even the International Red Cross cannot go in there. Others who returned to Vukovar after it fell to look for their relatives, have never come back. On Feb. 6, I and other mothers met with Lord Carrington in Belgrade. We gave him the list of the hundreds who have disappeared from our city. He said nothing to our pleas and our tears, and we have heard not a word from him since. None of the international agencies have been able to help us. Already the Serbs are beginning to expel Hungarians and other non-Serb groups from Vojvodina. Our houses, our household objects, can be rebuilt, replaced. Imagine, if the thousands of men gone missing were potatoes, what a mountain it would be! But they are not potatoes, they are men. You cannot replace an individual human life! If you Europeans allow this war to continue, the war will come to you."

The next speaker was Paolo Raimondi, for the Schiller Institute. Speaking as a friend and associate of Lyndon LaRouche, he warned that the future of Europe is Vukovar, unless the peoples of western Europe can be mobilized to stop the war. Millions demonstrated against the Gulf war—where are they now? he asked. The people must be told the truth. They must be told, who is really behind this war, who pushed Serbia outside her borders; who, like Lawrence Eagleburger of the U.S. State Department, spoke as late as June 1991 of preserving "Yugoslavia's territorial integrity"? In any event, there will never be true peace anywhere in

Europe, unless we break with International Monetary Fund policies and rebuild eastern Europe's ruined infrastructure and industry.

Both Bishop Hare-Duke and Dr. Godman strongly attacked British policy in the region. The bishop said he was horrified by Margaret Thatcher's strident calls for military intervention, since "peace does not proceed from the barrel of a gun." Equally irresponsible, he said, was the refusal of the British government to take in refugees, when Germany, for example, has taken over 400,000. "We cannot tell the refugees where they should go—or stay. They must choose where they want to go." If the European Community stands idly by, he said, refusing, because of the Greek position, to recognize Macedonia, the conflict would soon spread to Macedonia, Kosovo, and beyond.

Noting that he had been cooperating with the Schiller Institute in the attempt to prevent the Belgrade authorities from carrying out death sentences on captured Croatian soldiers, Godman said he feared that behind the proposals for NATO military intervention, lie unstated aims which directly violate the NATO Charter. He said he did not know what the answer should be, or even whether the U.N. or Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) could militarily intervene, but in any case, it cannot be tolerated that such

decisions be taken in secret, out of sight of the people's elected representatives in Parliament. The Balkan war, and the Baroness Chalker's scandalous statements on keeping refugees "as close as possible to their homes," made recalling the Parliament to London of utmost urgency.

The press conference went on for over two hours, as the dozen or so journalists and 40 to 50 observers debated what is to be done. Representatives of relief and child care agencies demanded that the British government allow in refugees. The conference was covered on Scottish television on the 1 o'clock news, on BBC Radio Scotland, by the *Glasgow Herald*, the *Scotsman*, the *Catholic Observer*, and the *Glasgow Evening Times*. Bishop Hare-Duke's remarks however, were taken completely out of context by the *Daily Telegraph* of London, so that it seemed he had taken an extreme stand against any form of intervention.

In the following days, Anna met with the Scottish members of the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq, lawyers, church figures, and activists in the nationalist cause. Her interpreter, a 19-year-old girl, was a Canadian of Croatian origin who, despite a severe hip injury, flew to the war zone three months ago to help Caritas do relief work. This beautiful young girl made a deep impression on the Scottish teenagers who came to hear Anna speak.

LaRouche on Bosnia crisis

Released Aug. 11, 1992 by independent presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.:

On the 11th of August, a display ad appeared in the pages of one of Germany's leading daily newspapers, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, whose contents I fully support, on the subject of policy for relief and assistance to victims of Serbian aggression in the region of former Yugoslavia.

The United States has an obligation in this matter, because the war could have been prevented had not the associates of Henry A. Kissinger—specifically Lawrence Eagleburger in the U.S. Department of State and Lord Carrington from London—acted to spearhead actions to unleash the Serbian aggressors against their neighbors, first against Slovenia and Croatia, where bloody violations of human rights and aggressive war were conducted, and most recently against the Bosnians and implicitly threatened against the people of Albanian stock in Kosovo region and against the people of Macedonia.

In this situation, with over 100,000 dead, and perhaps up to 3 million refugees already generated by the Nazi-like Serbian operation, we cannot sit by on the sidelines and say this mess is too great, we cannot meddle in it. We

must take effective action. In my circumstances, I cannot prescribe in great detail effective action, because to have effective action, would mean to contact the various forces involved, and to come to agreement on a package of action.

However, we must understand one thing. We must not spread the Balkan war; we must contain it, and while containing it, we must secure some relief for the people of particularly Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, who are the immediate primary victims thus far of Serbian Nazi-like aggression and Nazi-like concentration camps and Nazi-like people removal.

We are on the verge of what might be called a final solution method practiced by the Serbs, Hitler-style, against Croats and Bosnians, and we know not what other peoples tomorrow. We cannot stand by again and watch this happen without doing something. Let us hope we do something effective, that we stop the war, and we do not spread it.

I should add one thing to this, that what we must do of course is to come in—as the ad itself in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* says—and introduce an economic reconstruction program. Economic development is the essence of the works of peace. The best weapon against war is not war, though sometimes we have to take military action; the best action against war, is the works of peace, the positive, affirmative works of peace.