

had joined the Serbian militias a bit earlier came with 10 men to rape her. They raped her for several hours, and she finally escaped by saying that she had to go to the bathroom and jumping out of the second story window and running through the woods in the middle of the night. She finally arrived at the village where her mother-in-law lived, and had never told her mother-in-law or any family members what had occurred. According to her understanding of Muslim law, once she was defiled, she could never have her husband look on her again. She said she realized her marriage was over the moment she was raped, and only hoped to be able to see her 10-year-old daughter again, one day. So you think about how this systematic policy totally destroys the family.

Many of the women who escape from these rape camps reported that the Serbian soldiers who came in to rape them, said, "I don't want to do this, but if I don't do this, I'll be killed." So you're not just talking about some madmen, but you have a policy of total terror.

I wanted to stress again the optimism that people have,

and particularly among people from the church, the relief agencies, and the Bosnian government. Rebuilding is going on with virtually no resources. In Osijek, in eastern Croatia only a kilometer from Chetnik outposts, the center of the city, which was 50% destroyed by shelling, has been almost entirely rebuilt in nine months. They were very hopeful and encouraged by the fact that we were there. Reverend Bevel made a proposal about some social actions that we might be able to take in the area to one of the church officials, and at first, he said, "This is all wonderful, but it's too late. I'm happy for your concern, but you should have come here a year ago." Then, at a certain point, his eyes started twinkling, and he said, "Well, you have really great faith to think that something can be done. And *maybe* God has sent this Jim Bevel here, with these wild proposals to salvage this situation." There was that degree of optimism that we found everywhere: That is what the enemy is trying to wipe out, any vestige of Christian civilization, human civilization from the area.

## Victim of geopolitics tells her story

*Rev. James Bevel was given the following written account by a 16-year-old Bosnian during his trip with Lynne Speed to Croatia.*

After the attack to my village, I was the eyewitness of the massacre of civilians, which was the biggest tragedy I have ever seen before. I did not know that something even worse than death awaited me. My sister bore a baby in a basement where we were hiding during the mortar shell attack to the village. After the fall of [my village], and when Chetniks entered the village, I saw dead children lying near the house, aged between 3 and 8. I saw a destroyed mosque, and men taken away.

Some renowned persons were abducted from a column, and then killed with a gunshot in the head. They fell on the ground, and their bodies lay all around in grotesque poses. Everywhere, only chaos, panic, and death. They accused my grandfather of killing one Serbian, and then they killed him in front of my eyes in the doorway. A number of women and children remained in the village. We were hiding in basements of the destroyed houses. My house was untouched. A group of Chetniks arrived that day. They were looking for precious things, and information about men who were hiding in woods. One among them, about 30 years old, ordered me to follow him in a

house. I had to go. I was terribly frightened, and I did not expect the thing that would happen later. I knew that my resistance would have endangered the lives of my family.

When we entered the house, he asked for money, jewels, and other precious things. Everything in the house was at his disposition. He asked me where the men were. I did not answer. He ordered my to take off my clothes. I was terribly frightened; I took off my clothes in silence. I felt like I was dying. I closed my eyes. I could not watch him. He punched me, and I fell down. He lay on me; then he did it. I was crying, screaming, bleeding—I was a virgin. He ordered me to stand up. I wanted to gather my clothes to cover my nakedness and my desecrated body, but I was not even allowed to touch it. He ordered me to stand and wait. He warned me to be careful of what I was doing, because the destiny of my family depended on me. He left the house and invited two other Chetniks to enter the house. I cried. These two men did the same thing as he had done before. I did not feel anything, anymore. I did not notice when they left the house and for how long I lay on the floor alone.

My mother arrived and found me lying on the floor. She entered the house, and when she saw me in such humiliating condition, it was the worst thing. She supposed what had happened to me, and she felt it like the biggest sadness of our life. We cried and screamed together. She dressed me, and we went together to the basement. . . . My mother helped me a lot. I would like to become a mother some day. But how? Men represent to me now, violence and pain. I know that all men are not like this, but this feeling is stronger than me.