
Interview: Josip Cvitan

The war in Croatia is not over: an appeal for international help

Mr. Cvitan is the vice president of the Croatian Democratic Party. He was interviewed by Paolo Raimondi on May 8.

EIR: How do you see the situation in Croatia, and what solution do you see to the present crisis?

Cvitan: The situation in Croatia is very difficult, because the Serbian and Federal Army escalation is becoming stronger and stronger. In the past two weeks, they have bombarded almost all the cities on the border line, like Zadar, the area of Dubrovnik, Osijek, Vinkovci, and in the area of Slavonski Brod, they are destroying all the bridges connecting Bosnia and Croatia. Slavonski Brod is almost completely destroyed. The Serbian Army is sending more troops and matériel to consolidate its positions on the front. Unfortunately, at the present time, the United Nations troops which have arrived are not helping at all; they are just preparing to take over their task on May 15, as planned.

The Croatian people do not believe that the situation will become better with the arrival of the U.N.O. troops, because the U.N.O. troops will suspend all the Croatian laws in the areas where they will deploy, to allow the Croatian and Serbian people to go back to their villages. But the Serbian houses and villages are not destroyed, while the Croatian villages have been totally annihilated, and there is no chance for the Croatians to go back.

The situation in Croatia is very difficult, and we now have over 300,000 refugees, and more than 230,000 refugees from Bosnia—all together about 550,000 refugees who live just with the aid of the Croatian government and people. General Chamblar from India, who leads the U.N.O. troops, is known to have more friends in Serbia than in Croatia, and is not believed to be neutral; so far his answers to all questions have been, "Wait, wait." He has immobilized our troops and our units—we should not send our fighters to the front, but we should wait.

And day after day, the people are dying in our streets. In Osijek, just in the past days, more than 20 people have been killed, and over 200 wounded and hospitalized. Slavonski Brod, on the Bosnian border, was in the past week heavily targeted and bombarded by airplanes and heavy artillery, killing many people each day. They have bombarded also

locations where children found refuge, and in one house, for example, 16 adults and 6 children were killed; they were buried yesterday. Many people have also been killed on the bridges between Bosnia and Croatia, which have been one of the main targets of the Serbian forces. We have appealed to the U.N.O., to the U.S.A., to the CIS countries; unfortunately, we get no answer.

EIR: What do you think about the situation in Bosnia?

Cvitan: In Bosnia the situation is very complicated, because there we have three nations. The Serbians, through their control over the Federal Army, control more than 68% of the Bosnian territory. They have so many weapons and so much ammunition that we cannot properly defend ourselves. All the Croatians who were born in Bosnia went back to their towns and are fighting very well, but they do not have enough weapons and ammunition. Unfortunately, the relations between Croatians and Muslims are not perfect, not as they should be; there is no complete unity, while the Serbians are united and they attack with the full backing of the Federal Army and of [the Serbian government in] Belgrade. We have heard that a unit of 1,200 men in Sarajevo has surrendered to the Yugoslavian Army; they expected to be treated in a human way, but we hear that they are now in a horrible situation.

It is not easy to foresee a solution for Bosnia. Maybe it could be an independent state with three cantons. The program of my party is centered on the support for the integral, independent, and sovereign state of Bosnia. Serbia wants to split Bosnia in three parts and maintain the territory now under control of the Federal Army; for this reason, they are interested in destroying Bosnia. Unfortunately, Lord Carington has taken over from [Serbian dictator Slobodan] Milosevic the idea that more than 80% of Serbians in the Yugoslavian Army were born in Bosnia and should remain in Bosnia. This means that 80% of the Army will remain with a lot of weapons, and this will represent a big danger to the Muslims and the Croatians.

EIR: Do you believe that following the collapse of the system established by the Versailles Treaty in 1919, certain forces in U.S.A. and Europe are planning to change the map

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and the borders in Europe? Do you think that these forces plan to prevent the unity of Europe?

Cvitan: The present situation we have in the former Yugoslavia is the result of the artificial creation of Yugoslavia, with the intent to change Europe. The creation of Yugoslavia, in the context of the Versailles system, was to be, as seen by many politicians, the cancer cell of Europe. Yes, there are forces in the U.S.A. and in Europe who are interested in destabilizing Europe. Now that the Soviet Union has disappeared as a political and military power, the U.S.A. has no counterbalance in the world; it is the only military power. But Europe, with its 300-400 million inhabitants, with all its cultural and industrial forces, will be definitely a big competitor. Already now, in the present crisis in Yugoslavia, one can see almost a war between the U.S.A. and a united Europe.

I have already said on other occasions that the war against Croatia was a debacle for the U.S.A.; I said that the big power America has broken its teeth on the small Croatia. And the importance was not for Croatia alone, because Croatia is a small country; it was a test between the U.S.A. and Europe. In Europe, there are forces that are joining together to face the U.S.A., not militarily, but economically and politically.

EIR: The Schiller Institute and Lyndon LaRouche have proposed the program of the "Productive Triangle" and of infrastructure development in Europe. How do you see the economic development of Europe from a Croatian standpoint?

Cvitan: First I have to say that the united Europe has not yet understood the meaning and the importance of the "Productive Triangle" of the Schiller Institute. The countries of Europe are still under the influence of the International Monetary Fund, and the monetary and banking system connected to it. We in Croatia have gotten, from the first moment [of our existence as an independent nation], a debt of \$3 billion, and we became, from the first moment, a slave of the IMF. And as the result of the war, we have become poorer and poorer. Croatia must now work together with the whole of Europe. Europe, in the context of the "Productive Triangle," is definitely a center of economic and financial power. Not militarily, but at the economic and financial level, Europe will surely be a strong competitor with the U.S.A. After the fall of the communist regimes in the East, we have now a historical chance to create an industrialized united Europe for progress, peace, and stability in the world.

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Lyndon LaRouche for infrastructural integration of all Europe is the just and the only answer to the economic depression threatening all the world, beginning from the internal economic collapse in the United States. Croatia, like the rest of Europe, needs modern, quick railways, roads, and water transportation, nuclear energy, efficient communications, and science. Croatia is a natural connection with the Mediterranean and the southeast of Europe. Before the war, Croatia was already a key crossroads of North-South and East-West connections.

There are great projects in which we could be an essential part, like the plan to connect the North Adriatic with the Danube, through a canal which could make water transportation very cheap and attractive. Do not forget that Croatia was, until recently, the third or fourth shipbuilder in the world. But the most important thing is that we want to be part of a modern and industrialized Europe, to contribute also to peace and stability in this part of Europe, for a future of peaceful cooperation with all the peoples that live in this part of the world.

EIR: How do you see the special cultural and scientific contribution which Croatia can give to the development of Europe?

Cvitan: Croatia is part of European culture and civilization. We have been part of Europe all along; we have been on the border between East and West. Many Croatians are working in western Europe, in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France; more than 15,000 are doctors, engineers, experts in biogenetics, for example. We are a part of the culture of Europe, historically and today.

EIR: Do you have any particular message you would like to convey to our readers?

Cvitan: I want to launch an appeal for Croatia: Please help her, but help her quickly, because every day we are being hit with many victims, many dead, many destroyed cities. Help her with economic means, because the people are hungry; they have no more opportunities in this poor Croatia, damaged by the war and still partially occupied. Our industry functions only at 40% of capacity. We have no money. Day after day, we are receiving more and more refugees from Bosnia; 550,000 refugees is a heavy burden for Croatia. We will do everything possible, but we really need help from Europe and the civilized world. Quickly.