

# Srebrenica, the new 'Katyn Forest'

*Katharine Kanter reports from a conference in Bonn of the Society of Endangered Peoples, which exposed the British-U.N. betrayal of Bosnia.*

The question of the fall of the Bosnian cities of Srebrenica and Zepa to the Chetnik forces of Radovan Karadzic, will be seen by historians as of as great import as the murder by the Red Army of several thousand Polish officers at the Forest of Katyn in 1941. British Foreign Office internal memoranda, released under the 40 years' rule this year, some extracts of which were printed in the London *Times* in July, show that the Foreign Office was not only aware that it was the Red Army, not the Germans, which carried out the murders. British high officials may well have known of the Red Army's plans *in advance*. A memorandum, stating that it is "not in our interests" to let the truth be known as to the authors of the crime, points to that possibility.

It is the question of Srebrenica which dominated the Conference of the Society for Endangered Peoples held in Bonn Aug. 31-Sept. 4, as the Contact Group met in the nearby Petersberg fortress, to discuss the so-called "peace" plan.

It will be recalled that some time before Srebrenica fell, in mid-July, the city's military commander, Naser Oric, "The Tiger," had had to be evacuated due to a severe illness. At that point, strife broke out among the so-called "western powers." The new French President, Jacques Chirac, demanded that armed force be used to repel the Serbian onslaught. The British "went ballistic": They had *decided* that the enclaves would fall to Serbia *in order for the war to go on*. The Americans hesitated. Then, they went for the path of least resistance: Allow the weakly defended Zepa and Srebrenica to fall, while "pondering" the fate of Gorazde.

The British had already carefully prepared the new massacre at Katyn Forest. Their Special Forces are said to have been on the scene. Dutch Unprofor (U.N. Protection Forces) troops were supposed to be guarding Srebrenica. But they were only 400 men. Dutch military men and politicians on the *inside track*, said the city was in no danger, whilst the screams of those on the *outside track*, the Dutchmen inside Srebrenica, were ignored.

The actual log-book, the actual chain of command, of what happened, minute by minute, between Dutchbat, NATO Command, and the U.N. Secretariat, is not yet known. In military terms, these details count. Did Dutchbat commanders ask for air raids, or air support? Did they demand from NATO that the Serbian onslaught be stopped, or merely that Dutchbat be "covered" (provided with air sup-

port) to withdraw?

Real-time satellite information, available to the United States and Great Britain, that the men of Srebrenica were being taken away, was ignored. Hundreds of calls pouring in from the war zone to the NATO governments, were ignored. Because that was the plan.

## 'A few drinks is not a wild party'

A number of people in London are very interested to make sure that that chain of command never becomes known. Thus, for services rendered, they will blithely stab in the back their Dutch allies: The Dutch shall be made to carry the bag for everything that happened. The point is that although commanders or members of Dutchbat, as individuals, may have behaved atrociously, the decision *not* to stop the Serbians with air strikes was *not* made by Holland. On Sept. 2, a press conference was called by the Society for Endangered Peoples. Among those present was Colonel de Joong, a high official of the Dutch Defense Ministry, who remained in the corridors of the conference for the rest of the day. I asked Colonel de Joong whether the accusations made against the Dutch, in particular by the German parliamentarian Maria Luisa Beck, were justified. He replied: "We should not be made to bear the whole responsibility for the policy of the international community. What happened at Srebrenica is their policy, so let them be blamed." I asked him whether it were true, as Miss Beck has claimed, that the Dutch held a wild party with the Serbians the night the city fell. He replied: "A few drinks is not a wild party."

In the month of August, Miss Beck (of the Bundnis 90 party) travelled under the usual appalling conditions to Tuzla. There, she spoke to a great number of people who had fled Srebrenica. On Aug. 21, she wrote a report on what she had heard. She said: "I still cannot fully grasp, how it can be, that Europe . . . has delivered men into the hands of their murderers. The U.N. Base at Potocari was turned into a catwalk, from which [the Serbians] chose whom they wanted." A Bosnian soldier who refused to trust the U.N., and marched in a column of about 15,000 people who tried to break through to Tuzla, told Miss Beck the following:

"The Chetnik [Serbian] offensive began in early July. We learned that they were massing troops. Our mayor informed the U.N. He demanded we be defended, or that our

weapons be given back. We were told by the U.N., 'Don't worry. There will be air strikes.'

"On July 7, a hail of shells began to rain down. . . . The Chetniks attacked U.N. station Seleniada first. The U.N. pulled back. We took it over. The same at station Lubisavici. The U.N. pulled back. The same at the U.N. stations in the south of the city.

"A Dutch captain told us again, that our people would be defended.

"On July 10, the Chetniks reached the outskirts. On July 11, they entered the city. The people rushed toward the U.N. base near Potocari.

"The U.N. did have heavy weapons there. There were U.N. armored vehicles and tanks.

"Between July 7 and 11, shells rained down. But none hit the U.N. stations.

"As the Chetniks reached U.N. station Potocari, I saw, that they shook the hands of the Unprofor. Unprofor pulled their tanks back and gave up the base.

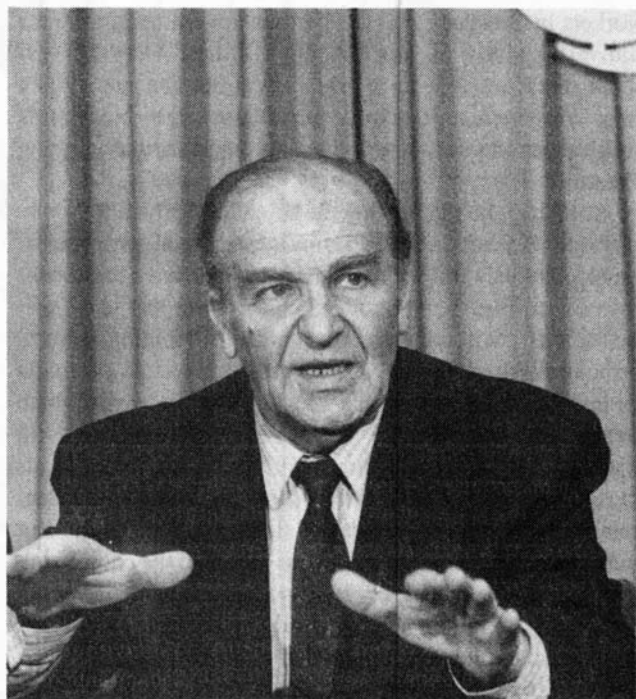
"Three thousand Bosnian men remained on the base. They believed the U.N. would protect them."

These men are those for whom the mass graves are now dug around Bratunac stadium.

Miss Beck was told by someone in the political department of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), who did not want to be identified, of a wild party on the night the city fell, between the Unprofor and the Chetniks. She was also told by an American officer who had been in Srebrenica, that before the city fell, the U.N. had changed the routing of aid convoys. Previously, they had started from areas controlled by the Bosnian government. Then, they were started from *Belgrade*. The number of convoys dropped from two a week to one. Bosnian sources have told this news agency, that the city of Srebrenica had no salt for three years, and no shoes for adult men ever came in the convoys—so that the soldiers could not fight. The American told Miss Beck, that by the time the city fell, the population was so weakened by privations, that even young men were not strong enough to stand upright.

A special session of the Dutch Parliament was held on Sept. 5, to discuss the fall of Srebrenica. The Dutch foreign minister and defense minister were called. According to the correspondent of the German daily *Die Welt* in the Dutch Parliament, Helmut Hetzel, it came out in the course of the debate, that Dutch Defense Minister Joris Voorhoeve was given false information by his commanders there, who had formed an agreement with Serbian Gen. Ratko Mladic on "cleansing" the city.

It now transpires that the 400 members of Dutchbat were not debriefed upon returning to Holland in August, but were sent on holiday for six weeks! The film and photographic material taken at Srebrenica by Dutchbat, as the Serbians entered the city, was destroyed, "due to carelessness," at the laboratory of the Dutch Ministry of Defense. The Rotterdam



Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic: "We will never give up Zepa and Srebrenica."

*Courier Handelsblatt* of Aug. 26 reported that Dutch Unprofor men reported seeing dump trucks full of dead bodies, and earthmoving equipment loading bodies onto them. These men had been the defenders of Srebrenica. Only now are the soldiers' eyewitness reports being taken down. They are to be sent as evidence to Special Prosecutor Richard Goldstone at the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

### The liberation of Bosnia

Among the most interesting presentations to the Bonn conference, was that of *Newsweek* journalist Roy Gutman. Gutman, who has a certain knowledge of military things, notably said:

"What would happen if the Bosnian Army were to capture Pale, and . . . the Fifth Corps, with help from Croatia, were to take on Banja Luka? . . . The fall of Knin forces you to think it through. . . ."

"Fifth Army Corps forces managed well against high odds under Commander Dudakovic. They developed their own tactics of maneuver, known as elastic defense, which kept the Bosnian and Krajina Serbs off-balance, and all this almost without equipment. Most of the fatal wounds they suffered in fighting were head wounds. Why? They had no helmets. Suppose they had helmets. And bullet proof vests. And fuel for their vehicles. It is safe to say they will, and soon."

According to Gutman, this is how the economy of the Serbian-occupied Krajina was shored up: The Bosnian guest-

workers in Germany, and the German government, gave the equivalent of \$10 million a month to Bihac. *All of this was paid to the Krajina Serbs to get food.* As Gutman puts it: "Not since West Germany bankrolled East Germany by buying free political prisoners at a king's ransom have I heard of anything like this."

Similarly, he reports that the so-called Serbian Republic of Bosnia lives off the loot from the international aid agencies, the blood money which the agencies let them have so the convoys can roll on to the besieged cities. Once that is cut off, the "S.R.B." will collapse. He concludes: "Ending a war in a truce with those responsible for genocide . . . is a formula for instability and another war. Just look at the way in which the inconclusive ending to World War I led straight to World War II. . . . President Clinton will pursue [partition] at his own political peril. He will face a damaging assault in an election year on his most vulnerable flank, foreign policy. But will he instead encourage Bosnia to carry out the course suggested by General Dudakovic? It's a hard decision to expect in one gulp, yet I don't see any real alternative."

A similar message intended for the United States was delivered to the Bonn conference by former U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey, and by Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic. "Western governments," said the prime minister, "have the proof that regular troops of Serbia-Montenegro are in Bosnia even now. They have the proof that Belgrade delivers weapons to the war effort in Bosnia every day, and that she intends to divide Bosnia and annex a part to Serbia. Can anyone seriously state that the ground-to-air missile systems, installed in Bosnia—and they even control the skies over the Adriatic—were not obtained from Serbia? . . . The not-so-distant past of Europe shows that governments can make grave errors of judgment. Actual power, and wisdom in statesmen, do not, unfortunately, always go hand in hand."

### **What the Serbians who defend Bosnia say**

One of the more original presentations, was that of a Serbian, a high official of the Defense Ministry of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Radimir Marinkovic. As he was too ill to travel, his speech was read. War crimes, he said, were carefully planned in advance, by Belgrade. There was a systematic effort, before ever the war began, to recruit convicts and the mentally ill into paramilitary units. These people were already "outsiders" when sent into Bosnia. The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art, said Marinkovic, has for decades, indeed, since before World War II, promoted a policy of transporting "aliens" in pursuit of an "ethnically pure" Greater Serbia. "The sight of an Academician in handcuffs, will be more useful against the new Nazism than all U.N. Resolutions."

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, said Marinkovic, has purposefully destroyed Yugoslavia, to build Greater Serbia, by burning the bridges of the Serbians in Bosnia, "tying them to the Serbian Nazi regime by the chains of crimes they

witnessed. . . . He ordered massacres of non-Serbs to be committed in the presence of the Serbian population. The message was clear: From now on there will be no retreat. . . . Serbian nationalists warned that the World War II practice, where neighbors of different nationalities protected each other, will not be tolerated. . . . That is why so many distinguished Serbs were slaughtered in 1992, others beaten up or fired from their jobs, precisely in those areas where the anti-Nazi and anti-Facist movements [during World War II] were very strong. . . .

"The failure to provoke retaliation [by the Bosnians] against the Serbs in Bosnian cities, was one of the biggest obstacles to a Great Serbia project. Serbian Gen. Milan Gvero spoke in advance about 20,000 Serbians who were to die in Sarajevo. A TV editor in Pale said they were going to repeat what happened at Vukovar and make a cornfield out of Sarajevo. But he could not explain why they wanted to destroy a town where 60,000 Serbs lived."

### **'We will never give up Zepa and Srebrenica'**

The sponsors of the conference, the Society for Endangered Peoples, appear to support just about every insurgency, every remote tribe, on this planet, and its secretary, Tilman Zulch, has gone into print in unfriendly fashion against the activities of *EIR*. For this reason, relations between the Society and *EIR* have always been, shall we say, tense. However, this bizarre group, which for whatever reason, did invite *EIR* to the Bonn event, has done some useful things for Bosnia. Its declaration, issued at the end of the conference, is worth taking note of.

The declaration considers that what has taken, and is now taking place in Bosnia falls within the strict definition of genocide, as per the conventions and treaties now in force in international law. The Permanent Members of the U.N. Security Council, and named individuals such Lord David Owen, Thorvald Stoltenberg, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Yasushi Akashi, and others, therefore bear, in strict legal terms, criminal responsibility under the Genocide and other conventions. Therefore, the State of Bosnia is justified in bringing criminal proceedings against them at The Hague. Therefore, the "international community" is *legally responsible* to rebuild Bosnia under a Marshall Plan. The declaration also considers the arms embargo to be "illegal, and furthering the purpose of genocide" and, therefore, calls for the embargo to be lifted forthwith.

As the Bonn conference ended on this forceful note, its echo was perhaps heard in Ankara, Turkey. Emerging from meetings with American and other diplomats there, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic told the Turkish press that he would not accept partition, nor the schemes put to him on eastern Bosnia by the Contact Group: "We will never give up Zepa and Srebrenica, or accept for the Brcko Corridor to be widened. The only State on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, is and remains Bosnia and Herzegovina."