

THE BETRAYAL OF SREBRENICA: WHY DID THE MASSACRE HAPPEN? WILL IT HAPPEN AGAIN?

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS
AND HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS
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TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 1998

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND
HUMAN RIGHTS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
*Washington, DC.***

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:10 a.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. [presiding] The Subcommittee will come to order.

Good morning. Today's hearing is about four terrible days in July 1995, when an estimated 8,000 people were executed by Bosnian Serb soldiers who had overrun the United Nations designated safe area of Srebrenica. The invaders killed women and children, and they almost certainly killed the majority of the adult male population of the so-called safe area. These brutal killings were not committed in battle. They were committed against people who were unarmed and helpless and who had been repeatedly assured that they would not be harmed if they surrendered. In some cases, these assurances came not only from the killers themselves, but also from the U.N. peacekeeping forces whose mission was to protect them. The evidence is overwhelming that the executions were committed with the specific intention of destroying the Bosnian Muslim population of the area. This intention is the central element in the crime of genocide.

The U.N. peacekeeping forces in Srebrenica were charged with enforcing Security Council Resolution 836, which had pledged to defend the safe areas with "all necessary means, including the use of force." But when the moment of truth came, the U.N. forces offered only token resistance to the Serb offensive. Their military and political commanders had redefined their primary mission not as the protection of the people of Srebrenica, but as the safety of the U.N. forces themselves. When Bosnian Serb commander Ratko Mladic threatened violence against the blue-helmeted U.N. soldiers, here is the way one of those soldiers described the reaction. I quote: "Everybody got a fright. You could easily get killed in such an operation. As far as I knew, we had not been sent to Srebrenica to defend the enclave, but rather as some kind of spruced-up observers."

So that is what the peacekeepers became. Observers to genocide. Soon they became something more than observers. On July 13, the Dutch blue-helmet battalion handed over to the Serb invaders 300 Bosnian Muslims who had sought safety within the U.N. compound. They watched as the men were separated from the women and the children, a process which was already well known in Bosnia as a sign that the men were in imminent danger of death. These men were never heard from again.

Terrible as these events were, they could hardly have been a surprise to those who liked to call themselves the international community. I happened to be chairman of the Helsinki Commission at the time of the fall of Srebrenica. Three months earlier, the commission had held a hearing documenting the systematic nature of the ethnic cleansing then going on in Bosnia and the subsequent widespread attempts by Serb militants to destroy mosques and to otherwise erase all evidence of Muslim culture.

Another hearing also in April 1995 dealt with the question of what the United States ought to do about the atrocities being perpetrated in Bosnia. Richard Holbrooke represented the Administration. Though he offered sympathy for the Bosnians, he gave us all the reasons why the United States would neither come to their defense nor allow them to defend themselves through the lifting of the arms embargo. A genuine effort by the United States to halt the slaughter in Bosnia-Herzegovina would not come until months later when it was too late for the victims of Srebrenica.

In the 2½ years that have passed since the fall of Srebrenica, we have learned more details not only about the scope and the brutality of the massacres, but also about why nobody did anything to stop them. First, as some of our witnesses will testify today, it appears that the United Nation's top military and political officials in the former Yugoslavia, Mr. Akashi and Bernard Janvier, regarded the safe areas as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. As David Rohde and others have written, most projected scenarios for an end-game in Bosnia involve trading the Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia for Serb-dominated suburbs of Sarajevo.

It further appears that these same officials may have been on better terms with the Serb commanders who were threatening the enclaves than with the Bosnian Muslim population that they were supposed to protect. To paraphrase a remark by another United Nations leader about another mass murder, Mladic seems to have impressed them as a man that they could do business with. Even before July 1995, Akashi and Janvier had begun to act as though the protection of the safe areas was not an important part of their mandate and they had communicated this to the Serbs. A month earlier, Akashi may have reached a secret agreement with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic that, in return for releasing U.N. hostages held by the Serbs, the U.N. forces would stop calling for NATO airstrikes in response to future Serb aggression.

Within days of the massacres, accounts by survivors and by U.N. peacekeepers themselves had begun to surface. It also appears that the United Nations had access to satellite photographs of mass graves and perhaps even of men kneeling on the ground waiting to be shot. This evidence had surprisingly little effect on the attitudes of the U.N. commanders, whose own reports had described nothing

more serious than harassment and unfortunate incidents. Rohde reports that 3 weeks after the massacres at Srebrenica, Akashi and Janvier had dinner with Milosevic at a hunting lodge outside of Belgrade. When Milosevic pointed out that hunting was prohibited in the immediate vicinity of the lodge, Akashi joked that it was a safe area for animals. Everybody laughed.

These are serious charges. At the least, a betrayal of trust, at worst, complicity in the crime of genocide. Unfortunately most of the journalists and human rights advocates who have studied the events surrounding the fall of Srebrenica, believe them to be true. We will never know for sure until the United Nations releases the documents in its possession that will tell the world what the peacekeepers knew and when they knew it.

Two weeks ago in preparation for this hearing, I wrote to Secretary General Kofi Annan requesting the release of communications between Akashi, Janvier, and other U.N. officials about the events in Srebrenica. I also invited them to send a witness to be at today's hearing. They chose not to send a witness. The only documents they have sent have been a couple of U.N. press releases and other documents that were already made public.

I intend to renew my request. The credibility of the United Nations is very much at stake in this matter, particularly because some of the documents that are still being kept secret were addressed to Secretary Annan himself in his former position as head of U.N. peacekeeping operations.

I also requested that our own government release any records in its possession that may shed light on what the international community knew about Srebrenica before, during, and immediately after the massacres. I particularly hope our government will give a full accounting of when the U.S. intelligence analysts and policymakers came to understand the importance of satellite pictures of men kneeling on the ground near what soon turned out to be mass graves.

I make these requests not only because the victims and their families are entitled to the truth, not only because truth and justice are essential prerequisites to peace and stability, but because we need to find out what we did wrong and make sure that we change it in the future. Srebrenica was not the first nor the last time the United States or the United Nations has known about massacres in progress and has done nothing.

President Clinton recently acknowledged that we ignored the signs of the 1994 Rwanda genocide until it was too late. He has not yet acknowledged that his Administration made exactly the same mistake during the later stage of the same conflict, when in 1996 and 1997, they failed to act on credible reports that the Rwandan Patriotic army was engaging in mass slaughter of Hutu refugees. Most recently the international response to the killings in Kosovo, which could become Milosevic's next Bosnia, shows that we have not yet learned the lesson of Srebrenica. At a minimum, that lesson requires that when we are put on notice that a massacre is about to happen, we must not wait for proof beyond a reasonable doubt before acting to prevent it. Such proof always comes too late.

I would like to yield now to the very distinguished chairman of the Full Committee, Mr. Gilman, for any opening comments he might have.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend you for holding today's hearing on the betrayal of Srebrenica and why this massacre occurred, and what we can do to prevent it from happening again.

As the international community is once again confronted with the same kind of violence in the former Yugoslavia, it is certainly timely to remind ourselves of the tragic occurrences at Srebrenica in the summer of 1995. The name of that small town in eastern Bosnia has come to epitomize the ignominy of our collective response to that conflict. During 4 years of the bloodiest conflict seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War, the world regrettably stood by, watched, and treated, threatened, vacillated, and capitulated as a gang of war criminals systematically attempted to exterminate the Bosnian Muslims. Our feckless policy culminated with the massacre of Srebrenica, where some 8,000 persons are believed to have been murdered in cold blood.

We should recall that Srebrenica had been designated a safe area by the U.N. Security Council, whose members had guaranteed the safety of all of its inhabitants. Regrettably and tragically for the citizens of Srebrenica who took the United Nations at its word about the pledges made and the assurances that were given, the pledges were never backed up with the military resources to ensure that aggression against Srebrenica could be met and thwarted.

The shameful result was that Bosnian Serbs were able to amass around the town, envelop it, finally overrun it with only the most weak and pulsimious protests from the west. It is believed that our government had satellite photographs simultaneously to the attack on Srebrenica and that we saw what was about to happen. Madeleine Albright, then our U.N. representative showed other Security Council members photos shortly after the attack that revealed signs of disturbed earth in the soccer field believed to be the evidence of a mass grave. Yet despite the knowledge of what was happening, the world just stood by, watched, and did nothing.

Troops from the Netherlands were in a token UNPROFOR unit that had responsibility for protecting Srebrenica. Those troops were ordered by U.N. commanders to do nothing other than to secure their own safety. They tried to provide shelter to several thousand Bosnians who fled to their compound. But when they were surrounded by the Serbs, they were ordered to withdraw again by the same U.N. command.

In the Netherlands, there was denunciation and a sense of national guilt for what happened to these Dutch soldiers. I think we should be saying to our Dutch friends that they should feel no greater shame or remorse for the tragedy that unfolded in Srebrenica than any other country. We are all equally guilty of looking the other way, and now making excuses in allowing that slaughter to have occurred. The policy that permitted Srebrenica to happen was one agreed to by the entire international community.

Today as we learn of a renewed campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, let's hope that the memory of Srebrenica will be seared in our souls and let our shameful response in that instance be re-

deemed by a strong resolute action that prevents the same fate from befalling the Albanian majority of Kosovo.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to note that next week I will be sending a staff team from our International Relations Committee to Srebrenica to review these issues and to review the role of the newly elected government there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Chairman Gilman.

I would like to introduce our panelists for today's hearing and ask that they limit their opening statements to between 10 and 15 minutes and their full statements will be made a part of the record.

Our first witness will be Bianca Jagger, who is a member of the Executive Director's Leadership Council of Amnesty International USA, as well as a member of the advisory committee of Human Rights Watch Americas. For the past 20 years, she has campaigned for human rights around the world, including extensive work in Central America and the former Yugoslavia. From 1993 to 1995, Ms. Jagger evacuated children out of Bosnia for medical care in the United States.

Hasan Nuhanovic was formerly a translator for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Srebrenica. Members of his family have not been seen since they were turned over to Bosnian Serbs by U.N. peacekeeping forces in July 1995. Since that time, Mr. Nuhanovic has been investigating the fate of the thousands who were turned over to Serb forces and the possibility of complicity of U.N. forces in those disappearances.

Eric Stover is the director of the Human Rights Center and an adjunct professor of public health at the University of California at Berkeley. He was the executive director of Physicians for Human Rights until December 1995, and has served as an expert investigator on several missions for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague.

Diane Paul is a consultant of the former Yugoslavia for Human Rights Watch on the former Yugoslavia. She has traveled to the region in 1993 as a delegate for the International Red Cross. Since that time, she has done extensive field work in Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, and Kosovo, and has written numerous articles and reports on the human rights situation in those areas.

Finally, John Heffernan is the executive director of the Coalition for International Justice, a nonprofit organization created to assist the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the tribunal for Rwanda. Prior to his service with the coalition, Mr. Heffernan was the director of the International Rescue Committee's operation for refugees in Zagreb, Croatia.

Ms. Jagger, if you could begin now, the Committee would appreciate it.

STATEMENT OF BIANCA JAGGER, MEMBER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Ms. JAGGER. Let me thank you, Congressman Smith, for having taken the leadership in having this hearing. Thank you, Congressman Gilman, for your offer to send an inquiry group to Srebrenica. It would be very helpful.

It has been 2½ years since I have been haunted by the atrocities perpetrated in Srebrenica. I decided that I was not going to forget those who were executed, massacred, tortured and buried alive because I felt that if I forgot them I would be completing their extermination. I met many of the women who were either the widows or the mothers or the daughters of those men and boys who were killed. I met Hasan Nuhanovic. It was meeting them that convinced me and prompted me to do everything in my power so that we needed to do an inquiry into what happened in Srebrenica.

During that time, I have written articles that have appeared all over Europe. I have lobbied high ranking members of the United Nations requesting that they hold an inquiry into the United Nations. Strangely enough, as a member of the United Nations said to me the other night, the United Nations holds inquiry when we lose a car, when we have a computer that has disappeared, but 8,000 people were not important enough for them to call for an inquiry.

I must point out as well that there are many high ranking officials inside the United Nations who feel that there is a necessity for the United Nations to become transparent and accountable to their actions and who want the Secretary to open an inquiry as to what happened in Srebrenica.

It is important, and Congressman Smith pointed out that now there has been a suit against the State Department, the CIA, the National Security, requesting that photographs and all the information that the U.S. Government has be released. Until now, we have received information relating to all parts of Bosnia, but very little information has been released that has anything to do with Srebrenica.

It is important too to point out that there are moves around the world today. There is an organization that deals with the prevention of genocide in France who have asked for the indictment of General Janvier.

I would like to introduce various documents that I have obtained from inside the United Nations of those people who did not agree that they should give the seal of approval to what happened in Srebrenica. That includes as well letters of exchange between the Right Honorable Paddy Ashdown, letters that he wrote to Prime Minister Major where he speaks about the fact that General Janvier on the 24th of May gave a speech where he almost told the members that he thought that they should abandon the safe areas. It is the belief of Mr. Ashdown in this particular letter that there was a change of policy that took place as a result of that meeting on the 24th in the Security Council, and that because of that, the members, government had decided that they will abandon Srebrenica, which if you will look at the timetable schedule, it will make some sense.

I wanted to just go through very quickly about the timetable of what happened leading up to the fall of Srebrenica. There is so much detail that what I will do is I will request if I can introduce as a part of my testimony all the documents that I have obtained from the United Nations.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, that request will be honored. Anyone on the panel who would like to add additional documentation to the record, it will be made a part of the record without objection.

Ms. JAGGER. I think maybe I would like to be able to read Judge Riad when he asked for the indictment of General Janvier and Karadzic. He described in the following way. "The evidence standard to the prosecutor describes scenes of imaginable savagery. Thousands of men executed and buried in mass graves, hundreds of men buried alive, men and women mutilated and slaughtered, children killed before the mother's eyes, a grandfather forced to eat the liver of his own grandson. These are truly scenes from hell, written on the darkest pages of human history."

Massacres in the wood. As Srebrenica's population fled the coming army and its fire power, the fate which befell the column of people who set off to reach Tuzla on the night of the 11th of July, 1995, and on the morning of the 12th of July, was an appalling one. The column was ambushed by Bosnian Serb soldiers attacking with artillery shells and anti-aircraft guns, automatic weapons, and the like. These attacks caused enormous loss of life. Thousands of Muslims were killed and many more were wounded. Many were driven bezerk by the assault and eye witness accounts described how people were so horrified that they committed suicide to avoid capture. Many who were captured or surrendered, among them the wounded, were summarily executed.

One eye witness described how more than 100 captive Muslim men, women and children were slowly slaughtered by a group of Serbian soldiers using knives. Witnesses also saw hundreds of Muslim men buried in mass graves, some after having been shot, some buried alive. Mass executions at Karakaj, thousands of Muslims suffered, surrendered to Serb forces under the command and control of Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, having been assured that they will not be harmed.

Some of the Serb soldiers giving assurances were wearing stolen U.N. uniforms. The captured men were then taken to a large assembly point, including a football stadium where they were addressed by Ratko Mladic. Hereto, many were summarily executed.

According to the testimonies of the witnesses who survived, the men were then taken the next day on or about the 14th of July 1995, taken in trucks to at least two nearby fields, those fields that the U.S. Government had photographs of. They were then taken out in small groups, told to find a spot, and then shot where they stood. The survivors say that the men were shot in the thousands until the field was full of bodies after they were shot. Serbian soldiers walked over the bodies, checking that everyone was dead.

I have, by the way, taken testimonies of many of these men and women. I can tell you that I worked for many years in Central America. I heard a lot of atrocious accounts of what happened there. But nothing compares to what I heard in Srebrenica. That is why it is extraordinary that 2½ years after there has been no inquiry with the exception of the one that is being carried out today by the Dutch.

I would like to point out as well that the Dutch are doing an independent inquiry. They have requested on various occasions

from the United Nations that they release documents which until now they have not been able to attain.

I am here because I believe that if we stay silent and we don't speak out about what happened in Srebrenica, we will be part of the coverup. Maybe a coverup is a big word, but everything seems to indicate that the fact that the international community has refused to apprehend Karadzic and Mladic and that there is no intention whatsoever until now to do so, maybe because they feel that it will implicate them and that maybe it will shed light as to the kind of war crimes or crimes against humanity that were committed by some members of the international community, and in particular, of the United Nations. Maybe it will shed light as to the kinds of agreements that were made between General Mladic and General Janvier, and many other dealings that were carried out by European and U.S. politicians who were in Bosnia who negotiated the peace accord with Milosevic, notwithstanding the fact that Milosevic should be considered to be a war criminal.

It is for that reason that I thank you for holding this hearing, and that I hope that what Hasan Nuhanovic has to say may convince you that it is important that there be an inquiry and that we open and that we have clarity and accountability about the kinds of crimes that took place in Srebrenica. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Jagger, thank you very much for that very moving testimony. When you appeared some years ago before the Helsinki Commission and brought with you some of the women who had suffered the absolute cruelty of rape which was done by the Bosnian Serbs as a way of breaking the Muslims, then you were bearing witness. You continue to bear witness, and I think it is very important to note that it was you who encouraged that this hearing occur today. I am very grateful for your tenacity in keeping this extremely important human rights issue and the fact that there has to be an accounting with regard to Srebrenica so that these kinds of atrocities are less likely to happen again.

Again, as we have looked at the volumes of information—my staff director and I, and members of the Helsinki Commission staff who are here and continue to monitor this—it is one of the gravest and poorest performances ever by the United Nations when they not only apparently looked the other way, but may indeed have been complicit in these atrocities. So again, I want to thank you. We need to continue probing until we get to the bottom of it. We will do that. I thank you again for your testimony.

Chairman GILMAN. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank Bianca for her very eloquent statement. She has been a true leader for human rights throughout the world. We hope she will continue in that area.

Mr. Chairman, if I might interrupt, I see we are joined by a very distinguished gentleman who has come to our Committee. Hans Christian Kruger, who is a Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, formerly Secretary General of the European Commission on Human Rights, and he is here exploring arrangements for a celebration by their commission of their 50th anniversary next

year of the Council of Europe. We welcome you, Hans Christian Kruger.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Chairman Gilman.

I would like to ask Mr. Nuhanovic if he would now present his testimony.

**STATEMENT OF HASAN NUHANOVIC, FORMER TRANSLATOR,
U.N. PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN SREBRENICA**

Mr. NUHANOVIC. I want to thank everybody here for inviting me to testify. I came to Washington with an intention to ask for support. The families of missing persons from Srebrenica in Bosnia really need support from anybody who is willing to help us because we really feel strongly that we are left alone.

There are many agencies and organizations who have a mandate to search for missing persons in Bosnia, but for 2½ years only 10 persons missing from Srebrenica were identified out of 8,000 to 10,000 people who are missing, which is a very, very small number. I will explain in some chronological order of events what happened in the area of a Dutch compound in Potocari, which is a village north of Srebrenica after Srebrenica fell to the Serb hands.

I was in Srebrenica with my parents and my brother for 3½ years as a refugee from another town in eastern Bosnia. Srebrenica fell on 11 July 1995. I at that time worked as the interpreter of U.N. military observers and also for the Dutch battalion commander. On 11 July, Srebrenica fell to the Bosnian Serb army and approximately 25,000 refugees moved toward Dutchbat headquarters in Potocari village. The Dutch allowed about 6,000 refugees to enter the camp, including my parents and my brother. The remaining refugees were told to stay outside the camp.

In the meantime, a group of 12,000 to 15,000 refugees, mainly grown up males and some women, take to the surrounding mountains, attempting to flee to Tuzla. So what I saw is related to the situation, what happened to the people who were among the 25,000 people around the area of Dutch battalion compound. I haven't seen what happened to the people in the mountains.

On 12 July, the day before the fall of Srebrenica, the Bosnia Serb Army (BSA) commander, General Ratko Mladic, requested a meeting with Dutchbat commander, Lieutenant Colonel Karemans, and local representatives of Srebrenica in the nearby town of Bratunac, outside the enclave. My father, Ibro Nuhanovic, volunteered to go as one of the three local representatives. The officially elected representatives were among the 12,000 to 15,000 who had taken to the surrounding mountains attempting to flee to Tuzla.

During the meeting, Mladic assured the Dutch and local delegation that no harm would come to the refugees in Potocari, though all men would be screened against a Serb-drawn list of war criminals. That is what my father told me when they came back from the meeting.

Upon returning to the camp, three local representatives are ordered by the Dutchbat deputy commander, Major Franken, to prepare a list of all males, all men and boys between the ages of 16 and 65 among the refugees inside and outside the camp. The list of the males among the 6,000 inside the camp was completed the

same day, reflecting the total of 239, including approximately 20 wounded. Between 50 and 100 males inside the camp refused to give their names. My father and other representatives, fearing the list would be used for untoward purposes, refrained from putting his own and my brother's names on the list. A list of the males outside the camp was not made because the Serbs allowed the representatives and my father to leave the camp only for 5 minutes at the request of General Mladic. Then they returned to the camp.

The rumors about executions of males outside the camp spread inside the camp. So we the people who were inside the camp could hear the noise and shooting outside the camp, but we didn't know what exactly happened. So we needed Dutch commanders, Dutch officers to explain to us what was going on outside.

The Dutchbat deputy commander, Major Franken denied saying that everything outside the camp was all right and the evacuation of refugees was going on in order. So he denied saying that no man or boys were killed outside the camp, which was not true. I found that out later on. So that let the people inside the camp, they made them think that when the following day they were the ones to be evacuated, everything would be all right.

In the night between 12 and 13 July, 2 days or two nights after the fall of Srebrenica, there were more rumors about executions of males outside the camp. I tried to confirm the rumors. Major Franken denied it again. U.N. military observers denied too. Major Franken informs the representatives that the evacuation of some 5,000 refugees from outside the camp will be continued the following day at 8 a.m. He states that the refugees from inside the camp will be evacuated immediately after the evacuation of refugees from outside the camp is complete. Major Franken orders that the list of all locally employed people by organizations, like United Nations, MSF, and UNHCR should be drawn. Only people whose names were on this list were allowed to stay inside the camp.

On 13 July, the Dutch ordered 6,000 refugees out of the Potocari camp. The Serbs were waiting at the gate, separating all males from the women and children. Major Franken stated that all the males whose names were on the list of 239 would be safe. He told the people who asked him the questions about what the fate of the people from inside the camp was going to be, he told us that everything was going to be all right and the Serbs would not harm the people because he sent the list to the Hague, Geneva, and some more addresses.

He allows my father, like the other two representatives, to stay, but refuses to allow my brother to stay. So my father decides to join my mother and my brother. I remain in the camp and I watched my parents and my brother being handed over to the Serbs at the gate. None of them have been seen since.

We interpreters and the Dutch soldiers and officers stayed in the camp for another 7 or 8 days. So on 21 July, I was evacuated to Zagreb as part of the Dutch convoy. As soon as I arrived in Zagreb, I tried to contact all relevant organizations, International Community of the Red Cross, UNHCR and others asking for information on the people from the list of 239 from the Dutch battalion camp. I am told in Zagreb that none of these organizations has ever heard about such a list.

Then I returned to Tuzla. I resumed to work as a U.N. interpreter, hoping to find out something about my family through the U.N. channels since the area of responsibility of U.N. headquarters in Tuzla covered Srebrenica. So I tried to contact more people, including the Serbs. For the remainder of 1995, I traced down three U.N. military observers from a former Srebrenica team. I convinced them to sign statements in which they state—I will read, it's very short. It says, "I, Major Kingori hereby state that Nuhanovic, Ibro and Nuhanovic, Nasiha, parents of Hasan Nuhanovic and brother of Hasan Nuhanovic, came to the Dutch compound in Potocari on the evening of 10 July. All three spent 2 days there under UNPROFOR protection until they were ordered by Dutch officers to leave the compound together with the other refugees in the evening of 13 July 1995. They were last seen passing through the compound gate behind which the Serb soldiers were standing."

I want to explain here that the people who hoped that the Dutch were going to protect them, the U.N. peacekeeping troops and all other members of all other organizations who were present in Srebrenica who were inside the camp, the people hoped that they would be protected, but the Dutch soldiers and officers gave no other option to the refugees but to leave. So the refugees inside were told to leave without any other choice. My family was told on the evening of 13 July that they should leave. About 6 p.m. there were no more refugees inside the camp.

I don't know if this is the topic of the meeting or the hearing but the same night the Dutch soldiers had a party inside the camp because they received two or three trucks full of beer and cigarettes. They played music while I was sitting, not knowing what happened to my family. Also when we came to Zagreb on July 22, the Dutch had another party when a whole orchestra arrived by plane from Holland and they all got drunk together. I have it on the video tape. So I had very little understanding from the United Nations and all other organizations involved in this issue.

I continued to search for information on missing persons for the next 2½ years. I wrote many letters to the Ministry of Defense of Holland. The last answer I received from the Minister of Defense was that I should no more address the Ministry of Defense of Holland because they claim that they can not help the people of Srebrenica look for their missing relatives. He told me that if I had any further questions I should contact the Dutch Embassy in Sarajevo.

I also wrote letters to U.N. headquarters in Sarajevo. One of the letters I received a year ago, it was in fact the only official reply I received from the United Nations. It says during your meeting, you informed Mr. Armstrong that you had appealed to the ambassador of the Netherlands in Sarajevo for help in obtaining information from the RS Government on the fate of residents of Srebrenica. You had arranged to contact the Ambassador in 3 months' time to see whether she had made any progress. Mr. Armstrong noted that this was an important initiative and encouraged you to follow up. Mr. Armstrong also explained to you that the mandate of the U.N. Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIDH) with respect to missing persons, is limited to facilitation and referral rather than being an operational one. Current in-

formation and practical assistance should be sought through the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Office of High Representative.

There are five or six organizations in Bosnia which have mandates to assist the families of missing persons in their search. It is the International Committee of the Red Cross, it is the Office of the High Representative, and all the organizations claim that there is very little they can do. The people of Srebrenica and I myself are looking for my missing family, we have no use of promises. We really need something to be done as soon as possible. We hope that there are still some alive people, maybe hidden in detention camps in Bosnia or Serbia. But also we are aware of the fact that the 8,000 or 9,000 people from Srebrenica have probably been murdered. We would also like the bodies to be exhumed and identified so that we know for sure what happened to our family members.

But I would like also say one thing concerning the mass grave sites in Bosnia. American troops, when they got deployed in Bosnia, they were deployed in eastern Bosnia. The American zone of responsibility covers exactly the area where all mass grave sites, all the victims from Srebrenica are located. None of those sites have been protected from tampering. Many of them were disturbed. Some sites are even empty. There are no more body remains there.

I contacted some American officers, trying to indicate that it will be really necessary to mark the sites and protect them from disturbance because they are being disturbed every day. Nothing has been done so far about that.

I have also many documents here with me which I have already given to the organizers of this hearing. It would take a long time to go through all of them, but one thing is for sure, so far we had no results at all when concerning the issue of missing persons. The families in Bosnia are told that International Tribunal in the Hague is performing an investigation on war crimes in Srebrenica. War crimes and war criminals is a separate issue from missing persons. The families of missing persons like myself, we have no use of Ardamovic being in prison for 5 years. He is going to come out of the prison in 3 years now. It is not going to change anything in my search for my family. We can not rely on only international tribunals in Sarajevo. Many of their investigators stated to the families, when families asked questions, that all evidence that the International Tribunal for War Crimes in the Hague obtains on the ground remains a secret until the trial starts. None of us knows when the trial is going to start. So we don't have any use of the tribunal in the Hague at the moment. It may take 5 or 10 years for the trial to start. We are not intending to wait for 5 to 10 years to find out the truth on Srebrenica. There must be some other body which will launch a thorough investigation right now, not waiting for the politicians to decide when the political situation is suitable for such an investigation.

I only want to say one more thing, that the missing persons from Srebrenica has nothing to do with politics. We are just looking for our missing relatives. We really are not interested in any political games. Unfortunately it all became part of it. That's probably what's stopping the whole process.

I would like to thank everybody here and I will leave the documents which I have brought with me with the organizers of the hearing.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nuhanovic appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Yes. We'll put that in the record.

Mr. Nuhanovic, let me just say that I believe and I believe every member of our panel and every Member of Congress believes that you and people like you are entitled to answers, whether it be as a result of gross miscalculation or cowardice or complicity in these crimes of the United Nations, of which we are a part, even though the Dutch had the lead here. You are entitled, regardless of any political consideration, to know exactly what happened to your family. As you pointed out, you still harbor some hope that one or more may survive.

Mr. NUHANOVIC. I will only say one more thing, if I may. When I approached the Ambassador of Netherlands in Sarajevo last year trying to follow up on the action of the Minister of Defense who instructed the Ambassador in Sarajevo to meet Mrs. Plavsic, the President of the Republic of Srpska. So the Ambassador in Sarajevo met Mrs. Plavsic once a year ago and addressed Mrs. Plavsic with the question of missing persons from Potocari, Dutchbat camp. There was still no answer from Mrs. Plavsic.

So I tried to approach the Ambassador several times again. I was every time told during the last summer that the political situation does not allow any contacts with Mrs. Plavsic concerning this issue because the international community was dealing with some problems, political problems inside the Republic of Srpska. So it looks like everybody is in Bosnia waiting now for the political situation to settle down and then start, let's say, opening mass graves and answering different questions. But we can not wait for that long. It's just out of the question.

Mr. SMITH. You know, I agree. The political situation has limited the number of people that even the international tribunal will look at. I find it appalling to this day that Milosevic himself, whom former Secretary of State Eagleburger as he was leaving office said he believed was a war criminal, perpetrated the crimes first in Croatia and then in Bosnia. And yet there is to the best of my knowledge, and I have asked this question a number of times, no effort to gather information about Milosevic's ordering these crimes throughout the wartime period. Now he is our "partner in peace" and there's very little or nothing being done to gather the record.

I think it is important to note for the record that we had invited a very important witness to this hearing, a former U.N. employee in Bosnia who now works with the U.S. Department of Defense. The department unfortunately responded that they normally don't allow their employees to testify about their former employment. They refused to make an exception. It would have been very helpful to have his information on the record today.

I intend to insist that not only the United Nations, but also our State Department and Defense Department come clean and tell us exactly what they knew, when they knew it, about this terrible situation.

I would like to yield to Mr. Wolf who has joined us, a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and also a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I don't serve on this Committee, but Mr. Gilman and Mr. Smith invited me to come. I guess I have a couple comments. One, you are fortunate that Mr. Gilman and Mr. Smith are interested in this issue to eventually get the truth out, because I think, unfortunately, it is going to take people digging and pursuing and requesting and requiring people to come forward. I don't think people on their own are going to come forward.

Second, having been over there a number of times, I think much of the responsibility lies with Mr. Akashi. I have often thought the times that I was over there and watched him that if my loved one had their future dependent upon Mr. Akashi, it would be absolutely depressing. His activity, the lack of action and movement, all the activity that took place and the atrocities time after time after time and he would just be there in Zagreb. You just never could get a feeling that he really cared about this. I think he was much more sympathetic to the Serbs than anybody else.

Third, I think your statement is very damaging to the Dutch military. I mean I think if what you say is accurate, they have to be somehow held accountable. I would hope that the Dutch Foreign Ministry and the Dutch Parliament would hold some hearings on this. Holland has a very proud history of standing up to the Nazis. They must understand this. All you have to do is to go to Amsterdam and go into the house of Anne Frank, who wrote "The Diary of Anne Frank". Every citizen of the Netherlands must be sensitive to this. I would urge that a letter be done to the Dutch Government asking that they hold an inquiry, that their Foreign Ministry hold an inquiry or that their Dutch Parliament hold an inquiry because until there is knowledge of what happened, it is very difficult for reconciliation to take place. Reconciliation can take place, but there has to be something to close this down, whereby there is some closure. There must be acknowledgement of guilt and either people go to prison or something is done to end this.

So I just wanted to tell you. I appreciate so much what you have been through, having been there about five or six times during the war. I had the opportunity back in 1992 or 1993 to go into a Serb-run prisoner of war camp, where we saw what they were doing to the Muslims. The Muslims were running around with their hands behind them, their heads down, and it was almost like a scene out of World War II, out of the Nazi camps.

So I appreciate what you have done. Anything we can do to help, Mr. Smith or Mr. Gilman, we'll be glad to do it. I just think what you are doing is being faithful to your parents and being faithful to those people. It is very, very important. Ultimately the truth will come out. The truth has to come out for there to be any kind of healing and any kind of reconciliation.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Wolf.

Mr. Stover.

STATEMENT OF ERIC STOVER, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA/BERKELEY

Mr. STOVER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to show some slides, which I'll try to go through fairly quickly.

First let me note that I am a former executive director of Physicians for Human Rights. I also have served as an "Expert on Mission" for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. However, today I will be testifying in my own capacity. I don't think either institution would have any difficulty with what I am going to say, but there are some things that I can not mention because they relate to the Tribunal's work.

Let me first begin by saying that I have come here with a profound sense of failure. The reason for that is in January 1993, I testified at the "Hearing on War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia" for the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe of the House of Representatives, which Wolf had helped organize. On a collective farm outside of Vukovar a forensic investigation was completed. We had discovered one of the first war crimes of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. What it amounted to was a mass grave containing the bodies of nearly 200 hospital patients and staff. It wasn't until 2 or 3 years later that we were able to do a full investigation. As of today, 91 of the 200 victims have been identified.

At that hearing, I brought forward what evidence we had uncovered. It was clear a massacre had taken place. We needed to investigate further. But I called on the need for the international community to take strong measures to protect Croatian-based evidence that we had collected. I hope I don't have to return here 5 years from now.

I would like to turn to the slides now, and begin by saying that my perspective is going to come from the forensic investigators and also from some of the families and the victims. The slides that you are about to see were taken by Gilles Peress, who is a photographer who documented the war in Bosnia and also in Rwanda. His photographs are the ones that line the room today.

First of all, let me mention that turning to the first slide here, this is the "Trail of Life and Death" which Hasan Nuhanovic had mentioned earlier where the men had fled up the trail toward Tuzla in an attempt to escape. Here is Srebrenica. Up here is Potocari. As the women and children on July 11 through July 12 fled up to Potocari, the men went along a trail in this direction. It's about 40 miles up to Tuzla from the enclave of Srebrenica. As they went across the trail, many men and boys were captured or called down from the mountain and executed. Others were killed in the hills. Several months after the fall of Srebrenica, I was able with Gilles Peress to walk along the trail for about 3 or 4 miles. It was as if we were descending into hell.

There were bodies on all sides of the trail, 200 or 300 bodies just along one stretch of about a mile. As you went along the trail, you found objects that were left behind by the men as they fled. This is a slide of a little shaving mirror which was left behind. In this particular site, Bosnian forensic investigators have ascertained that artillery shells (or at least some type of mortar shells) were launched into the center of the group. As they fled, Bosnian Serb

army soldiers opened fire on those fleeing. This is a slide of a book of the Qu'ran, which was left behind as the men fled or were captured.

Personal objects were everywhere along the trail. Clearly the men were desperate as they were fleeing. Many of them were rounded up and taken down to this warehouse and other buildings and executed. What appears to have happened here was that the Bosnian Serb army soldiers stood outside and fired into the room or through the windows, massacring hundreds inside this warehouse.

In July 1996, the forensic investigations began of the mass graves under the auspices of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. It was hell for the investigators. There were about 90 scientists from 19 different countries. These were scientists from Chile, Argentina, the Philippines, and the National Park Service in the United States. When they arrived U.N. or NATO troops at that time were not providing them security at the sites, neither was there any demining activity. So private arrangements had to be made by Physicians for Human Rights, which was actually conducting the investigations on part of the Tribunal.

At first, in the evenings when the teams left the sites, the NATO troops would not protect the graves. As anyone knows in a criminal investigation, you need to keep the sites protected. So in fact the leader of the forensic investigation, William Haglund, who deserves a great deal of credit for his work, stayed behind with a couple of other forensic scientists. They would actually sleep in their vans waiting to make sure that the sites weren't disturbed.

For the first 2 months they worked in almost perpetual rain. Then it turned to blistering sun. I have worked in the sites. I have been there. It was a very difficult work for all of those involved. Particularly because there was a growing sense because that perhaps this effort would not result in justice or that the families would never eventually get the remains identified.

What was important initially was to show to the Serb leaders, political and military, who had claimed that these were just military exchanges between the men fleeing and the Bosnian Serb army, were not true. In fact, as we were able to see in this site here, body number 19 has its hands tied behind its back.

In the four graves that were exhumed in that period of time from July through October 1996, some 500 bodies or more were removed. Many of them had hands tied behind their backs in a way that was consistent with execution-style killings. This is important forensically: many of the bodies in their particular graves had been bound by the same type of telephone wire or a piece of curtain that may have been pulled down. There was a systematic approach to these executions that were clear in the forensic evidence.

The bodies were taken to Kalesiza, which was on the front line and autopsied in an abandoned garment factory which had been turned into a make-shift morgue. The clothes would be cleaned. Work would begin in reconstructing. Some of the skulls and so on would be shattered by gunshot wounds. Some of the graves contained hundreds and hundreds of projectiles and bullets.

What was interesting was that in the clothes one found that the men in their desperation as they left Srebrenica had grabbed what-

ever they could. It was only normal. You find keys, keys because you think you are going to return at some point to your home. This is an x-ray of a bullet embedded near the spinal cord. Objects were found on the bodies such as religious artifacts and objects for starting fires. Many of these were rural Bosnian Muslims. Here is a slide of a child's drawings found on one of the bodies. Photographs were found on some of the bodies. One man had over 40 photographs stuffed in his clothing. In this photograph on the left-hand side, there is evidence that a bullet has gone through the photograph.

There is a great deal of anger, as Hasan Nuhanovic has mentioned, among the women and children of Srebrenica, because the one thing that comes out in the discussions is what happened in the political machinations of the United Nations. It is important we get to the depth of this. But there is another issue there. For the women and the survivors of Srebrenica, they believed they were going to be protected. What we need to learn from this experience is that the international community doesn't pass Security Council resolutions declaring safe areas to people who are living and believing that they are going to be protected. That is the key issue we have to take forward.

As one woman told me during my interviews this summer in preparation for the book I'm publishing with Gilles Peress called *The Graves: Srebrenica and Yukova*, she said "Srebrenica taught us that our lives were less valuable than the lives of U.N. soldiers. That for us was the final truth." What has happened with the women of Srebrenica, as Hasan has mentioned earlier, is they want to know the truth. It is important to have the trials in The Hague, but the women also want to know what happened to their men. Many of the women still live in collective centers around the city of Tuzla. These are dreadful places where 20 or 30 people will share a room together. There are food supplies that are brought in, but they are hardly adequate.

What remains the problem for many of the women is that without the return of the bodies, they can not visualize the death of their husbands and sons, and thus accept it as real. So as a Bosnian psychologist told me, "And so when the women think of moving on with their lives, they are often hit with strong feelings of guilt because they think they will maybe, just maybe still be alive."

Also as a result of the fall of Srebrenica there were hundreds of orphans. About 110 of them are still in a Tuzla orphanage.

This is a slide of four elderly people in a collective center sharing the same room. There's loneliness there, boredom.

I would like to just give one other brief quote by a Bosnian psychiatrist, Irfanka Pasagic, who works for the organization Amica, a Tuzla-based clinic which provides therapeutic services to refugees. Dr. Pasagic said: "What is the utmost importance now is the message that the international community sends those boys and what they communicate to their sons and daughters. If you say to a child, look, that man there killed your father and now he lives in your house, what kind of message is that going to send? But if you say look, that man there killed your father and that is the reason why he is in prison, the message is very different." So for now, there may not be a lot of talk of hatred or revenge, but if we don't

find a way to punish those responsible for these crimes, it will be surely something we can count on in the future.

To understand is not to forgive or forget. It is to accept things as they are. Forgiveness for those who massacred the men and boys in Srebrenica is not ours to give. Only the victims have the right to forgive. Forgetting is also unthinkable, as it would be a dishonor to the dead and their memory. The most disturbing truth is that we are at the end of the Never Again century and genocide is happening again. Bosnia's nightmare, like Rwanda's is not hers alone. Until we accept the moral imperative of acting swiftly to stop genocide and crimes against humanity and punishing those responsible, it will happen again.

This is a photograph of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo burying their dead that appeared recently in the *New York Times*. Over 80 people have been killed in Kosovo. The bodies have been buried. And the forensic scientists are purchasing their tickets to fly to Kosovo. It is happening again. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stover appears in the appendix.]

Mr. WOLF. Would the gentleman yield? These are very powerful visuals. I guess I had two questions. Where do you think that most of the Serbs are who were involved in the killings? Where are they now? Because in Tuzla there are very few Serbs obviously in the Tuzla area now. Where are they? Do we have any sense of where that battalion or that unit is or did they go back to a certain area, a certain village?

Mr. STOVER. In some ways it's conjecture. We know that Arkan's paramilitary forces were there. The Drina Wolves were there. Many of those who carried out the killings came from other parts of Serbia, Montenegro. Many of the paramilitary groups were comprised of people that weren't necessarily from within the region. Many I would presume are in the Republic of Srpska, which is not far from Tuzla.

Mr. WOLF. I know.

Mr. STOVER. So clearly they are in areas, many of them, where they can be arrested. Of course the most important ones to arrest are Mladic and Karadzic.

Mr. WOLF. I agree. I have said over and over, I did a report when I came back in December again, that until that issue is dealt with, there can never be peace and healing there. I mean you have to go back and find and hold accountable the people that have been involved. It just has to be done.

I was one of the Republican Members that supported sending troops. I think what we have done there has been very, very positive, but I think we should be doing more, I agree.

The other question that I wanted to ask you is what should we be doing? What should the U.S. Government do? What should the Congress do? What should be done?

Mr. STOVER. First of all we must make every effort to arrest Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. That is No. 1. And others who are associated with war crimes throughout the former Yugoslavia.

I would also say that we need to understand what are the needs of women and children throughout the former Yugoslavia. This is especially true of the young men and boys. If we don't find ways

of supporting them on many levels, we will see more violence in the future. What has happened to the women and the people of Srebrenica who fled, who quite technically should have been by virtue of their safe haven status, the best protected people in the world? A Security Council resolution was passed to protect them. But what has happened is they have ended up in Tuzla and central Bosnia in deplorable conditions with few, if any possibilities for meaningful jobs. Here are young men and women who are feeling guilty because their brothers and mothers and fathers may have died or were executed. Yet they are not getting any kind of basic job training. They don't necessarily need to be taught English or computer skills. Many of them want to learn how to be mechanics. Now I know this sounds small, but it is important to be helping these people re-establish their lives again. The U.N. community has abandoned them. More effort needs to be put in that regard.

Also I think clearly support for an international criminal court must be forthcoming, and clear financial and military support for that.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you very much. Excuse me. Go ahead.

Mr. NUHANOVIC. Can I answer your question about where the Serbs who have done this are now?

Mr. WOLF. Yes.

Mr. NUHANOVIC. I have been trying to find out where they are for 2½ years now, not because I just want to get them but only because I want them to tell me what happened to my family.

One of them who was definitely involved in Srebrenica's massacre was until 10 days ago chief of police of the entire area, which is in a way overlapping with the American zone of responsibility of eastern Bosnia. So I have gone to the American officers and it's called Camp Double near Kalesiza. It's only 10 kilometers east of Tuzla, east of the American main base. I gave them the video and I showed them on the video the man they were meeting every day at the meetings, because American military is communicating with the local authorities, civilian authorities like police authorities. So they met these men many, many times. They had some suspicions about him. I told them this is a man who coordinated the mass executions around Zvornik, which is the town where the mass graves are concentrated mostly. This man was sitting in Zvornik. His office was there for 2½ years. Americans knew it for half a year now.

I also went to the Office of the High Representative several times and gave them this video tape because this Serb is on the video tape in Srebrenica and there is a date on the video tape also. He is talking to the Minister of Interior for Republic of Srpska at that time on the tape reporting to him. More things can be seen on that tape. Nobody has done anything about this. Only ICTY about 10 days ago, first time, approached this police officer and he is missing now for 10 days. He is gone. He is probably hiding. But this shouldn't have been allowed. Because ICTY went to his office to ask if he wanted to talk, and of course after that he fled his job or hid. He was probably promoted or I don't know. So it's really not dealt with in a serious manner at all.

Some of the Americans, when I tell them or any other members of the United Nations in Bosnia, if I tell them that this Serb has been involved in war crimes, I have proof that can support this, I

receive answers saying like we don't care. It's been 2½ years ago. It's over now. It's time for reconciliation. But you see thousands of refugees were supposed to return to the area controlled by this person. They were being encouraged by Americans, by UNHCR, by ICRC to return to their homes which are in the area controlled by this Serb police officer. How can you expect the people to return there where the murderers of their brothers, fathers, mothers, are sitting in a police headquarters? I have names of more Serbs involved.

But also only one more thing. The only organization which is really investigating what happened in Srebrenica is as I mentioned, the International Tribunal for War Crimes in the Hague. They are the only ones who follow the path, the line, everything that happened between the place where somebody disappeared, and following it down to the place where somebody might be buried or maybe alive in a prison. Because if somebody disappeared, there is one location where somebody has been seen last time that's like location A. So we are all now looking for location B. OK? Which is a mass grave or a prison, most probably mass grave.

But all these organizations in Bosnia are looking for the location B without following this line. The line is really very simple, in fact. It's only two or three villages or towns in Bosnia through which these people were transported. And the Serb authorities who were in charge of those towns in 1995 when it happened, the mayors, the chiefs of police, the military commanders, are all there talking to American soldiers every day, American officers as if nothing happened because these things are forgotten.

It is just simple. Just go there and talk to them. All Serbs involved in war crimes in Srebrenica are still sitting in the same positions as they were in 1995.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you.

Ms. JAGGER. I would like to add just a small point. I was a part of an "apprehend war criminals" task force with Justice Goldstone very recently. We visited the State Department, the Pentagon and the White House. When we met at the Pentagon I asked the question about why have they not apprehended Karadzic and General Mladic. The answer they gave me was because they didn't know where they were situated today.

So I would like to introduce in the record a map that Human Rights Watch has put out of where the war criminals are today, in which areas. It is extraordinary to be given an answer by the Pentagon telling us that they don't know where they are, when everybody is seeing them and when a human rights organization has done a map of all the places.

What I wanted to say was that I am convinced that the reason why Karadzic and Mladic and other war criminals have not been apprehended is not because it is a danger for the lives of the soldiers that will do it, but simply because it will shed light as to the kinds of crimes that may have been committed by high ranking U.N. officials and the kind of negotiation that they may have undertaken with Mladic and Karadzic that will become public if they were brought to the Hague.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much. I would like to ask Ms. Paul if she would speak.

Before doing that, without objection I would like the record to include a statement from the Committee of the Dispossessed from Srebrenica and Zepa. There are some 300 refugee survivors living in St. Louis, Missouri. They have made an appeal asking for the immediate arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the war crimes and genocide in Srebrenica and Zepa, including Mladic and Karadzic, which Ms. Jagger just made reference to. Information about those killed or missing and material, including financial compensation for their loss. Without objection this will be made a part of the record.

[The statement referred to appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Paul.

**MS. DIANE PAUL, CONSULTANT ON FORMER YUGOSLAVIA,
HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH**

Ms. PAUL. Thank you very much. Chairman Smith, Members of Congress, ladies and gentlemen here today, the events of over 2½ years ago in Srebrenica must be remembered. For this reason, your decision to hold this hearing is deeply appreciated. To the families of the missing, however, it seems the world has already forgotten, has moved on. Yet the survivors can not. They are frozen in the trauma of not knowing the fates of those who disappeared. They must endure the cruelty of hoping against hope that some may still be alive while knowing that few are likely to have survived.

I worked with Holocaust survivors to assist them in determining the fates of family members who disappeared into Nazi concentration camps. What I will tell you is that after 50 years, the trauma was still very fresh. What I know about the survivors of Srebrenica, about those families is that they will never stop searching. I think that we must help them find the answers.

Adding to the already unbearable burden that they face, the two persons believed responsible for organizing the systematic deaths of thousands of people from Srebrenica are still at large. What message is being sent to Milosevic on Kosovo when Mladic and Karadzic are permitted to escape justice? It should not be forgotten that Milosevic is believed to have played a large part in what happened in Srebrenica. Yet we have been told repeatedly, and I must say often condescendingly, that those indicted for war crimes will be brought to justice sooner or later. One senior U.S. diplomat told me recently when I asked him if it were true if Ratko Mladic had sought refuge in Serbia, responded "I am satisfied that Mladic is in a cocoon. He is not interfering with the peace process. We can take care of him later." That U.S. Government officials are satisfied with the status quo for reasons of political expediency is deeply offensive and wholly unacceptable. Patience has worn thin. The survivors demand justice. How long must they wait?

The questions raised in the title of today's hearing are critical. To rephrase them slightly, we might ask, could the people of Srebrenica have been saved, and might we prevent further such tragedies? Despite everything that's happened, we believe the answer is yes. Most of those who died during those days in July might have been saved had the international community's response been more decisive. The possibility to protect civilians in Kosovo and elsewhere exists. We heard President Clinton admit that early

action could have prevented many deaths in Rwanda. Reports of new attacks in Kosovo last week and the failure of Serbia to withdraw so-called police forces which act in every way like military forces, are not surprising developments. They were anticipated and, in fact, easily predicted, given the broken promises of the past.

Milosevic is a master of brinkmanship. We should not forget that. Once again, he is thumbing his nose at the international community, as evidenced by the recent arrest of Americans in Pristina and his refusal to accept an international mediator.

A reported arms deal with Russia which may even now be funneling sophisticated arms to Serbia, including attack helicopters, has gone unchallenged by the contact group. There are no international human rights monitors on the ground and humanitarian organizations do not have full access to those in need. Full and unimpeded access to international monitors is an absolute imperative. Yet to date, Milosevic has refused to permit the OSCE to reestablish a presence there after booting them out a number of years ago. The disunity within the contact group does not bode well and echoes the ineffective international response to the crisis in Bosnia, the lowest point of which was Srebrenica.

Action must be taken now to get people on the ground in Kosovo. Should there be a no-fly zone over Kosovo to at least prevent the use of attack helicopters indiscriminately against civilians as it's believed they have already been used there? Speaking more generally, I would argue that the potential use of safe areas as a strategy to protect civilians should not be discarded, despite the failure at Srebrenica. Zones of safety have saved lives, even in the former Yugoslavia. The safe area in northern Iraq did provide some protection over time until international will eroded. Designated safe houses established by the International Committee of the Red Cross, Raoul Wallenberg and others, enabled thousands of Hungarian Jews to survive during the darkest days in Budapest during World War II. An international safety zone created by fewer than a dozen internationals protected tens of thousands of people during the rape of Nanking. None of the safe zones mentioned provided complete safety. Rather, they mitigated the danger, enabling some persons to survive. The lesson is not to avoid the establishment of safe areas, but to ensure that they are indeed safe and to glean what we can from the successes and failures of the past.

In the case of Srebrenica, the political will existed only to protect international troops, not civilians. UNPROFOR commanders were permitted to narrowly interpret their mandate to include only the protection of their own troops, despite clear instructions from the U.N. Secretary General who in 1994 stated that UNPROFOR understands its mission as follows: to protect the civilian populations of the designated safe areas against armed attacks and other hostile acts through the presence of its troops and if necessary through the application of air power in accordance with agreed procedures.

Yet again and again in Bosnia and elsewhere, we have missed the boat and failed to focus on the real issue, stopping attacks on civilians. Instead, efforts have focused on merely containing the conflict, and I hear that language being used a lot again in Kosovo, preventing refugee flows or pumping in humanitarian assistance. All these are important, but none of them constitutes protection.

While we welcome the intent of the tribunal to investigate events in Kosovo, this also does not provide protection.

Boutros-Ghali, confronted by journalists with the U.N.'s failure at Srebrenica said no, I don't believe this represents a failure. You have to see if the glass is half full or half empty. We are still offering assistance to refugees, and we have been able to maintain the dispute within the borders of the former Yugoslavia.

Had the safe area been properly reinforced, the Dutch troops might never have abandoned the persons who sought their protection in Potocari. Instead, anxious to leave the enclave, Dutch troops deliberately failed to report troop movements and other activities to headquarters, long before the actual fall of the town. As Srebrenica fell, international reaction was divisive and undermined any hope of protection. The British threatened to pull troops out. The Germans recommended leaving Srebrenica to its fate and concentrating on Zepa. NATO said it was awaiting orders from the United Nations. The United States refused to provide troops at all. A year earlier, U.N. troops had been pulled out of Rwanda at a critical moment with overwhelmingly devastating results.

Some of the principles which have to be followed in the future if we are to consider these as safe areas again, and I'll just mention a few: Safe havens or safety zones should not be set up without a protection plan. If peacekeeping troops are involved, the plan should include the specific measures which should be used to protect civilians. Safe areas must be completely demilitarized. They must not compromise the right to seek asylum to escape attack. Contingency plans for the evacuation of the populations from the safe areas should be developed at the outset just in case the safe areas should fall to hostile forces. Safe areas must not be used to shield suspected perpetrators of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. Agreements with the parties to the conflict must include schedules for regular distribution of humanitarian aid, unlike what we saw in Srebrenica, where many, many, many months went by without any international aid getting into the city at all.

The possible negative consequences of implementing a safe area should be well thought out. For example, the use of safe areas as a substitute for actions to stop abuses, i.e. ethnic cleansing. Persons in a safe zone should be registered by neutral international third parties, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross. Evacuations, if absolutely necessary, must be accompanied by internationals, who should travel in the same vehicles as the evacuees. In Srebrenica, UNPROFOR escorts were simply turned back or their vehicles confiscated. Evacuations from Zepa, however, were less disastrous because UNPROFOR troops rode on the buses and not, by the way, out of their own initiative, but because people refused to permit them to leave Zepa.

No agreement should be made which will permit the evacuation of civilians by forces hostile to them, especially if unaccompanied. Any attempt to separate women and children from male family members should be resisted. Families must be kept together.

Intelligence information relating to impending attacks on civilians must not be withheld from the public or at the very least, from international organizations with protection or human rights monitoring mandates. We know that there was information about the

attacks in Kosovo, information about troop movements, et cetera, before the attacks occurred. Why were they permitted to go forward? Clearly evidence relating to the Commission of War Crimes must never be destroyed by peacekeepers or other internationals as was the case in Srebrenica.

Finally, I would like to raise an important issue that hasn't received much attention. That is the need for an international investigation into the possible use of chemical weapons at Srebrenica. Human Rights Watch interviewed numerous survivors from Srebrenica who claim they were attacked with a chemical agent that caused hallucinations and disorientation. Mr. E.J. Hogendoorn, who conducted the study, is here today and could answer questions afterward on this topic. The results of the Human Rights Watch research into the use of chemical weapons in Srebrenica in 1995 are inconclusive, but indicate that there were unexplained events which affected primarily the rear sections of the column of persons fleeing the town through heavily wooded areas. The testimony collected by Human Rights Watch and statements made by U.S. Government officials indicate the possibility that chemical weapons were used, and strongly suggest that further investigation is warranted.

Human Rights Watch has conducted a study of allegations of the use of chemical weapons, primarily concerning BZ or BZ-like compound. BZ is a chemical warfare agent which causes psychological and physical incapacitation. Prior to the breakup of Yugoslavia, the JNA, the Yugoslav national army's arsenal is known to have included BZ and other chemical weapons, as acknowledged in a NATO intelligence assessment which Human Rights Watch has seen. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is one of the few states, by the way, that has not signed the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention.

The U.S. Government was aware of allegations of BZ use as early as August 1995, if not sooner, when Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck, during a trip to Bosnia, reported that "there were many credible accounts of the shelling of large columns of civilians attempting to flee and four separate accounts of the use of chemical weapons that severely disoriented fleeing people, causing several to commit suicide."

Human Rights Watch interviewed a number of U.S. officials from various branches of the government. While none agreed to speak for attribution, they did reveal the following: A small team of Defense Department experts interviewed a number of Srebrenica survivors in the summer of 1996, and concluded that their accounts supported allegations of the use of chemical incapacitants. The conclusion was deemed highly significant by the department. This information was sent up the chain of command.

More than one person told Human Rights Watch that we were "on the right track." In late 1996, the U.S. intelligence community had information that chemical weapons may have been used in Srebrenica. A large investigation, which included physical sampling, was undertaken in late 1996 or early 1997 by the U.S. Government. The results of this investigation are not known to us. One official told Human Rights Watch in December 1996 that "we do not see an advantage in declassifying those documents relating to

chemical weapons use in Bosnia. We have spoken with people and received assurances that other channels are being pursued that we believe would be more effective and achieve a more favorable outcome than simply publicizing theme." That is where it's been left.

U.S. Public Law 102-182, the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Eliminations Act of 1991 requires that a determination regarding the use of chemical weapons be made. If it is determined that chemical weapons were used, Public Law 102-182 would require the imposition of sanctions, which raises some other questions about why these questions haven't been further pursued.

The U.S. Government should release immediately all information on the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons in the former Yugoslavia which it may have in its possession. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Paul appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Paul, thank you very much for your very comprehensive testimony. We will follow up on the chemical weapons issue as well. I think we have been aware of it but there has been very little, as you have indicated, in terms of divulging what we know about the use of those weapons. So I do appreciate that.

The gentleman you mentioned being here, does he have a statement he could make a part of the record? And you did say he would be available for some questions.

Ms. PAUL. He feels my statement for now is sufficient. We will be releasing a report in a short time on this topic. However, if afterward anyone would like to speak with Mr. Hogendoorn, he will be available.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Heffernan, if you could present your testimony?

STATEMENT OF JOHN HEFFERNAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

Mr. HEFFERNAN. Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for convening this hearing today. For the countless victims who have been permanently silenced, and for the family members and survivors who remain committed to finding out what happened to them, this hearing is welcome and long overdue. For some in particular, as others have said, the people of Kosovo, this hearing is ironically timely.

Over the last few weeks, the Kosovars have witnessed the massacre of nearly 100 people, many innocent women and children by Serbian paramilitary troops directed by the man who directed the slaughter in Srebrenica. The Kosovo Albanians might find the question "Will it happen again?" a bit after the fact. It is all too familiar to them. The faces of the victims have changed, but the genocidal perpetrators remain the same. The anemic reaction of the international community, expressions of outrage and as yet relatively empty threats, are hauntingly familiar. Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, indicted for genocide and charged with masterminding the largest single war crime in Europe since World War II, remain free today, almost 3 years after the massacre in Srebrenica.

At the same time, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, although not indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal, is di-

recting the crackdown in Kosovo, providing a safe area, confirmed by many high-level U.S. officials for the twice-indicted alleged architect of Srebrenica, General Ratko Mladic.

My message today is a simple one. Unless the perpetrators of these past heinous acts are arrested and brought to justice, the likelihood of a Srebrenica massacre being replicated in Bosnia or in other parts of the former Yugoslavia is almost certain.

I spent 2½, almost 3 years as a humanitarian aid worker in the former Yugoslavia during the war. I know first-hand that none of the admirable goals set out in the U.S.-brokered Dayton Peace agreement from the return of refugees, to the functioning of joint institutions and economically sound reconstruction efforts, will be achieved unless the architects of the genocide and their henchmen are captured and sent to the Hague. If you were a refugee, would you return to your home, knowing that the man who ran the concentration camp now works at the local police station? How free and fair can elections be if candidates running for office for exile are prevented, once elected, from taking office by the ethnic cleansing that drove them from their home districts?

Just last week, it was reported that despite the presence and diplomatic efforts of the international community, after a few minutes the meeting of the Srebrenica town council ended in total chaos. Clearly the legacy of the massacre lives on.

In answering the questions why did the massacre happen, and will it happen again, it is important to understand the extent to which an escalating series of human rights abuses in Bosnia before the war contributed to a complete breakdown of civil society. These events and the negligible international response to them, paved the way for the eventual tragedies in Bosnia. To suggest, as many do, that ancient religious and ethnic hostilities are the cause of the most recent Balkan conflict, ignores recent history. For nearly 40 years following World War II, the people of former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia, lived in a peaceful multi-ethnic state.

The fragile peace came to an end in the 1980's when Belgrade unilaterally dismantled the Kosovo Government, stripping it of its autonomous status and created a police state. A few years later, as Croatia sought independence, fear of the denial of their rights sparked a rebellion among the Croatian Serbs, which led to the massive destruction of Vukovar. The failure of the international community to react to these events sent a message to the perpetrators that no one would intervene to prevent exploitation of minorities by nationalists. A pattern of human rights abuses was established and reinforced. The eventual result was the worst European bloodbath since World War II.

Threatened by Bosnia's desire for independence, a few insecure demagogues launched campaigns of hate and terror aimed at achieving ethnically pure states. Seizing the opportunity, some of these nationalists began to promote their grand designs of creating a greater Serbia, others, a greater Croatia. Each fastidiously worked to eliminate any and all who would interfere with their nationalist expansionistic goals. During this time, the major players in the international community refused to get their hands dirty in the Yugoslav conflict. Although there were ongoing attempts to ne-

gotiate a peace and to propose territorial boundaries, the parties could not reach consensus and the killing continued.

Sensing very little progress in the negotiations, the United Nations declared certain areas to be safe, promising to protect the most vulnerable populations. The failure to protect the so-called safe areas set the stage for further human rights abuses, permitting the siege of Sarajevo and other safe areas, culminating in the massacre in Srebrenica.

As has been said by my colleagues here on the panel, the United States, the Netherlands, and other European Governments, the United Nations and the international community should be condemned for their failure to act on reports of impending Srebrenica massacre. Perhaps external force could have saved thousands of lives. But the ultimate culpability must rest firmly on the shoulders of the most senior Serbian politicians and officers who planned and authorized this crime. Evidence from the well-documented massacre points to the complicity of Bosnian Serb leaders in Pale as well as the leadership in Belgrade.

President Clinton said we have an obligation to carry forward the lesson of Nuremberg. Those accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide must be brought to justice. There must be peace for justice to prevail, but there must be justice when peace prevails.

Just last week while in Rwanda, the President, acknowledging that the world did not act quickly enough to the 1994 genocide, repeated his vow never again must we shy away in the face of evidence. While he said this, the Serbian paramilitary forces were firing on Albanians in Kosovo. The President said in Rwanda, genocide can occur anywhere. It's not an African phenomenon. In the case of Srebrenica, the evidence is clear. Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic must not be allowed, as former Senator Dole so eloquently put it, to exercise their noxious influence on the people who they sought to destroy, an influence that threatens to jeopardize the entire peace process in Bosnia.

Arresting these two suspected war criminals is not the panacea, but it could influence the answer to the question that we are asking today, will it happen again? As long as war criminals are at large and justice is not done, the wounds of war can not heal, reconciliation and lasting peace can not be achieved. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Heffernan appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Heffernan.

Let me ask the entire panel first of all, and Ms. Jagger suggested this a few moments ago about the idea of not pursuing the evidence to these highest levels because of what it might reveal about U.N. complicity, certainly negligence and perhaps United States and other countries' negligence and complicity in the crimes as well.

Why do you think there is not an aggressive effort, now that many months have passed since there have even been elections in Bosnia and Republic of Srpska? Why does the reluctance remain to pursue the higher ups? That especially goes for Milosevic himself. I am, as I said earlier, appalled that our government is making no attempt whatsoever, unless they have changed yesterday, to pursue Milosevic because he is our "partner in peace" now.

What is your take on that?

Ms. JAGGER. I think it's clear if we understand that the State Department refused to send a witness today that the Pentagon refused to allow a very crucial witness who used to work with the United Nations and who would have given us a very credible account of what happened in Srebrenica and what happened especially with General Janvier and Akashi. That is the reason why they didn't want to allow that to happen.

I think it's important to understand that as the chronology shows us, if on the 24th of May, General Janvier went to the Security Council to advocate dropping the safe areas and not defending them, and if there was, as the British MB that I spoke about before, believe that there was a change of policy for the British, the French, and the Americans and the United Nations, and as we know on the fourth of June, there was a quid pro quo agreement between General Janvier and Mladic by which General Mladic was going to release the hostages in exchange for which General Janvier undertook that there will be no NATO air strike.

But furthermore, there was one important thing. On June 9, U.N. Special Representative Akashi announced the United Nations will abide by strictly peacekeeping principles, i.e. no use of force. This is from a report done by Rob Guttman on the fall of Srebrenica that appeared in *Newsday*.

I am convinced that the word a "coverup" or a "conspiracy" is not a strong enough word for what happened in Srebrenica. They want us to forget what happened in Srebrenica. I feel that the anger and the outrage of the survivors, and especially the women of Srebrenica who feel that everybody wants us to forget what happened there, is the reason why we don't have any war criminals from Srebrenica who had been apprehended until now. That is the reason why the whole process of identification has been stalled. That is the reason why they still want to have the answers for the missing persons, and why so few of the missing have been identified until today.

I think that everything tends to show to us that there is too much to lose for the United Nations, for the U.S. Government, for the French Government, for the Dutch, who by the way I would like to say are the only ones who are carrying out an independent investigation as to what happened in Srebrenica.

Mr. SMITH. Would anybody else like to answer that question?

Mr. STOVER. What needs to be known is the truth, whether you call it a coverup or whatever you call it. What needs to be known is the truth. I can tell you from the time that I spent during the war in the former Yugoslavia there often was a sense among younger UNPROFOR soldiers of complete frustration. I traveled with UNPROFOR troops, I worked with them, and they constantly questioned why they were there, if they couldn't use force to prevent the killing. I can remember in 1993 when we arrived in Vukovar to complete the evacuation of the mass grave, and the Belgian UNPROFOR commander met with the Serb commander to tell him that we were going to continue the work. In the meeting, the Serb commander said we couldn't go to the site, and the UNPROFOR commander didn't raise a word in protest.

I think that what is important now is, and that we know among many U.N. colleagues I know who are still in the United Nations, a deep sense that our moral authority, not only of the United Nations, but of the governments that supported the safe havens, has been tarnished. Until there is a full airing of what happened, it is very difficult for us to listen to the proud words of even our own President that this will never happen again.

We need to know functionally and at an operational level what went wrong and who gave the order to abandon the enclave of Srebrenica.

Mr. SMITH. You know this idea that it will never happen again, and you mentioned, Mr. Stover, about Vukovar in the hearings that we held, Mr. Wolf and I were in Vukovar when it was under siege. When we visited a wine cellar where there were dozens of people holed up because of sniping and daily bombings that were occurring, one of the people when they heard we were U.S. visiting Congressmen were a little surprised that we were there, but then somebody shouted out why is this any different than Kuwait where this aggression will not stand, and started quoting President Bush's words right back to us.

So those words of "never again" take on a very hollow meaning when they do take place over and over again, and the response is tepid and there is a culture of appeasement.

That leads to my next question in terms of the chain of command. On May 24, 1995, General Janvier reported that the "military force deployed by UNPROFOR in these safe areas is of little use." Why did the United Nations and troop contributing nations not respond? Is he at fault? Were they sleeping at the switch in country or is the chain of command in your view flawed when it goes to the higher echelons at the United Nations in New York? Are they incapable of responding?

Ms. JAGGER. It is my belief that what General Janvier was advocating to the Security Council was really what everybody wanted to hear. That's the sad state of affairs. That they were not there to try to convince him that what he was saying was immoral, but they were willing to go ahead and change their policies toward Srebrenica and let the Srebrenica people be immolated and sell them to the Serbs. That is, I think, what is most outrageous about what happened in Srebrenica, is that as far as the 24th of May, they knew that the people of Srebrenica were going to be handed over to the executioners with the consent of the international community. By that, I mean by the French, the British, the Americans and the United Nations.

Mr. SMITH. Yes?

Ms. PAUL. If I might add, Mr. Chairman, that I think that the critical issue here was one of troop protection. That frankly none of the contributing nations wanted their troops in any kind of situation which might compromise their own safety. That was the reason that the Dutch troops were not reinforced. As Dutch troops rotated out of the region, they were, in fact, not even replaced.

The enclaves presented a problem for the United Nations in terms of protection. I would have to concur with Ms. Jagger that there was a decision essentially to allow them to fall. It certainly appears that way.

When we did a report of what happened in Srebrenica in the early fall of 1995, one of the things we called for was an investigation of the role of U.N. officials. We called for the disclosure of all of available information pertaining to the U.N.'s response, and argued that this disclosure of information shouldn't just be targeted at the Dutch and the Dutch Government, but it should include senior military and civilian officials at UNPROFOR headquarters in Zagreb. In addition, I think that what was going on in New York would have to be taken under consideration as well.

However to date, no such investigation has taken place as we are all aware. I think it's still not too late to call for such investigation. In fact, I think it's critical that one be conducted.

Mr. SMITH. Yes?

Mr. NUHANOVIC. As Diane said, it was probably already decided that Srebrenica should be let to fall. The Dutch peacekeepers in Srebrenica were definitely not able to defend Srebrenica with the arms they had, although they have never really shot back. I mean they have never returned fire to the Serbs, not even once. That is what I have seen there. But probably that was the policy.

But I was talking about the concrete case, specific case of people being allowed to enter the U.N. camp. They spent there 2 days and 2 nights. After 2 days and 2 nights, they are thrown out of the camp right to the Serbs. This is something different. So they were already protected in a way. They were inside the safe place. No one has ever answered my question why have those people been thrown out of the camp, because I was there and I know that the Serbs have not tried to break into the camp. They haven't tried. So there was no open threat from the Serbs against Dutch soldiers or officers to hand over the people from the camp. I have never been given any answer. There has never been any investigation about the situation inside Dutchbat camp.

I want to also say something about the meeting. As you know, on 11 July, Srebrenica fell. 12 and 13 July, people in Potocari area were being taken away. Many of them were executed also on the spot. From 13 July until 15 July, nobody knows what happened. But on 15 July, which means only 2 days, only 2 days after Potocari situation, on 15 July there was a meeting in Belgrade. At this meeting United Nations, international community representatives were supposed to save the lives of those whose lives could have been still saved if there was still anybody alive. It was only 2 days after they disappeared.

So there was a meeting in Belgrade. I have a document which attests to that. It says "Mr. Carl Bildt, Mr. Stoltenberg, and myself," and this was written by Akashi, "and myself in Belgrade with President Milosevic on Saturday, 15 July." They met with Milosevic. "I was accompanied by General Rupert Smith and Milosevic, at the request of Bildt to facilitate the presence of General Mladic at the meeting. Mladic and Smith had a long discussion. Despite their disagreement on several points, the meeting re-established dialog between the two generals. An informal agreement was reached in the course of the meeting on a number of points between the two generals, which will however have to be confirmed at their meeting scheduled for 19 July. In view of the highly sensitive nature of the presence of Mladic at the meeting,

it was agreed by all participants that this fact should not be mentioned at all in public."

So this was at that time a secret meeting. If I knew that the meeting was taking place, I would have expected these people to ask Mladic and Milosevic what happened with the people who were taken away from Potocari. According to the official document issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross, it's a book on missing persons which lists almost 20,000 persons missing in Bosnia.

One thousand eight hundred and eighty nine men, mostly men and boys and some women, which means the total number of missing persons from Potocari is 1,889. So many people disappeared in front of the eyes of all these representatives of the international community, and it seems like no one has asked about these people. But what is even worse than what I have told already is that the following day on 16 July, which means only 1 day after this meeting on 16 July, the Serbs killed 1,500 men and boys in Pilica. This has been proved by also the witnesses and also the indicted for war crimes, Mr. Damovic, who is in the Hague. Which means that all these facts show that there was very little interest to save the lives of anybody.

Ms. PAUL. I just wanted to add to that that what was discussed at this meeting was the safety of U.N. troops and the hostage situation in terms of Dutch troops, and also essentially an agreement, perhaps not stated quite so bluntly, but an agreement that there would be no further air strikes. Therefore, there was not a focus, again, on the fate of civilians, many of whom whose lives could have been saved had there been insistence or had there been some kind of plan developed at this meeting as a result. It was not even brought up.

Mr. NUHANOVIC. It was not even mentioned. It was not even mentioned. You see only 2 days after 2,000 people were taken away, this meeting took place. It was not even brought up.

Ms. JAGGER. I would like to add something more to that. Besides the safety of the Dutch troops, they were there to request for the military equipment of the United Nations, but I would like to read you in an unpublished interview that Carl Bildt gave to Rob Guttman from *Newsday*. He said, "We had to meet with Milosevic. He was the only person who could get the two generals together. Milosevic ordered Mladic to Belgrade. This leaves no doubt as to who was pulling the strings within and without the now ravaged enclave in Srebrenica. The point of the meeting, said Bildt, was to arrange access for the International Red Cross to an enclave in which the United Nations knew well that no Muslims were now living. Bildt made it clear that he knew a lot of details about the violence. He said we knew about men being separated."

Newsday asked Bildt, "Did you raise the issue of massacres with Mladic and Milosevic?" "No, we didn't," replied Bildt. "We had unconfirmed reports of massacres, but we didn't raise the issue." Later in the interview he contradicted himself directly. "Of course we raised these issues." So it shows you and he was then the head of the Office of the High Representative and the former Prime Minister of Sweden.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask Ms. Paul if perhaps you could elaborate on the issue of chemical weapons and ask your associate if he would come and give us his name and tell us some information that he might have.

How much of it was used, how many people were affected? I think you said it was BZ? What is the consequence of coming in contact with that chemical agent?

Mr. HOGENDOORN. Well, it's difficult to tell what really happened because of course most of the people we believe were—

Mr. SMITH. Could you identify yourself for the record?

Mr. HOGENDOORN. I'm sorry. My name is E.J. Hogendoorn. I am a researcher with Human Rights Watch.

It is quite difficult to get the facts straight because of course most of the witnesses of these alleged attacks are dead. Because it appears clear from the testimony that most of the symptoms that were described to us were experienced by people in the rear of the column. These were the people that were cut off on the second day of the march out of Srebrenica and the majority of these people were then either killed in the area or executed later on.

The reason we suspect it is BZ or some kind of BZ-like agent is because of the effects that were described to us, which is disorientation and incapacitation. We were aware of the information that the Yugoslav national army had developed an incapacitant which they called BZ. They had weaponized it, and that they had actually developed doctrine for its use.

Ms. PAUL. In addition, there were some of the survivors interviewed who identified peculiar looking shells in terms of the way they exploded, that they described colored substance coming from the shells rather than an explosion, a detonation with shrapnel. These accounts varied.

There are possibly other explanations for some of the behaviors that occurred. There were, however, some very bizarre behaviors which experts felt could not be explained by the traumatic stress of this situation which some people have said might explain some of the symptoms. There were a number of suicides and people who were very disoriented. One of the effects of BZ can be even the thought that someone near you is in fact the enemy. People weren't recognizing others in their vicinity whom they were believed to have known, et cetera. So there was a great deal of psychological reaction that doesn't seem to be adequately explained.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Stover, does a gassing of this kind show up when bodies are exhumed? Second, in looking at these gruesome pictures and some of the pictures that we saw on the slides that you presented, how many of those people have been identified and the survivors have been made aware of the fact that either their father or their son or husband or daughter has now been positively identified? Are the dental records sufficiently well kept in Bosnia? Are there other signs? Or is it usually just things that they might have been carrying that leads to a positive ID?

Mr. STOVER. I will deal with the first question. In the late 1980's, I was involved not directly, but I sent a team of forensic experts to Iraqi Kurdistan. The team was actually going to investigate mass graves, but took on investigating possible chemical weapons use. They were able to recover, and this was certainly early 1990's,

they were able to recover from craters that were found in the area traces of serin and traces of mustard gas. In fact, it was the first time in history that traces of a chemical agent had been found so many years actually not in test situation, but had been found "in sites". They were analyzed in Britain and in England. The results were positive.

In this case, I don't know. It is something that certainly could be looked into and samples should be taken from some of the bodies in the clothes that are exhumed. A lot of it is the conditions and the type of agent and how long it lasts.

In terms of how many identifications have been made, it's been some weeks since I have had any new information, that some 800 bodies have been exhumed or collected from the trail from Srebrenica to Tuzla. Of those, around a dozen or so have been identified. Most of those have been identified on the basis, I believe, of DNA analysis.

One of the things that I feared from the beginning is that the families may be led to believe that a large number of the dead will be positively identified. It is a very difficult situation because you have such a large number of men who were executed and buried at certain sites. Anti-mortem records are not as widely available as they were in Vukovar and so on. However, the forensic efforts need to continue. Perhaps by the end of this year, just simply my own projection, I mean it could be no more than 40, and this is insignificant, and the effect on the families is tremendous.

So any effort and support that can be given to help Physicians for Human Rights and the other organizations helping with the examination work would be beneficial.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Nuhanovic implied that, absent a concrete identification, there is some hope that perhaps a relative might still be living. Is there any evidence that the Bosnian Serbs or Milosevic's people are holding in concentration camps or in any other situation people from either Srebrenica or any other Bosnian Muslims?

Mr. STOVER. You know, one of the women from Srebrenica who I spoke to about this said, "You know, all I have is hope. You know, you take away hope, I have nothing." It is understandable. We saw this in Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala. It is very unlikely, in my opinion, and this is based primarily by ICRC visits, that there may at this date still be men being held in Serbia or other areas. However, this is my own personal feeling.

But then, you never know. We need to continue to press for that information. But also a process of coming to understand that probably most of the men and boys are dead and that they are not being held in mines or in prisons also needs to be accepted.

Ms. PAUL. If I might add to that. We have done some investigations into this. There is not much evidence that suggests that at least a large number of people survived or were taken either into Serbia or elsewhere. However, I think out of respect for the survivors and the need to get at the truth, that we should not discount those allegations. I have been told recently that a man was released from servitude in a mine in Serbia and arrived in Sarajevo and spoke on Bosnian television. We have not interviewed him so I can't say what I think about the veracity of his statement.

But what I would say is that through investigations that I have done starting back in 1994, when I was looking at the issue of forced labor in the Bozonska Cryena region of what is now Republic of Srpska, that there were a number of allegations of persons being taken into Serbia proper to work in the mines at Aleksinac and the area around Nis. So I think that we can't discount it.

I was never able, however, to find an individual who had actually been in the mines or even have a second hand story that I felt was solid enough to go on. But knowing what I know about the process of forced labor and what was happening during that period, it seems entirely conceivable to me that something like that could occur.

I think though one has to be cautious because one doesn't want to give false hope to the survivors. At the same time, it is completely unfair to discount their stories as mere wishful thinking. I think that we have not done a full enough investigation or satisfactory investigation of these issues.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask just one final question. Why do you believe the U.N. peacekeepers and the UNHCR did not insist that the Muslims be evacuated through their good offices or on their trucks and buses rather than allowing the Serb captors? I mean, did they just trust Mladic, that somehow he was going to act benignly toward the Muslims, or was it just incompetence, or worse?

Mr. NUHANOVIC. I think that they just didn't care. According to what I have seen there, I can give you many details but it would take a long time. The Dutch soldiers, the representatives from MSF who were there, and also UNHCR representatives who were there for maybe 1 or 2 hours while this was happening in Potocari didn't show an interest in protecting the civilians at all. I mean no one has shown any interest at all. Everybody just waited to pack up his things and leave. That's all. And leave that hell on earth.

But you mentioned UNHCR. I have managed to find out something concerning the UNHCR complicity, which has not been mentioned in any book. At the moment when people were being thrown out of the camp, there were two UNHCR trucks just arrived at the Potocari area. They were parked along with the Serb trucks and the Serb buses. There were still a few hundred people left in the camp. Two UNHCR officers were there on the spot. I saw them. I know their names. They didn't even try to suggest to the Dutch officers that maybe at least the remaining refugees should be evacuated by the UNHCR trucks because they were there.

Not only that, but later on, I found out that those two UNHCR officers have never written any report on what they have seen in Potocari. When I tried to contact them and ask if they have seen where the people were taken away, into what direction, the UNHCR spokesman in Sarajevo, Mr. Christianofsky in 1997 when I went to his office, told me but Hasan, we had no international staff in Srebrenica during the whole issue. So the spokesman of UNHCR and some other high officials in the organization didn't even know that UNHCR international staff was present in Srebrenica. Everything was just covered up.

Ms. JAGGER. I would like to quote the words at the debriefing by the Dutch Brigadier General van der Wind. The debriefing says, "In order to prevent excesses with regard to transport, the battal-

ion commander decided to cooperate in the evacuation. When the first buses arrived, they were stormed by a large number of refugees who wanted to board as quickly as possible. Dutchbat personnel then formed an orderly pathway to the buses. But more extraordinary than that is the Dutchbat transferred 30,000 liters of fuel to the Bosnian Serbs in accordance with Mladic demands. The Dutch were fueling the very vehicles that Mladic used to bring the executioners to Potocari and the buses that brought the victims to the killing fields simply because General Mladic demanded it. The Bosnian Serbs held 55 Dutch personnel in Braternag," wrote General van der Wind. That is the excuse that he gave why they were cooperating with the Serbs in such a way.

Mr. SMITH. You know, I do have one additional question to you, Ms. Jagger. You spoke of the Dutch investigation that has been undertaken. When is that expected to be concluded? How extensive is it? Does it have high-level, competent jurist investigators working on it? And do you think that might be the catalyst for additional investigations and are U.N. documents going to be part of the discovery?

Ms. JAGGER. Yes. There is a gentleman I think at the moment here present and maybe it would be good if he would be willing to speak. I do not know if he is still—

Mr. SMITH. He is coming up right now.

Mr. KERSTEN. My name is Albert Kersten. I am a member of the team of the Institute for Documentation in Amsterdam. Our institute is investigating what has happened in Srebrenica in July 1995. It's an independent investigation by the Dutch Government. We have access to all Dutch documents. We are in contact now with the United Nations, with NATO, and other international organizations to reach agreement on access to their documents.

So far, we have an agreement with NATO. We hope to get soon an answer from the United Nations. We are also discussing this issue with the U.S. Government at the moment. We have also asked the French Government and the British Government to cooperate with the investigation.

Mr. REES. A technical question about that. Congressman Smith has requested that the United Nations release all of its internal documents, minutes of meetings, debriefings, communications, both within Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia and two other U.N. officials and even to the Security Council and member states. Have you made similar requests to the United Nations? Do you feel that the release of those sorts of documents is essential to being able to conduct a thorough investigation?

Mr. KERSTEN. Yes. I think access to the documents is essential for a thorough investigation. We have not asked for release of the documents. We have asked for access to the documents. After we have searched the documents, we will continue the discussion with the United Nations on which part of the documents or which documents we can use for our report. So the final decision on publication of the report is with the United Nations, but in general we have the impression that the United Nations will be cooperative with our investigation. We have had no negative indications so far, but we have to experience in practice how it will work out.

Mr. REES. Is there anything that the U.S. Congress should do to encourage that cooperation that has not been done already?

Mr. KERSTEN. Well of course all assistance is welcome. At the moment I couldn't be very specific on what the U.S. Congress could do to help us. I think because we are an independent institute we have to do it on our own, contacts. So far, we are very grateful for what we have reached on cooperation.

Ms. PAUL. Although if I might add, intelligence information that's related certainly would be useful, I would imagine as well as the photographs.

Mr. KERSTEN. Oh, yes.

Ms. PAUL. So that is something the U.S. Congress could ask for, certainly would be the release of classified data.

Mr. REES. I think the Chairman will be making a request very shortly that those documents be declassified.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Rees. Your associate from Human Rights Watch I think wanted to make a comment? No, he covered it.

I want to thank you very much for your testimony. You have long provided leadership very often not clearly taken by people in positions of authority. That's entirely regrettable. But for your good work on behalf of human rights and trying to prevent this from happening again and to get to the bottom of what happened in Srebrenica, I know that this Subcommittee is very, very grateful. Thank you.

As I said earlier, any additional comments, data that you would like to be made a part of the record, please get it to us and we will make it a part of the record.

The hearing is adjourned, and thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:28 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

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CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
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Statement of Representative Christopher H. Smith
Chairman, Subcommittee on International Operations
and Human Rights
MARCH 31, 1998

Today's hearing is about four terrible days in July of 1995, when an estimated 8000 people were executed by Bosnian Serb soldiers who had overrun the United Nations-designated "safe area" of Srebrenica. The invaders killed women and children, and they almost certainly killed the majority of the adult male population of the so-called safe area.

These brutal killings were not committed in battle. They were committed against people who were unarmed and helpless, and who had been repeatedly assured that they would not be harmed if they surrendered. In some cases these assurances came not only from the killers themselves, but also from the UN peacekeeping forces whose mission was to protect them. The evidence is overwhelming that the executions were committed with the specific intention of destroying the Bosnian Muslim population of the area. This intention is the central element in the crime of genocide.

The United Nations peacekeeping forces in Srebrenica were charged with enforcing Security Council Resolution 836, which had pledged to defend the "safe areas" with "all necessary means, including the use of force." But when the moment of truth came, the UN forces offered only token resistance to the Serb offensive. Their military and political commanders had redefined their primary mission not as the protection of the people of Srebrenica, but as the safety of the UN forces themselves.

When Bosnian Serb commander Ratko Mladic threatened violence against the blue-helmeted UN soldiers, here is the way one of those soldiers described the reaction:

Everybody got a fright. You could easily get killed in such an operation. As far as I knew, we had not been sent to Srebrenica to defend the enclave, but rather as some kind of spruced-up observers.

So that is what the peacekeepers became: observers to genocide. And soon they became something more than observers. On July 13, the Dutch blue helmet battalion handed over to the Serb invaders 300 Bosnian Muslims who had sought safety within the UN compound. They

watched as the men were separated from the women and children --- a process which was already well known in Bosnia as a sign that the men were in imminent danger of death. These men were never heard from again.

Terrible as these events were, they could hardly have been a surprise to those who like to call themselves the "international community." I happened to be chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission at the time of the fall of Srebrenica. Three months earlier, the Commission had held a hearing documenting the systematic nature of the ethnic cleansing then going on in Bosnia, and the subsequent widespread attempts by Serb militants to destroy mosques and otherwise erase all evidence of Muslim culture.

Another hearing, also in April 1995, dealt with the question of what the United States ought to do about the atrocities being perpetrated in Bosnia. Richard Holbrooke represented the Administration. Though he offered sympathy for the Bosnians, he gave us all the reasons why the U.S. would neither come to their defense nor allow them to defend themselves through the lifting of the arms embargo. A genuine effort by the United States to halt the slaughter in Bosnia-Herzegovina would not come until months later, when it was too late for the victims of Srebrenica.

In the two and one-half years that have passed since the fall of Srebrenica, we have learned more details not only about the scope and brutality of the massacres, but also about why nobody did anything to stop them. First, as some of our witnesses will testify today, it appears that the UN's top military and political officials in the former Yugoslavia --- Yasushi Akashi and Bernard Janvier --- regarded the safe areas as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. As David Rohde and others have written, most projected scenarios for an "end game" in Bosnia involved trading the Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia for Serb-dominated suburbs of Sarajevo. It further appears that these same officials may have been on better terms with the Serb commanders who were threatening the enclaves than with the Bosnian Muslim population they were supposed to protect. To paraphrase a remark by another United Nations leader about another mass murderer, Mladic seems to have impressed them as a man they could do business with.

Even before July 1995, Akashi and Janvier had begun to act as though the protection of the safe areas was not an important part of their mandate --- and they had communicated this to the Serbs. A month earlier, Akashi may have reached a secret agreement with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic that in return for releasing UN hostages held by the Serbs, the UN forces would stop calling for NATO air strikes in response to future Serb aggression.

Within days of the massacres, accounts by survivors and by UN peacekeepers themselves had begun to surface. It also appears that the United States had access to satellite photographs of mass graves and perhaps even of men kneeling on the ground waiting to be shot. This evidence had surprisingly little effect on the attitudes of the UN commanders, whose own reports had described nothing more serious than "harassment" and "unfortunate incidents." Rohde reports

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that three weeks after the massacres at Srebrenica, Akashi and Janvier had dinner with Milosevic at a hunting lodge outside Belgrade. When Milosevic pointed out that hunting was prohibited in the immediate vicinity of the lodge, Akashi joked that it was "a safe area for animals." Everybody laughed.

These are serious charges: at the least, betrayal of trust; at worst, complicity in genocide. Unfortunately, most of the journalists and human rights advocates who have studied the events surrounding the fall of Srebrenica believe them to be true. We will never know for sure until the United Nations releases the documents in its possession that will tell the world what the peacekeepers knew and when they knew it. Two weeks ago, in preparation for this hearing, I wrote to Secretary General Kofi Annan requesting the release of communications between Akashi, Janvier, and other UN officials about the events at Srebrenica. I also invited the UN to send a witness to this hearing. They chose not to send a witness, and the only documents they sent were a few UN press releases and other documents that were already public. I intend to renew my request. The credibility of the United Nations is very much at stake in this matter, particularly because some of the documents that are still being kept secret were addressed to Secretary General Annan himself in his former position as head of UN peacekeeping operations.

I also request that our own government release any records in its possession that may shed light on what the international community knew about Srebrenica before, during, and immediately after the massacres. I particularly hope our government will make a full accounting about when United States intelligence analysts and policy makers came to understand the importance of satellite pictures of men kneeling on the ground near what soon turned out to be mass graves.

I make these requests not only because the victims and their families are entitled to the truth --- not only because truth and justice are essential prerequisites to peace and stability --- but because we need to find out what we did wrong and make sure we change it.

Srebrenica was not the first or the last time the United States or the United Nations has known about massacres in progress and done nothing. President Clinton has recently acknowledged that we ignored the signs of the 1994 Rwanda genocide until it was too late. He has not yet acknowledged that his Administration made exactly the same mistake during a later stage of the same conflict, when in 1996 and 1997 they failed to act on credible reports that the Rwandan Patriotic Army was engaging in the mass slaughter of Hutu refugees. Most recently, the international response to the killings in Kosovo -- which could become Milosevic's next Bosnia -- shows that we have not yet learned the lesson of Srebrenica. At a minimum, that lesson requires that when we are put on notice that a massacre is about to happen, we must not wait for proof beyond a reasonable doubt before acting to prevent it. Such proof always comes too late.

I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses today.

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**Testimony of Hasan Nuhanovic, Former Translator, U.N.
Peacekeeping Force in Srebrenica**

Date: 29 March 1998

STATEMENT

for the hearing at the Subcommittee on International Affairs and Human Rights (US House of Representatives).

A chronology of events during the fall of Srebrenica the situation in Potocari – Dutchbat UNPROFOR HQ is ~~attached~~.

My family, just like thousands of others was simply handed over to the Serbs in the village of Potocari, six km north of Srebrenica on 13 July 1995 They have never been seen since.

The Dutch " Peace Keepers " threw my family out of the camp right in front of my eyes. The people, especially the men and boys who were inside the camp, didn't want to leave the relative safety of it. All they wanted the Dutch to do was to let them sit inside the camp until the (ICRC) International Committee of Red Cross comes to register them. Then they would have been safe even if the Serbs got hold of them.

The ICRC came to Potocari Dutch battalion camp but on 16 July 1995 only. At that moment, only few sick and wounded people (up to 15 in total) were still in the camp, apart from the Dutch soldiers.

It should be known that the Serbs never tried to brake through the parameter of the camp. They came inside the camp only once, on 12 July around 11 AM, and left after five minutes. They were escorted by major Franken, the Deputy Dutchbat commander.

The Dutch refused to tell the refugees inside the camp what was going on with the people outside. They lied saying that everything was all right and that the people from inside the camp were also going to be evacuated to the federation territory. The Dutch lied to the refugees inside the camp. The Dutch knew that the men and boys outside the camp were being separated from the women and children and that some of them were even killed right on the spot. They watched the Serbs take away and kill civilians. They did nothing to prevent it. According to what I learned, while I was still in the camp, by 17 July the Dutch did not even inform their higher command in Tuzla, Sarajevo, Zagreb or New York (maybe except for the Dutch defense Ministry in the Hague) about the situation in Potocari. In the afternoon on 17 July 1995, I sneaked into the communication room inside the Dutchbat HQ and used the satellite telephone to call the Tuzla UNPROFOR HQ (Sector NE HQ) hoping that there would be quick reaction from their side to save the lives of the people who had been driven away to an unknown direction. I was shocked when on the other end of the line I heard voices of US Army Major, Guy Sands and the Head of UN Civil Affairs for Sector NE, Mr. Keneth Biser, saying : " Hasan what is going on there. We have don't have any information about the situation in Potocari at all. They told me that they did not even know that there were so many men and boys in Potocari after the Serbs overran the enclave. They told me that they did not know that over 300 men and boys have been inside the camp.

I had difficulties making those phone calls because the Dutch officers and UN Military Observers tried to stop me from entering the communication room. I had to speak in Bosnian to a translator

on the other end of the phone line who then translated my words into English to the UN people staff in Tuzla UN HQ.

It was entirely the Dutch idea to "empty the camp" as soon as possible so that it is easier for them to leave the area. The way the Dutch behaved indicated that they felt the presence of the refugees inside the camp as a burden.

The sooner they get rid of the refugees the better – they thought. I saw it happening and heard them discussing it. I tried to keep my family inside the camp. My father was offered to stay because he was one of the three refugee representatives. The Dutch offered them to stay. But my brother and my mother, who was sick, were not allowed to stay.

The Dutch and three UN Military Observers came to the room, in which my family was sitting, and yelled: "Hasan your family must leave right now. Almost all refugees are out and your family can't stay here any more."

There was no room for argument. It was an order.

It is important to point out that there was no pressure from the Serb side on the Dutch to expel the refugees from the camp. The Dutch have never explained why they did it. And if they were really forced to do it, they never explained who forced them, in what way, what was the name and the rank of a Serb officer who "threatened" the Dutch forcing them to do it, etc.

In the Dutch Defense Ministry Debriefing on Srebrenica, made in 1995, a Dutch soldier states that around 04.00 PM he saw the Serbs taking away a man who just came out of the Dutchbat camp. He further says that he saw how the Serbs shot the man in the back of his head. Two hours after that, at about 06.00, the Dutch threw my family out.

Later when I came to the UN HQ in Tuzla I was called to come to the office of the Deputy Commander of the UNPROFOR Sector NE HQ, Lt Colonel Brantz (a Dutch army officer). He knew that I was looking for my family and that I needed to use a satellite telephone to contact some Serbs I knew from before the war. I was hoping that they would tell me what has happened to my family. The only satellite phone in Tuzla UN HQ was in the office of Lt Col Brantz. He told me that I could use the telephone in his office any time I wanted by with one condition – all I know about the role of the Dutchbat in Srebrenica I should not tell anyone else but him. I understood that he was also trying to cover up the facts.

At the moment when my family was being thrown out of the camp I saw 10 UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) trucks parked along with the Serb trucks and buses. At that moment I also saw two UNHCR International Staff members, Rosana Sam and Andrei Kazakov standing next to me. They were the witnesses of what happened in Potocari that evening and also of what happened that night and following day in the area (they spent the night in the near by town of Bratunac – one of the places where the Serbs brought the men and boys).

The two of them had ten trucks available at the moment when there were still approximately 300 refugees inside the camp. It was their duty to try to evacuate at least the remaining refugees by UNHCR trucks. Instead, they let the Serbs separate the men and boys from women and transport them in two different directions in the Serb trucks and buses.

Later I found out that they have never informed anyone of what they have seen in the area. They never wrote a report on it as it should have been their duty as UNHCR officers. They were supposed to alert their superiors and the whole International Community but instead they kept silent. When I asked the UNHCR spokesman in Sarajevo, Mr. Kriss Janovsky, if I could see the UNHCR reports on Srebrenica he said: " But we had no International staff in Srebrenica during the whole issue. " The UNHCR didn't even know that their staff have been in Srebrenica on 13 July 1995 – the day when 2,500 men and boys disappeared.

I wrote a letter to the Head of UNHCR Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina asking for explanation explanation.

I received a reply only six months later. The Head of UNHCR Office replied that there were "no grounds that would justify pursuing any disciplinary procedures against Mr. Kazakov and ... "

The Dutch not only turned the people over to the Serbs but also tried to hide evidence about it. They hid the list of 239 people from Potocari camp. They did nothing to find out what has happened to those men and boys (and some women – including my mother) until I visited the Dutch Defense Ministry in the Hague in January 1997. Only then the Dutch Defense Minister promised to take some concrete steps but still denying any responsibility for the people whom his soldiers have turned over to the Serbs.

There was no news about the fate of the people from Potocari camp to the date. Moreover, I received a reply to one of many letters, which I have written to the Dutch Defense Minister, saying that I should no more demand action from the Ministry. The Minister advised me in the letter that if I had any questions I should contact the Dutch Embassy in Sarajevo.

After I wrote many letters to UN demanding a thorough investigation on the situation Potocari, I received a reply from the UN HQ. The letter was signed by Mr. Peter Jones Office of Special Representative of Secretary General of UN MIBH (UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The letter says that I should not be addressing the UN any more because : " ... the mandate of the UNMIBH mission with respect to missing persons is limited to facilitation and referral rather than being an operational one, and that current information and practical assistance should be sought through the offices of ICRC (International Committee of Red Cross) and OHR (Office of High Representative)."

The organization whose members have turned over my family and thousands of other people to the Serbs is now saying that it can not look for them.

I continue to search for information about my family and other missing people from Srebrenica. I contacted all the relevant organizations and agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina asking for assistance but the results are very poor.

Hasan Nuhanovic

SUMMARY OF THE STATEMENT (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS DURING AND AFTER THE FALL OF SREBRENICA " SAFE AREA ")

As I have been invited to testify at the hearing organized by the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights (Committee on International Relations, United States House of Representatives) I wrote the following summary of my testimony :

(The content of the summary of this testimony gives only a part of experience I had as a resident of Srebrenica " Safe Zone ", a UN language assistant and a person who, just like thousands of others, is looking for information on his missing family.)

April 1992 My family, my parents and my younger brother, and I flee from our home town of Vlasenica (Eastern Bosnia) to Zepa.

August 1992 After the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) attack, most villages in Zepa area are burned to the ground. My family flees to Srebrenica. Period of starvation and continuous bombardments by the Bosnian Serb Army begins.

April 1993 The first UNPROFOR unit, a reinforced company of Canadian Army, and UNMO (UN Military Observers) arrive to Srebrenica. I was hired as a UNMO Language Assistant (translator).

February 1994 Dutch Battalion replaces the Canadian Company. The Dutch Battalion Command uses me as a Language Assistant at all important meetings held with the Enclave authorities and the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) authorities.

July 1995 The BSA attack Srebrenica. The UNMO team in Srebrenica town remains in their HQ, fearing exposure to the Serbs. Instead, fearing for my family and other people in Srebrenica, I gather information on the ground about the position and movement of Serb troops, and activities of the local civilian and military establishment and pass it to the UNMO team.

Two days before the fall of Srebrenica the UNMO team escapes to UN HQ in Potocari (Dutchbat) leaving me behind. I continue my information gathering activities, and pass the data to the UNMOs in Potocari.

10 July 1995 I realize that the situation in the town has deteriorated and I take my brother, the youngest member of my family, to Dutchbat HQ in Potocari hoping that the Dutch would protect him.

11 July Srebrenica town falls to the BSA and approximately 25,000 (first group) refugees move towards Dutchbat HQ in Potocari. The Dutch allow 6,000 to enter the camp, including my parents ; the remaining refugees are told to stay outside the camp.

Approximately 12-15,000 refugees (second group), mainly grown up males, take to the surrounding mountains attempting to flee to Tuzla.

12 July The BSA commander, Gen Ratko Mladic, requests a meeting with Dutchbat commander Lt Col Karemans and local representatives of Srebrenica, in the near by town of Bratunac, outside the enclave. My father, Ibro Nuhanovic, volunteers to go as one of three local representatives. (The officially elected

representatives were amongst the 12-15,000 who had taken to the surrounding mountains, attempting to flee to Tuzla),

During the meeting Mladic assures the Dutch and local delegation that no harm would come to the refugees in Potocari, though all men would be screened against a Serb drawn list of war criminals.

Upon returning to the camp the three local representatives are ordered by the Dutchbat deputy commander, Major Franken, to prepare a list of all males between the ages of 16 and 65 amongst the refugees inside and outside the camp. The list of the males amongst the 6,000 inside the camp is completed the same day, reflecting the total of 239, including approximately 20 wounded. Between 50 and 100 males inside the camp refuse to give their names. My father - fearing the list would be used for untoward purposes - refrains from putting his own and my brother's names on the list. The list of the males outside the camp is not made because the Serbs allow my father and the other two representatives to leave the camp only for five minutes at request of Gen Mladic. My father returns to the camp.

The rumors in the compound about executions of males outside the compound spread inside the camp. The Dutchbat deputy commander, Major Franken denies it. My father and the other representative, Nesib Mandzic, assess the number of males outside the camp to 2,500.

Serbs carry out deportation of refugees from outside the camp until 20.00 hrs.

Males from outside the camp are separated from their families.

Night between 12 and 13 July 1995 More rumors about execution of males outside the camp spread inside the camp. I try to confirm the rumors. Major Franken denies it. UNMOs deny it too.

Major Franken informs the representatives that the "evacuation" of some 5,000 refugees from outside the camp will be continued the following day at 08.00 hrs. He states that the refugees from inside the camp will be evacuated immediately after the evacuation of refugees from outside the camp is complete.

Major Franken orders that a list of all UN, MSF, UNHCR, locally employed staff be drawn. He states that those whose names are on that list would be allowed to stay. I plea with Major Franken and UNMOs to allow my brother stay with me, UN employee. UNMOs promise to include my brother's name on that list but in the morning (13 July) they remove my brother's name from the list saying that was the order of Major Franken.

13 July 1995 The Dutch order the 6,000 refugees out of the Potocari camp. The Serbs are waiting at the gate, separating all males from women and children.

Franken states that all the males whose names were on the list of 239 would be safe. He supports his statement saying that he had faxed the list to " the Hague, Geneva and some more addresses ". I plea once more with Major Franken to allow my brother to stay.

He allows my father, like the other two representatives, to stay but refuses to allow my brother to stay. My father decides to join my mother and my brother. I remain in the camp, and watch my parents and my brother being handed over to the Serbs at the gate. None of them have been seen since.

21 July I was evacuated to Zagreb as part of the Dutch convoy. I contact all relevant organizations, International Committee of Red Cross, UNHCR, UN Protection Forces HQ, asking for information on the people from the list of 239, not knowing that the names of my family members were not included. I am told that none of these organizations have ever heard of such a list.

I return to Tuzla and resume to work as an UNMO interpreter hoping to find out something about my family through the Tuzla UN HQ since its area of responsibility was east Bosnia (Srebrenica). For remainder of 1995 I attempt to glean information from Srebrenica survivors and agencies working on this issue.

I trace down the three UNMOs from the former Srebrenica team and they sign statements attesting to the existence of Ibro Nuhanovic, my father, Nasiha, my mother, and Muhamed, my brother, in the camp as part of the 6,000.

September 1995 After I contact them, Human Rights Watch Helsinki investigates the case about the list with the Dutch Foreign Ministry and the Dutch Defense Ministry releases the list of 239 men from Dutchbat Potocari compound, all of whom - but for very few wounded who were evacuated - have not been seen since. The Helsinki organization obtained the list only after pressurizing the Dutch Foreign Ministry. The list is also a part of the report (total 242 names including the UNMOs statements on my family as affidavits) about the fall of Srebrenica made by Helsinki Watch to the UN SG in October 1995.

I start writing letters to the Dutch Defence Minister demanding investigation on the fate of the 242 (and others) who the Dutch handed over to the Serbs.

1997 7 January I meet the Dutch Defence Minister, Mr Voorhouve, in his office in the Hague. We discuss Srebrenica issues for over an hour, and especially the fate of 242 on the Potocari list. The disappearances of my family is raised. I request some definitive action such as a meeting between a senior Dutch representative and the Republic of Srpska President, Mrs Biljana Plavsic, in which the list would be handed over with a demand for information about the names on it. Whilst not disregarding the many thousands of other missing people from Srebrenica, I emphasize that the 242 were under direct protection of UNPROFOR - specifically the Dutch contingent - and were ordered out by Dutchbat even though they knew the BSA was waiting to arrest the refugees once they stepped outside the camp. Mr Voorhouve promises to instruct the Dutch Ambassador in Sarajevo to meet with Mrs Plavsic and ask her for information.

February 1997 The Dutch Ambassador meets with Mrs Plavsic, and passes on to her the list of 242 names (239 plus the names of my parents and my brother) together with a request for information about the people from the list. Nothing has been heard from Mrs Plavsic or any other Serb on the matter to the date.

Hasan Nuhanovic

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**Hearing on: "The Betrayal of Srebrenica: Why
Did The Massacre Happen? Will It Happen
Again?"**

Tuesday, March 31st 1998 10:00am
Room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building

House Committee on International Relations
Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights

Chapter Excerpts from
"The Graves: Srebrenica and Vukovar"

Text by Eric Stover
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This book is based on research conducted in Bosnia and Croatia from 1992 to 1997. Some of the names of individuals in the book have been changed to protect them from possible retaliations and further hardship.

My terror of forgetting is greater than my terror
of having too much to remember.

Yosef H. Yershalmi
Holocaust Survivor

If you seek vengeance, dig two graves.

Chinese Proverb

During the autumn and winter of 1996, the Hague tribunal transferred approximately 517 bodies and assorted "disarticulated" body parts from its authority to the jurisdiction of the authorities in Tuzla. The "body transfers," as they were referred to, weren't conducted under the cloak of darkness, but both parties made every effort to keep them discreet. Every three weeks or so, a green canvas-covered truck pulled through the gate to the sewing factory in Kalesija and grim-looking municipal workers, wearing face masks and shoulder length black rubber gloves, would load several dozen white, zipped body bags onto the flatbed. They would then transport the remains to a 300-foot tunnel cut into a hillside on the outskirts of Tuzla. There, behind a heavy metal door peppered with hastily-made air holes, the workers would stack the anonymous corpses on top of one another on each side of the tunnel where they would await identification and reburial.

As the tribunal's scientists exhumed and autopsied the bodies from the mass graves that summer, the Bosnian government's commissioner for the investigation of the disappeared, Amor Masovic, working with his Serb counterpart, Dragan Bulajic, and a team of local investigators, had conducted numerous forays along the "Trail of Life and Death." Masovic and his investigators searched a three-mile stretch of pastures and woodlands along the path for the remains of Muslim men who had been killed while fleeing to Tuzla. Kneeling down at various points along the trail, the investigators gently pried bones and scraps of clothing from the tall meadow grass and decaying leaves and placed them into large plastic bags. From a distance Masovic and his men looked as if they were playing an oversized game of pick-up-sticks. But, in fact, it was dangerous work, as the hills were littered with unexploded shells and mortars.

Late one morning, deep within the forest, Masovic and his investigators discovered the remains of thirty to forty bodies clustered together under a large oak tree, its thick gnarly limbs scarred by shrapnel. As it turned out, it was the same place where Ibrahim and his father and brother had been ambushed. Judging from the position of the remains, Masovic guessed the men were probably sleeping or resting under the tree when the shells began bursting around them. Next to one of the bodies was a battered copy of the Koran, its pages stained with mold and caked in mud. A few yards away, a small shaving mirror hung from a branch. And, on the ground below it, resting on a flat gray stone, was a straight razor rusted shut by the rain and snow.

By the first snowfall in early November, the Bosnian investigators had gathered the remains of over 300 individuals, bringing the total number of

human remains gathered from the trail and exhumed from the mass graves that year to approximately 800. When compared to the ICRC list of 7,079 missing men from Srebrenica, this meant that for each body retrieved, there were, at least, eight more still buried in mass graves or lying somewhere along the 40-mile trail to Tuzla.

With the departure of the tribunal's scientists in October 1996, the task of identifying the Srebrenica remains fell to the director of the forensic institute of the University of Tuzla, Zdenko Cihlarz. Early one morning in June 1997, I found the doctor in the Tuzla hospital just as he was finishing an autopsy. A balding, heavy set man in his mid-fifties, Cihlarz seemed to have an air of sadness about him. As I watched him in his stained lab coat pushing the gurney back into the refrigeration unit, I couldn't help but wonder if he didn't secretly wish that he was somewhere else, perhaps bringing new life into the world rather than ushering it out. Like other pathologists throughout the former republic, he had had the onerous task during the war of delivering the corpses of soldiers and civilians to their families. Cihlarz was in charge of the entire northeastern region of Bosnia, and it had kept him very busy. When I asked how he had kept his sanity during those terrible years, he frowned and shrugged his shoulders. "It's your job. You're not paid to dwell on it."

In fact, for Cihlarz, the Srebrenica investigation had become something of a personal obsession. He compared its intensity to how he had felt six years earlier, in August 1990, when he had been called on to investigate the deaths of a 180 coal miners killed during an explosion in a local mine. Although Cihlarz realized that he would be able to identify only a small percentage of the Srebrenica bodies, he was still determined to reconstruct the events which had taken place along the Trail of Life and Death.

In the main laboratory of the institute, Cihlarz stopped and swept his arm around the room. "So, you see, it's all improvisation. Here you have one of the biggest forensic investigations of a war crime in European history and what have you got? Forensics on a shoestring." In the dimly lit room I could make out boxes of bones stacked against the tiled walls. Here and there, bones had fallen out, collecting dust, on the floor. Make-shift examining tables had been fashioned out of planks and sheets of thick cardboard. Several medical and forensic textbooks laid strewn across table tops, their covers torn and dog-eared. I picked one up and leafed to the title page. It was more than thirty-five years old. On an examining table, laid out in anatomical order, were less than half the bones of a skeleton, and next to it a makeshift bone board, an instrument physical anthropologists use for measuring stature from the long bones. It had been cobbled together by attaching two metal bookends to a smooth wooden plank. Tacked to the top of the board between the bookends was a cloth measuring tape. Fixed to the wall above the table was an illustration of a skeleton cut from the pages of an anatomy book.

Cihlarz waved me over to a table where a large hand-drawn map was taped to its surface. "This represents a small section of the trail, in an area called the Bijela Forest," he said pointing to what I immediately recognized as the same

place where Ibrahim and his father and brother had been attacked. The map looked like a bull's eye with a dense cluster of red dots in the center and fewer dots around the periphery. Each dot represented the location where a body had been found, and there were dozens of dots across the map. "When we examined the remains in the lab," Cihlarz continued, "we found that the bodies in the center were riddled with mortar fragments, while those on the periphery tended to have bullet wounds. This suggests that the Serbs had ambushed the men by first launching a mortar attack and then by opening fire on those men who tried to flee further into the forest."

As Cihlarz and his investigators pored over the Srebrenica remains, Laurie Vollen and her team of Bosnian interviewers were processing the antemortem information they had gathered in their interviews with hundreds of relatives of the missing men. Once each case profile was completed, it was sent to the Bosnian scientists. But, unlike the Ovcara grave, the pace of the Srebrenica identifications was hardly encouraging. By late 1997, only seven bodies—one from the Lazete grave and six from the pit on the Pilica farm—had been positively identified. If Cihlarz and Vollen were lucky, they might be able to resolve 40 cases by the end of 1998.

To the families of the missing men of Srebrenica, the slow pace of the identifications only added to their despair. They longed to know the fate of their sons and husbands and fathers, while still clinging to the hope that their loved ones were still alive. As one woman put it: "How can I give up hope? It is all I have left." Caught in a limbo between hope and grief, the women could neither return to their past lives nor plan for the future. And, for a growing number of them, the pain of what they themselves had endured, coupled with the anguish of not knowing the fate of their loved ones, was beginning to take its toll.

To appreciate fully the plight of the women and children of Srebrenica, one must look back to July 12, 1995, the day when Bosnian Serb soldiers forced the refugees out of the Dutch compound at Potocari and bussed them to Muslim-held territory. The expulsions, referred to as "cleansing the terrain" by the Serbs, lasted well into the evening of the following day. Exhausted and paralyzed with fear, after having watched helpless as Serb soldiers dragged their menfolk away, many of the women wept uncontrollably as the buses crawled along the hilly roads. Through the windows, they occasionally saw the corpses of men and boys stretched out next to the asphalt road. Crowds of Serbs gathered at a crossroads in Bratunac to jeer. At various checkpoints, Serb soldiers and militiamen, drunk on plum liquor, would swagger onto the buses, demanding money and threatening the women and oldmen. Women were often dragged off the buses and gang raped.

For the Muslim women, those brief, terrifying hours represented the final separation not only from their menfolk and their homes and villages but from their own sense of security and place in the world. Months after the deportations, many continued to talk incessantly about the bus journey. A few, like "Nora," had become consumed by a particular event they had witnessed during the trip.

A middle-aged woman from a village outside of Srebrenica, Nora had lost all five of her sons during the siege of the Srebrenica enclave in July 1995. When Harvey Weinstein, an American psychiatrist and consultant to Physicians for Human Rights, met her at a meeting of her support group in February 1997, she was living in a house in central Bosnia where she shared a single room with her daughter, grand-daughter, and her daughter's mother-in-law.

"Nora entered the meeting a little after the other women," Weinstein recalled. "She was a big woman, dressed in traditional Bosnian Muslim attire, with a kerchief over her hair. As soon as she entered the room, the atmosphere became charged. And when it was her turn to speak, her body shook uncontrollably." She related to Weinstein an account she had shared with the group many times before. Soon after leaving the Dutch compound at Potocari the bus she was on pulled to a stop at a checkpoint. A Serb militiaman climbed aboard. He was young and hard-faced. She smelled the intensely familiar odor of cigarettes, musty sweat, and faint sweetness of alcohol, and with them the stifling heat of the dusty road. He spoke, and his words come out in a slur. Suddenly he pulled a long knife from his belt and held it up in the air. He was smiling, and his large hands, she now saw, were swollen from the heat. Then, in one motion, he leaned over and pulled the blade across the throat of a baby sleeping in her mother's arms. Blood splattered against the windows and the back of the seat. Screams filled the bus. The man shouted something at the woman and then with his left hand he pushed her head down toward the child's limp body. "Drink it you Muslim whore," he screamed again and again. "Drink it!"

As Nora's account drew to an end, the other women in the group gathered around her. Still sobbing, she said that she had fainted several times during the ordeal and now was aware that there were briefly periods when she lost touch with her surroundings. Worst of all she couldn't forget the event, whose memory could descend on her without warning and in all its horrifying detail at any time of the day or night. Unable to control her anxiety, she asked others for sedatives, as she had no money to buy drugs herself.

Nora's symptoms—variability of mood, disturbed sleep with recurrent nightmares, poor concentration, extreme sensitivity to environmental stimuli, liability to re-experience aspects of an original trauma—are the hallmarks of what psychiatrists call post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Whether the vivid and intrusive imagery that took hold of Nora reflected a psychological attempt to rework the moment of overwhelming terror or whether those minutes of profound powerlessness had crystallized as a visual memory that was set off apparently at random, she felt destined—at least for a time—to relive the experience over and over.

Dereck Summerfield, a psychiatrist and founding member of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Torture Victims in London, cautions that "Traumatic experience, and the search for meaning it triggers, must be understood in terms of the relationship between the individual and his or her society, with outcomes influenced by cultural, social, and political forces (which themselves evolve over

time)." The fact that Nora had been taken into a support group comprised of women from her own community who had suffered similar experiences had helped her place her own individual trauma within the context of collective suffering, in Weinstein's view. Several of the women in the group told Weinstein that while Nora still became overwhelmed by memory of the loss of her sons and the incident on the bus, she was nevertheless beginning to rebuild her life. She often spoke of her granddaughter and hoped that she and her generation would learn to live in peace with Serbs and Croats as they had done before the war. Nora and the other women in the group recognized that not all Serbs were to blame for the atrocities. Some Serb soldiers had intervened to save their lives and the lives of their children, they commented. Nora herself recalled how after the baby's murder, the driver of the bus, a Serb, had refused to stop at further checkpoints along the road.

Once the refugees from Srebrenica arrived in Muslim-held territory, they were bused by the Muslim authorities to the UN headquarters in Tuzla—a sprawling former Yugoslav Air Force Base—and dumped at the front gates. As the Muslim authorities and officials with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) argued over who was responsible for handling the refugee crisis, the women and children took refuge on the main runway of the air base. Local and international charities provided tents and doled out supplies of food and water. Over the next several weeks, the UNHCR staffers and other aid workers registered and then re-settled the refugees in "collective centers"—usually abandoned schools and government buildings—in Tuzla and surrounding villages. The centers were bleak and overcrowded: as many as 30 people, old and young alike, shared a single room. Children who had lost both parents and had no relatives to care for them were sent to a state-run orphanage on the outskirts of Tuzla.

One morning in June 1997, Gilles and I, along with our translator Alojisa Jakupovic, visited the Simi Han collective center in a Tuzla suburb. Established in 1996, the facility served as a home for refugee women and children who required special psychiatric care. In a waiting room on the ground floor, we met "Rejha," a woman in her early 40s with short, auburn hair and dressed in contemporary clothing. With her were two older women wearing more traditional Bosnian-Muslim attire who also lived at the center.

Rejha had come to the center only recently. During the siege of Srebrenica, her husband, Ismet, had worked as a driver for the Dutch UN peacekeepers in Potocari. When the men fled to Tuzla, Ismet had stayed behind with his employers, believing that his association with the United Nations would protect him. Rejha and Ismet had four children. Their oldest, an 18-year-old girl, was the

reason Rejha had come to Simi Han. "My daughter was taken off by Serb soldiers at Potocari," Rejha said as she kneaded her hands in the folds of her skirt. "Afterwards she became very depressed and refused to talk about it. The younger ones, they ask about their father nearly every day. Our boy even talks to Ismet's picture. But not our oldest." Rejha paused and shook her head. "She only wants to forget."

As we toured the center, I asked Rejha if the children ever celebrated birthdays or holidays. As Alojsa translated, Rejha looked at her two companions. "No, never," she replied. "Not while our husbands and sons are missing. It wouldn't be right."

Like many Muslim refugees from eastern Bosnia, Rejha wanted nothing more than to return to her home, although she knew it was now occupied by a Serbian family. "We talk about our towns and villages almost all the time. We remember what it was like before the war and how nice it would be to go back home and live like normal people."

Later that day, in a cafe next to the offices of Amica, a Tuzla-based clinic which provides therapeutic services to refugee women and children, I spoke with my interpreter's mother, Nevenka Kovac. She was a psychologist and one of the founding members of Amica. With mother and son sitting next to one another, their heads almost touching as they chatted and smoked cigarettes, I could see Nevenka's round features and piercing eyes reflected, though in a more exaggerated reworking, in those of her son.

In the years before the war, Kovac had worked as a psychologist in one of the state-run chemical factories in Tuzla. When the Serbs started shelling the city in the summer of 1992, the factory closed and Kovac lost her job. In April 1993, Kovac and a small group of local psychologists and psychiatrists started a counseling service for the refugees who had begun arriving from Srebrenica and other areas under siege.

"For the first six months, it was really very hard," Kovac said. "There was little food in the city, and I was constantly worried about the safety of my own family. Still, I could see my problems meant nothing compared to those of the refugees. I became obsessed by my work to the point where I couldn't separate my life from the lives of the refugee women I was treating. Whenever I started to feel happy, I would be overwhelmed with feelings of guilt knowing that the refugee women and their children had lost everything and were suffering more than me." Kovac found that her co-workers were experiencing similar feelings of guilt and hopelessness. Eventually, they formed a therapist's support group and began talking more openly among themselves about their own emotions. •

Among its many projects, Amica provides counseling services for rape victims. "It is a terrible problem," Kovac said. "And one which must be handled with the utmost empathy and care." Many women have been reluctant to speak about their experiences for a variety of reasons: severe traumatization, feelings of shame, lack of trust, and fear of awakening bad memories as well as fear of

reprisals against themselves and their families. As a result, Amica's mental health workers never prod or even encourage rape victims to talk about what they have suffered. "The women must feel safe and secure before talking about such matters", she said. "Each women must decide when she is ready to speak; she must do it in her own time and in her own way."

Kovac was concerned about the invidious way that the stigmatization of rape victims could rip tiny fissures in the already fragile social fabric of Bosnia's displaced communities. She told of young rape victims who had had to leave collective centers because older women were spreading vicious rumors about them. Some rape victims, in an effort to regain their honor, had rushed into disastrous marriages. One of the most tragic cases was that of a young Muslim woman who had been raped by a Serb soldier outside of the Dutch compound at Potocari. After arriving in central Bosnia, she gave birth to a baby girl. Despite her pleas, the woman's father and brother, both of whom had survived the trek out of Srebrenica, refused to let her keep the child. Desperate, she approached a local orphanage, where she arranged to leave the child on condition that she could visit her from time to time.

Kovac was quick to point out that many families were supportive of rape victims, and that it would be wrong to characterize all communities as uncaring. Still, she said, the stigmatization of rape victims, whether wittingly or unwittingly, existed and could not be ignored. "Our goal is to work closely with the women and, if possible, with their families, and especially the men, to help them create an atmosphere which is devoid of shame or blame," she said. "We try to help the women rebuild their self-esteem, which is crucial, and to look at themselves differently than before, and, finally, to take control of their lives."

Kovac and other mental health workers I spoke with in Tuzla believe the Serb paramilitaries and Bosnian Serb army used rape as a psychological weapon of war, especially during the "ethnic cleansing" campaigns in the spring and summer of 1992. In Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, Beverly Allen contends that in fact the Bosnian Serb military officers debated in detail the most effective means of producing terror among Muslim communities. She quotes from a document allegedly written by the Bosnian Serb army's special services in late 1991, which included experts in psychological warfare: "Our analysis of the behavior of Muslim communities demonstrates that the morale, will, and bellicose nature of their groups can be undermined only if we aim our action at the point where the religious and social structure is most fragile. We refer to the women, especially adolescents, and to the children. Decisive intervention on these social figures would spread confusion..., thus causing first of all fear and then panic, leading to a probable retreat from the territories involved in war activity."

An hour's drive north of Tuzla, in the farming village of Suha, Gilles and I met another group of Srebrenica refugees who were living in a school house that had been converted into a collective center. We were greeted at the front gate by the center's director, a young woman with two small children clinging to her flowered skirt. She led us down a rock-covered path to a white-stucco building and up a flight of stairs. At the end of a narrow corridor, she opened the door to a room with high, white-washed walls.

Three families—12 women and children in all—shared the room, although only five of them were there at the time. A large, faded Oriental rug was spread across the floor and mattresses were stacked four-high against the walls. A cast iron stove stood next to the door, and a pan of bread pudding bubbled on its grill, filling the air with a sickly confectionery scent. On the floor by the stove were two small children playing with a doll. Next to them, sitting cross-legged on a mattress, was an old man with a broad face and wispy, gray eyebrows. He wore a blue beret, a gray vest, and thick wool socks. Tapping his long pale fingers together, he looked up quickly to greet us.

On the other side of the room, two women in traditional Bosnian-Muslim dress sat on a long wooden bench underneath a window that opened onto a pasture and a small pond. Above their heads, a string of green prayer beads hung from a brass latch; when a breeze swept through the room, the beads clacked gently against the window frame.

Bosnian Muslims are known for their hospitality, and after we took our seats on a mattress, a tray of thick, black Turkish coffee in small silver saucers soon appeared. I thanked them for welcoming us into their home and explained that I wished to talk to them about their lives before the war and how they had survived the siege of Srebrenica. As Alojza translated, heads gradually nodded in agreement. I was never sure how Gilles, with a tangle of cameras suspended across his chest, and I would be accepted. As it turned out, in our visits to the centers we were never turned down for an interview. Indeed, as we left the Suha Center, a group of elderly refugees, upset that we hadn't stopped at their room, insisted that we join them for tea so that they could tell us about their experiences.

"In Bosnia, most people wanted to talk about their tragedies," Peter Maass has aptly commented in *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War*: "they wanted the outside world to know of the injustices they were suffering, they wanted to squeeze a bit of enlightenment out of the death of a wife or husband or infant son, and so they put their grief aside and gave a visiting journalist all the time he wanted, all the information he wanted, and then, when everything had been said and you were ready to leave, the grieving husband or wife or father might give you a gift, as though you had done them a favor, just listening."

As soon as Alojza had finished translating, the older of the two women said she wished to say something. A small woman, she wore a beige dress covered

with tiny red roses and a heavy blue sweater. A brown, paisley headscarf was knotted tightly under her wrinkled chin, and, as she spoke, her round eyes quivered like those of a frightened bird. "I'm eighty-six years old," she said. "I know war. I've seen the destruction it can cause. During the Second World War, they killed my father. This time, I thought, it wouldn't be like before: now people are smart and educated, there won't be such brutality. But I was wrong. Those men killed sixteen members of my family, including my husband and two sons." She covered her face with her hands, and began rocking back and forth, sobbing uncontrollably.

After several minutes, the old man spoke.

"My name is Hanic. Meho Hanic," he said. "I'm eighty-three years old. My wife and I live in a room downstairs. My wife is bedridden with a stroke." He paused to clear his throat. "We were farmers before the war. We had a cow, we always had a cow, so we had butter and cheese for the house. And we had enough vegetables. We always provided everything for ourselves. And fields. We had more fields than anyone in the village. We worked hard, but it was a good life. When Arkan's men attacked our village they killed my eldest son. My other two sons and six grandsons disappeared somewhere on the trail to Tuzla."

He paused again and spread his arms wide. "They should have killed me, not the young boys," he said. "Look at me. I'm old and of no use to anyone."

A door opened and a barefoot girl, dressed in black running sweats and a gray sweatshirt, slipped into the room. Straight auburn bangs fell across her blue eyes. She hesitated for a moment, unsure of how she should act in the company of these strangers, and then darted across the room and sat cross-legged on the floor next to the old woman.

I asked her what her name was. Looking first at the old man and then back to me, she said it was Esma and added that she was fifteen years old. She spoke softly and had a sheepish smile. That was her younger brother playing in the yard. They were orphans, and the old woman was their grandmother.

Hearing her name, the old woman shook her head and looked for something in her dress pocket. She pulled out what looked like a long brass house key and sighed.

Esma pulled her knees up to her chin and watched, transfixed, as her grandmother turned the key over and over in her small hands. Finally the young girl looked up.

"The Serbs took prisoners," she said. "That's what some people have told us. They say they're in Serbia, working in the mines."

She hesitated, looking straight at us, "Do you know if it is true?"

"One day, I would like to take you to my secret garden. It's near here, not far from the mosque. I go there when I'm angry with this world. When I pass through the wall of trees that surrounds the garden I feel like I'm stepping into another world entirely."

As Irfanka Pasagic spoke, her hands shook and threads of cigarette smoke curled up toward her pale face. In her early 40s, she was slim and frail, almost painfully so. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Pasagic had been the only practicing psychiatrist in Srebrenica. From her clinic at the municipal hospital, she traveled throughout the region, seeing patients—Muslims, Serbs, and Croats alike—and consulting with local physicians. In early April 1992, Arkan's "Tigers" set up roadblocks around Srebrenica. One day a pharmacist disappeared. The next, a police detective. Then a factory foreman. One morning a Muslim physician failed to show up for work at the hospital. Pasagic drew her own conclusions and fled to Tuzla. She met Nevenka Kovac several months later and began working at the Amica clinic.

It was a busy day, and the only free space at the clinic was the children's playroom, where Pasagic and I now sat opposite each other on small red plastic chairs. I told her about my interviews with the women and children at the collective centers and asked what she thought the Srebrenica refugees most wanted.

"Truth," she replied. "They want to know exactly what has happened to their missing husbands and fathers and sons. It consumes them night and day. Until they know the truth, they will never be able to grieve properly."

She lit another cigarette and continued, "The absence of their men is a profound problem for the women. Many of them come from very rural communities and have little or no education. In our more traditional Muslim families, women take care of the household and tend the fields, while their husbands, who are usually the principal wage earners, work for hire or at jobs in town."

In the post-World War II years, Muslim men circulated freely throughout federalist Yugoslavia. They were the ones who developed and maintained links with the unifying Yugoslav state; they spent more time socializing in an environment defined as 'Yugoslav' and establishing a network of "Yugoslav" colleagues, through education, work, labor migration, and the people's army. As such, they were more involved in the public sector and officialdom. Most rural women, by contrast, tended to stay within the confines of their neighborhood.

"Uprooted from their homeland, the women of Srebrenica are lost," Pasagic continued. "They have no house, and no land, no menfolk or communities to give them support. Alone, they must care for their children,

their elderly parents or parents-in-law, and, of course, themselves. Unless they remarry, which in many cases is unlikely, they must become the sole breadwinners, a particularly frightening prospect in a world that is completely alien to them."

"The women unfortunately often try to solve their own problems through their children," Pasagic went on. "What little future the women see, they see through their children. This causes problems for the children, especially the boys, because the expectations of their mothers and grandmothers are so great."

Pasagic told me the story of a woman who had lost her husband and five sons and now lived in a collective center with her five daughters-in-law and several grandchildren. The woman's eldest grandchild, a 12-year-old boy, had been brought to the clinic to see Pasagic because he had developed epileptic-like seizures. "Interviewing the boy, I discovered that he felt overwhelmed by the enormous expectations the women had placed on him to take care of the family," she said. "It was as if he had created his seizures as a way of crying out: 'Stop, I'm only a boy, I can't take care of all of you.'"

For the women of Srebrenica, traumatization was not necessarily related to a single incident or a particular set of events. More often, it was an enduring, cumulative process that had begun when they fled their villages during the ethnic cleansing campaigns of 1992 and 1993 and continued as they struggled to survive, first in Srebrenica and later as refugees in Tuzla. Many had been subjected to or witnessed horrible acts of cruelty, including torture and rape. They had gone hungry so that their children could eat. They spoke of having nightmares and trouble sleeping, of feeling anxious and helpless, and of still being unable to concentrate. Tears were always just below the surface.

Many of the refugees expressed a deep distrust for any official, politician, or agency—whether local or international. They felt an unforgiving rage towards the Muslim authorities and the United Nations for failing to protect the enclave. As one woman put it vehemently: "Srebrenica taught us that our lives were less valuable than the lives of UN soldiers. That, for us, was the final truth."

Such outbursts were common. To blame someone or something is a search for both cause and meaning. It serves as a kind of symbolic, though often only temporary, retribution. It also gives one a temporary illusion of power because the feelings are mobilized and channeled and collectively shared. For the women of Srebrenica, blaming the international community for their suffering and the loss of their menfolk was understandable. But it had also turned violent. The most serious incident took place on February 2, 1996, when hundreds of women stormed the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Tuzla, shattering windows and occupying offices. They demanded that greater efforts be made to find the missing men who, the women claimed, were prisoners

or working as slave laborers in mines in Serbia. The ICRC, however, had already inspected Bosnian Serb prisons as part of the Dayton Accords and found no men from Srebrenica.

Much of the women's rage was focused on the ICRC's "death attestation" program. Since the signing of the Dayton Accords in December 1995, the ICRC, following its humanitarian tradition of trying to reunite families separated by war, had compiled a list of just over 19,000 people who had disappeared on one side or another during the war in Bosnia. For a listing to be accepted, the ICRC required that a close relative submit the missing person's full name, father's name, date of birth, place of birth, and date and place where they were last seen. The organization then sent this information to the relevant authorities in either the Republika Srpska or the Muslim-Croat Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Any answers these authorities provided were double-checked against the information provided by the wife and other witnesses who may have been present when the man disappeared. If the ICRC delegates were satisfied that the person was deceased, an "Attestation of Death," signed by an ICRC delegate, would be delivered to the family. By late 1997, hundreds of death attestations had been delivered to families of the disappeared throughout Bosnia.

When I asked Rejha at the Simi Han center her opinion of the death attestation program, she flushed with anger. "We don't trust [the ICRC]," she said. "They come here with a piece of paper which says such-and-such a person is dead. But who gave them that information? It's the same people who destroyed our homes and villages and killed our husbands. And where is the evidence? Where is the body? They don't even have an ID card or a piece of clothing. It is unacceptable. We want proof. If my husband is dead, I want to know where his body is. And if he is alive, I want to know where he is being held."

ICRC delegates were dismayed at the intensity of the rage directed against them. During the war, they had been the angels of mercy, delivering food aid and medicines to besieged Bosnian communities. Now, nearly two years after the signing of the Dayton Accord, they were being vilified as unwanted, perhaps false messengers of death. While the Red Cross delegates could have delivered the death notifications in a more sensitive and appropriate manner, they were also the hapless victims of circumstance. Aside from the NATO troops, the ICRC was the most visible of all the international agencies and thus an easy target for scorn.

The "death attestation" program was probably doomed from the start. In its rush "to help the women find closure and move on with their lives," as one Red Cross delegate put it, the organization had failed to recognize that death has two faces. "One," Milan Kundera writes, "is nonbeing; the other is the terrifying material being of the corpse." Without a body (or at least a photograph of a corpse or a piece of clothing), many—if not, most—of the women were unwilling and unable—at least for the time being—to accept a "paper death."

Although funerary rituals in some cultures and religious groups are explicitly carried out for the dead, they are always rites of passage for the principal survivors, a mechanism for restoring the rent in the social fabric caused by death.

Funerals express the emotional links of the living to the dead, be they of respect or grief. Bosnian Muslims view bereavement as an experience to be shared, strengthening the solidarity of family and community. For the women of Srebrenica, the absence of the bodies (Kundera's "the terrifying material being") was robbing them not only of funerary ritual but of the visual cues that would help them to acknowledge the death of their loved ones and to pass through states of mourning and grief.

Death in the traditional Bosnian Muslim community brings with it certain obligatory rituals. There is the ritualized washing of the corpse by a "hodza," or male Islamic teacher, for a male deceased, or by a "bula," or female religious instructor, for a female deceased. After the corpse is washed, it is wrapped in a white shroud and placed in a lidless coffin. Only the male relatives and co-villagers accompany the body to the mosque and later to the cemetery. The women, meanwhile, remain in the house of the deceased to hold a "tevhid" of sorrow, a collective prayer for the departed. For days and weeks after the burial, women and men may hold separate and, at times, collective tevhids for the departed. The most important aspect of the tevhid for the traditional Bosnian Muslim woman, in the words of anthropologist Tone Bringa, "is fulfilling her obligation to care for the spiritual well-being of deceased persons with whom her household has had close social relations, whether they were relatives, neighbors, or friends."

The absence of traditional Muslim funerary rituals had not compounded the suffering of every woman of Srebrenica. After all, some women, while still recognizing their Muslim heritage, would not consider themselves "traditional," but rather view themselves as "Bosnians" or even as "Yugoslavs." Other women had abandoned their Muslim identities altogether, either through personal choice, marriage into other ethnic and religious groups, or through the gradual assimilation to a more secular or urban way of life. Still others wished to deal with the loss of their loved ones at a strictly personal or familial level.

But without bodies and funerals, many of the women—whether practicing Muslims or not—could not visualize the death of their husbands and sons and thus accept it as real. "And so when the women think about moving on with their lives," Nevenka Kovac commented, "they are often hit with strong feelings of guilt because they think, well, maybe, just maybe, he is still alive."

Hope had become a survival mechanism, and it was not easy to surrender. In mid-October 1997, some 400 women from Srebrenica marched through the streets of Sarajevo, demanding information about their missing relatives. At the headquarters of the ICRC, they held aloft banners saying "The truth must be known" and "Give us proof of their death." One demonstrator held a banner which said "Son, your mother is looking for you."

It was easy to understand why many of the women had refused to give up hope. How could thousand of their men have been killed in such a short period of time? If so many had really been killed, why had only a few hundred bodies been recovered from the mass graves and from along the trail to Tuzla?

Moreover, there were constant rumors that the men were being held in labor camps in Serbia. These stories were often kept alive, wittingly or unwittingly, by the press and refugee support groups which frequently published information about missing men without first verifying the facts. Fatima Huseinovic, the president of the Tuzla-based "Women of Srebrenica," the largest and most prominent of the refugee organizations, showed me one of her group's brochures. Identical versions of the pamphlet had been published in Serbo-Croatian and English. Across its cover in bold letters was written: "WHERE ARE THEY? And above the headline was a black and white photograph that a Newsweek correspondent had given Huseinovic. The photo appeared to be of a line of prisoners, standing three abreast, their heads bowed and with their hands held behind their backs. At the far end of the queue was a man holding an electric hair trimmer.

Huseinovic was certain one of the men in the front row was her husband, Munib, who had disappeared from the Dutch compound at Potocari on July 13, 1995. "What I don't understand," she said, "is why the Serbs would give these men haircuts, if they were going to kill them later. It doesn't make sense. This gives me hope that some of the men may still be alive." Huseinovic did not actually sound as convinced as she said she was that her husband was in the photograph, but the very thought that he might be seemed to give her great comfort. Later, when Gilles and I returned to the United States, we discovered that the photo was indeed of Muslim prisoners, but that it had first appeared in Newsweek on August 17, 1992, three years prior to the fall of Srebrenica and the disappearance of Huseinovic's husband.

By the end of 1997, thousands of refugees from Srebrenica had passed through the doors of the collective centers around Tuzla. The lucky ones had relatives living in apartments or houses in Muslim-held areas of Bosnia who were willing to take them in. The less fortunate remained at the centers or were re-settled in one of eleven housing settlements located in the countryside, often only a few kilometers from the former frontlines and current zone of separation between the Serbs and Muslims. Some refugees managed, through contacts with international relief organizations, to secure independent housing. But unscrupulous landlords thrived on these arrangements, and refugees frequently found themselves evicted if they failed to pay the exorbitant rents.

Remaining in a collective center or being transferred to a settlement near the zone of separation was a miserable lot. Many of these facilities had been in the direct line of fire during the war, and their shell-blasted windows and walls were covered with sheets of light blue plastic, bearing the ever-present UN emblem, and held in place with gray duct tape. On windy days, the air filled with the sound of plastic sheeting billowing and snapping in the wind. A hundred or more refugees might share a single toilet that constantly overflowed. Drinking water was scarce and food supplies often failed to arrive.

Most of the refugees had learned to get by in a world ravaged by war. They could deal with the physical deprivations, but what gnawed at them most were the psychological ones. Boredom, so raw and abject you could already see it etched on the faces of young boys and girls, prevailed in the centers, especially during the dreary winter months. Overcrowding and generational differences often triggered disputes between older and younger women. Looming like a brooding storm over many of these altercations was the unresolved fate of the missing men. Tima Jakubovic, a young mother who had lost her husband, complained that the older women in her center objected whenever she and her friends tuned into a local rock station. "The older ones don't like it," she said. "They say it's disrespectful. One woman even wagged her finger at me and said: 'What about your husband, Tima?' I was hurt by what she said, but I understood. This woman had lost so many of her people, she had decided in her heart that she wouldn't begin living again until they were found. So, out of respect, we don't play the radio when the older ones are around."

Elderly refugees frequently criticized mothers for so quickly losing patience with their children and hitting them at the slightest provocation. "Negligence isn't the problem," Nevenka Kovac explained. "The women spend a lot of time and energy providing their children with food and clothing. The women are

traumatized by the past and fearful of the future. So they get irritated easily and strike out at their children."

Equally troubling, Kovac said, were the anguished relationships which often developed when orphaned children had been sent to live with their grandmothers or other female relatives. "The grandmothers don't see that their grandchildren are suffering. They believe if the child is quiet, she is being good, which, of course, is often the reaction of a traumatized child. So, eventually, a vicious circle develops. The grandmother doesn't want to express her feelings of loss in front of the child, while the child, copying her grandmother, keeps her emotions bottled up. What starts as an attempt to protect one another gradually deteriorates into withdrawal and denial. The hardest part is getting both the grandmother and child to break this unhealthy cycle and to express their feelings of loss."

During the Bosnian Serb army's three-year siege of Srebrenica, hundreds of children became orphans. Most of the children were taken in by a municipal-run orphanage, located just outside of Tuzla. In June 1997, when Gilles and I visited the facility, there were still 150 orphans living there. Of these, 110 children were from Srebrenica and other "ethically cleansed" towns and villages nearby. Most of the orphans had lost both parents, though some had been left because one or both of their parents had been unable or unwilling to care for them.

Built just after World War II, the Tuzla orphanage was one of five state orphanages in Bosnia. It was housed in two drab, brown brick buildings, separated by a long open stretch of unkempt gardens, now covered in knee-high grass. From the entrance to the orphanage one could hear the swish of traffic streaming along the highway which connects Tuzla with northwestern Bosnia. The smaller of the two brick buildings, known as "Kekec," or "Our Child," served as both as the neighborhood's kindergarten and as home for orphan children under seven years of age.

On the day of our visit, small children were standing in clusters around a bonfire which workmen had thrown together on a hillock near the buildings. It was late afternoon, and the children were enjoying their last play hour before dinner and bed. The workers were clearing debris from the grounds, and whenever they tossed a tree limb onto the fire, columns of swirling sparks would rise up into the darkening sky and sweep high over the heads of the children, who threw up their arms and squealed with delight.

Later, as the children were running up the front steps of the orphanage and taking their places around a long dining table, I toured the facility with its director, Melika Aliefendic. She was a kind woman—in her late forties, I guessed—who had a way of finishing her sentences by clasping her hands together in front of her face. She and her two assistants, young women in their

late teens, provided care to 33 young orphans. The newest arrival was a 3-month-old baby that had been abandoned in the cemetery directly across from the Tuzla hospital.

"I worry about the development of these children," Aliefendic said as we climbed the stairs to the children's dormitory. "As you can see, the children are clean and well fed, but, in the end, it really would be better for them to be in homes."

Aliefendic's concerns have been confirmed in numerous studies of orphans around the world. As early as 1909, medical researchers in the United States had recognized orphanages as inadequate for the growth and development of healthy children. Children younger than four years in orphanages were found to have developmental deficits and IQ scores lower than children raised at home. Even part-time mothering, though better than no contact, failed to improve significantly the growth and development of young orphans. Researchers in England who have studied children institutionalized at a young age and then adopted or returned to their biological parents have found that when these children became teenagers they often experienced difficulties dealing with their peers and society at large. Why this is so is not entirely clear. Perhaps their early experiences in institutions gave them few clues about how to form peer relationships. Alternatively they may have learned styles of interaction that were adaptive in the institutions but maladaptive outside them.

Life at the Keckec orphanage was often hardest on the five and six year olds, Aliefendic said. At that age, children are just on the cusp of mastering the four essential attributes of death: that it has a specific cause, involves the cessation of bodily function, is irreversible, and is universal. Before that, children may nod solemnly when told of their father's death, and still expect him to appear at the orphanage at any time.

"It breaks my heart watching the orphans at the end of the day," Aliefendic said. "As their classmates from the neighborhood gather on the steps outside the front door, the orphans line up at the windows, waiting and watching for their friend's mothers to come. Then, as each child is scooped into his mother's arms, the orphans wave goodbye. They wave and they wave, probably realizing a little more each day that their own mothers will never come to take them away."

When the young orphans in Aliefendic's charge reach the age of seven, they are transferred to the larger building. There, they will be assigned to one of eight "Porodicas," or "Family Units," each comprised of up to 20 boys and girls. Each porodica consists of a common living area and a kitchen with separate bedrooms for the boys and girls. Up to six children of varying ages might share the same bedroom. A female and male social worker, who typically have families of their own, supervise each unit and act as surrogate parents, counseling the children and setting out daily tasks. When the orphans turn eighteen, they must leave the orphanage and find a way to make it on their own.

I met Nasa Hadic, the “surrogate mom” of “Porodica 6” at the end of a long corridor, painted a ubiquitous institutional gray and filled with the sounds of slamming doors and high-pitched voices. For more than a decade, this diminutive woman with a warm smile and firm handshake had raised her own children while caring for dozens of orphans—the ever-patient mother, listening to their tantrums, mending their cuts and scraps, helping them with their homework, and, at the height of the war, as shells exploded around them, soothing their fears.

Hadic ushered me into the main living area of her porodica where five teenage girls and a young boy were lounging on an old sofa. She quickly rattled off the children’s names—two of the girls were identical twins and another had her younger brother tucked under her arm. “They’re all from Srebrenica,” she said. “And if they *all* don’t get started on their homework,” she added with mock gruffness, “they’re going to lose this week’s town *visiting* privileges.”

Once out of ear shot, I asked Hadic how the Srebrenica orphans were faring. Were their needs different from those of children who hadn’t been orphaned by ethnic cleansing? Hadic frowned and nodded as my words were translated back to her. “We don’t separate the orphans here,” she finally said. “War orphans and abandoned children alike are housed together and share the same rooms. For the Srebrenica children, the first year was the hardest. Often I would find a child alone, crying. And it was especially hard on the ones who didn’t have brothers or sisters. Gradually, they began to speak less and less about the past. Now, the most difficult thing is to get them to talk about what is troubling them.”

The boys’ and girls’ dormitories were located at the end of a narrow hallway. They were spartan, but clean. Beds covered nearly every square inch of floor space, leaving little room to move around in. The boy’s room was neat and tidy, but couldn’t even compare with the girl’s room, which would have won the hearts of drill sergeants the world over: Every bed was made, every corner squared and tucked in, and not a wrinkle in sight. On top of a dresser, as if lined up for a military drill, was a seven-strong “Barbie Doll” brigade, and above it was enshrined a poster montage of American teenage heart throbs including rock singers George Michael and Michael Bolton.

Hadic opened the doors to a long closet and stood back. Divided into sections, each girl had her clothes hanging in perfect order and her shoes brightly polished and lined up, side-by-side, like new cars on a dealer’s lot. “Can you believe it,” she confided in a whisper. “Look, how each girl has marked out her own space and how neat it is. It’s really incredible.” It was as if out of all the chaos of war, and all that they had suffered and lost, the orphans had finally found a space, however limited and small, which they could call their own and control, a space in which, above all else, order prevailed.

"It was a time when I was going nowhere fast," Ibrahim told me as he pulled his red baseball hat tight over his brow. "Every night I drank. I was having nightmares and couldn't sleep. But, mostly, I guess, I was angry. I felt guilty because I had made it out of the woods and my father and brother hadn't. Drinking just made me feel better."

Then, one bitter cold dawn in December 1995, Ibrahim awoke in a drunken stupor in the stairwell of the collective center where he lived with his mother and younger brother. The night before, he and two friends had walked four miles to a neighboring village, where they had settled in at a local bar for a long night of knocking back beers, followed by shots of plum brandy. Ibrahim paid for the drinks with the cash he had earned that week chopping wood for a couple of shop owners. When his money ran out, the boys left the bar and staggered back to the center. Before climbing the stairs to his room, Ibrahim decided to take a minute to have a smoke and clear his thoughts.

The next morning, still half drunk and frozen as stiff as a board, Ibrahim swore off alcohol for good.

When I met Ibrahim, he was twenty years old and had just joined the army, although he was still living with his mother and brother in the collective center and, though it had been over eighteen months since he'd had a drink, his nightmares had continued: "I still dream about my father a lot. Its the same nightmare over and over. I see him, but he can't see me. Sometimes when I call his name, he just walks past me as if I wasn't there. When I'm alone, I think about what happened on the trail and I get angry. I know now that I can never go back and live with the Serbs. You have to understand, they killed not only my father and brother, but a lot of my relatives. Most of my good friends didn't survive. If war starts again, I will look for revenge, maybe not on all Serbs, but definitely for those who killed my father and my brother. There are a lot of boys like me, a lot of them, who would like to avenge the deaths of their fathers and brothers."

While Ibrahim may well be right, most of the boys I spoke with in the centers seemed more concerned about meeting girls and finding jobs than settling old scores with their enemies. When I asked a group of boys at the Lipnica center if they wanted take revenge on the Serbs, they all looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders. "Why?" one of the older boys asked. "What would it accomplish now?"

Later, when I told Ifranka Pasagic about the discrepancy between Ibrahim's response and those of the other boys, she said that she, too, had been surprised at how little talk there was among the refugees of hatred and revenge. But she cautioned that such feelings could simply be lying beneath the surface: "What is of the utmost importance now is the message that the international community sends to those boys and what they then communicate to their sons and daughters. If you say to a child 'Look, that man there killed your father and now he lives in your house.' What kind of message is that going to send?' But if you say 'That man killed your father and that is the reason why he is in prison.' The message is

very different. So, for now, there might not be a lot of hatred or revenge, but if we don't find a way to punish those responsible for these crimes, it will surely be something we can count on in the future."

When I asked the boys at the Lipnica center whether or not they thought Mladic and Karadzic should be arrested and put on trial, they chortled cynically. "Sure, fine. But who's going to arrest them?" One of the older boys asked. "Maybe the Dutch, they're acquainted with Ratko [Mladic]," another one said, slapping his knees. Not to be outdone, another boy shot back: "And while you're making arrests, don't forget to pick up Tudjman and Izetbegovic!"

Unlike the Srebrenica investigation, the Croatian scientists at the University of Zagreb morgue were making considerable headway identifying the remains from the mass grave on the Ovcara farm. So far, they had identified 81 of the 200 bodies. Still, the investigators were concerned that the pace of identifications would soon slow considerably because of a lack of antemortem records, such as dental X-rays and medical reports. To help jog memories, they were circulating photo albums containing photographs of personal effects and distinctive clothing found on the bodies among the families of presumed victims.

"When I started working in forensic medicine over seventeen years ago, I never thought I would ever be doing what I do now," the forensic expert in charge of the Ovcara investigation, Davor Strinovic, told me. "Mass disasters, okay. A mine accident or a plane crash, that was to be expected. But not the kind of things I've had to do in this war." Like Tuzla pathologist Zdenko Chilarz, Strinovic had been in charge of recovering the corpses of soldiers on the front-line and coordinating body exchanges with the Serbs. "As the war heated up, and the shelling intensified, we began seeing more and more civilian dead, mostly old people who had refused to leave their villages. In this war no-one was off limits—soldier or civilian, healthy or wounded, young or old—all that mattered was your ethnicity."

I had met Strinovic four years earlier, when Clyde Snow and I had made our first trip to the Ovcara grave. I had seen him a couple of times since then. Now, as he sat across from me in his office above the university morgue, I could see that he had aged considerably. Gravity was winning a battle with the contours of his face, and his curly dark hair was starting to show prominent patches of gray. As we spoke, relatives of the men massacred on the Ovcara farm gathered in a foyer next to Strinovic's office. Every morning, family members gathered there hoping to learn if a son or a husband had been identified. Whenever the voices grew louder in the foyer—a sign that more relatives had arrived—Strinovic's shoulders would hunch forward and his hands would clench together, as he glanced at the closed door.

"I'm sure someday I'm going to have psychological problems because of this work," he said and then thought again. "Well, I hope not. But, I can tell you, dealing with the mothers has been the most painful part. For nearly five years, they waited from some kind of news. Is he alive? Is he dead? Then, all of a sudden, the exhumations begin at Ovcara and the bodies start arriving at the morgue. Some of the mothers have been calm and professional. Aware that all of us are doing the best job we can. They give us detailed physical descriptions of

their husbands and sons and help us locate old medical records. They also try to help the other women who find it difficult accepting the inevitable. Then there are the hysterical ones, always crying and wailing that everybody is guilty—I'm guilty, the President's guilty, the UN's guilty. Some mothers expected a miracle to happen, something God-sent, which would magically return their child. Then the day comes when the body's been identified and I have to inform the mother. I try to break the news kindly, but it's never easy. All those years of hope are shattered in a matter of seconds. I explain gently what we have found. Still, I know my words must sound harsh, almost as if I'm saying: 'Okay, done, stop dreaming, stop thinking about something that does not exist, your son is dead, he is bones and nothing else now, he is in peace.' Sometimes the mothers will tell stories about their sons and I become so touched, I start to cry. I can't just remain calm and say to myself: 'Okay, be professional, this is just another case which has been solved, now it's time to move on.'

Late one afternoon, I met with Ivan Hebrang, Yasminka Levic, and Maria Brkic in a conference room at the University of Zagreb medical school. They were relatives of men whose bodies had been exhumed from the Ovcara grave and identified by Strinovic and his team within the last four months. With me to help with translation was a young medical doctor, Igor Begovic.

Maria Brkic, a middle-aged woman wearing a full-length brown coat with a thick fur collar, spoke first: "I am grieving for both a husband and a son who were killed at that horrible place. My son was one of the wounded in the hospital, and I am sure my husband was with him always, protecting him until the end. I've heard the Serbs claimed my son was a big Ustache. Well, if that's what they thought, why didn't they indict him and put him on trial. They shouldn't have been executed. Six years I was waiting, hoping they would return. I don't have the words. My grief is too huge. I don't know what else I can tell you."

As Brkic's words trailed off, the room fell silent. Then Ivan Hebrang, a large man with a broad face and a husky voice, spoke: "I am the father of Goran Hebrang, a 21-year-old defender of Vukovar. He was my only child. Like the lady's son, Goran was recuperating from battle wounds in the Vukovar hospital when the Serbs took him away and shot him. I've been told he was taken under suspicion that he was some kind of mercenary because he had a German family name. But it was not like that at all. My son was born in Vukovar and he was raised a Catholic. He was an absolutely normal child, never aggressive, never looking for trouble or to harm anyone. How could he have been a mercenary? Our family was from Vukovar. It was our soil, our home. We had two houses there. Houses I built with my own hands. In early August of 1991, when the

fighting started, I had to return to Germany to take up my job driving a truck. Either I went or I'd lose the job."

Yasminka Levic spoke next. In her late 40s, she was an attractive woman with soft auburn hair and almond-shaped eyes. A small silver cross hung from a chain around her neck, and when she spoke, she frequently lifted the cross and touched it to her chin. "Unlike Mr. Hebrang," she said, "I am not from Vukovar. I am from Zagreb, where I live in an apartment with my eleven-year-old son, 'Tin.' I am a pharmacist, as was my husband, Tomislav, who like the others was brutally murdered after being taken from the Vukovar hospital. The last day I saw my husband was on September 25, 1991 when he left Zagreb for Vukovar with twenty other volunteers. Being a pharmacist, he, of course, had access to lots of medicines and supplies, which he took with him to help set up a medical unit on the front-line. Four weeks went by before I learned he had been wounded in the arm and chest by a shell blast and was being treated in the Vukovar hospital..."

"I am sorry to interrupt," Brkic said as she reached over to touch Levic's arm.

"That's all right."

"No, really, I'm sorry. I must go. My heart just isn't large enough to hold all this grief. I am just thankful to be able to have the remains of my husband and son and to be able to pay my respects. This is very painful. I don't think I am ready to talk just now. Please excuse me. I really must go."

Once Brkic had left the room, Lesic continued: "It was very difficult for Tin not having his father around. He was at an age when he wanted desperately to have a father—someone to look up to, to do things with, to boast about with his friends. Their fathers were here, but his wasn't. He grew resentful and eventually stopped asking about him. By the time the exhumations started, I had already received news that my husband was probably one of the men executed on the Ovcara farm. I had kept it a secret from Tin. But with the press stories of the exhumations, I had to say something to him. So, I told Tin it wasn't certain, but that he should be prepared for the worst. Then, one day, Dr. Strinovic called to ask if I had any of Tomislav's medical records. I found an X-ray of an old arm fracture and luckily his dentist still had his dental records on file. Everything matched perfectly. By a miracle, my husband was one of the first to be identified. Dr. Strinovic asked me not to make it public until a ceremony could be held to honor all the victims. During that time, I went to Israel to attend an international conference of pharmacologists. While I was there, I went to Bethlehem and found the place where Jesus was born. There was a small altar there and I set out two candles—one for the man who was my husband and another for the man who was Tin's father. When I returned, I told Tin what I had done. He understood, I could tell. Still, it hasn't been easy. For five years, I've been grieving the loss of my husband. Now, together with Tin, we are mourning the loss of his father."

As Lesic paused to light a cigarette, Hebrang sighed and leaned forward in his chair. "I don't know," he said with resignation. "After Vukovar fell, I was

sure Goran had been taken to a prison camp in Serbia. But, later, when I learned of the existence of the mass grave, I realized I had to look at everything realistically. Still, I couldn't bear the thought that my own son, my own flesh and blood, had been killed instead of me. Sometimes as I was driving on the autobahn my mind would start to wander. It got to where I couldn't concentrate. I realized I was becoming dangerous. So, after discussing it with my wife, I left my job and, with the help of the government, moved into a small apartment in Zagreb. I had heard about the Mothers of Vukovar and the other family groups. But I never felt I wanted join. I felt I had to deal with my loss in my own way, and on my own terms. For me, it was better not to have people around constantly renewing the grief. I like to go fishing whenever I can, to be alone with my thoughts."

"Well, for me, it is very difficult to describe all the different emotions and changes I've passed through in five years," said Lesic. "I just can't. Maybe the most important thing is finding your way toward a new way of living. I never could have made it alone, I'm sure. For me, it has been helpful to be with people who share the same problems and work for the same goals. I will be with these people to the end. Of course, I want justice. And if there's ever a trial in The Hague for my husband's killers, I will follow it with interest. But, for Tin and me, it is not important that we be there. We've sorted things out. I feel as if life is now waiting for us."

Turning to Hebrang, I asked: "Do you wish to return to Vukovar?"

"Vukovar is Vukovar. That is my last stop," he replied. "For that I am living and waiting. But I don't know if I can live with Serbs again. After all that they did, I don't know if I could ever make myself equal with them. I honestly don't know. The most important thing is that the criminals who killed my son be punished. Those killers must suffer like my wife and I have. I'm sorry, I really can't think about them or I'll explode. Yes, yes, I want justice but I also want the international community to accept some of the blame. They watched Vukovar die and did nothing. Absolutely nothing! And then Srebrenica, the same! You asked earlier if there was anything in my experience I could share with the survivors from Srebrenica. Well, of course, there are many things. But the most important thing I would tell them is that the years of waiting and hoping are the worst. For me, when the moment came and I learned the truth from the doctors, I accepted it with great relief. The sweater Goran's mother had knit for him, the documents, the dental X-ray of his jaw, the way one tooth was growing over another—the one he should have had removed, but always refused to do anything about—they all matched. So, now, at least, I have my deceased child buried in an honorable place and while I am sad, I have some peace."

For the first time during the interview, Hebrang paused and turned to look at Lesic, who nodded her head and smiled faintly. "Well, after I spoke with Dr. Strinovic," she said, "I struggled to decide whether I wanted just a private funeral or a more public one. In the end, I decided Tin and I should be present at the public ceremony. It took place on February 21 at the Zagreb crematorium. It was bitter cold, but hundreds of people came, and a few of the family members gave

speeches. When one of the speakers mentioned Tomislav's name, I could see it made Tin very proud. That evening, when Tin and I returned to the apartment, I took out a small plastic bag Dr. Strinovic had given me. Inside were a set of keys that had been discovered in one of Tomislav's pockets. My hands were trembling so much, I could hardly keep from dropping them. I found what looked like the right key and slipped it in the lock. I turned it slowly to the left, and the door swung open.

Epilogue

Crimes are committed by people. They are not committed by abstract entities like nationalities. The victims are not abstractions, although they are often perceived as such when their numbers accumulate by the thousands.

—Louise Arbour, Chief Prosecutor for
the International Criminal Tribunal
for the former Yugoslavia

In the valleys and alongside the country roads that connect the red-tiled villages of the former Yugoslavia are dozens—perhaps hundreds—of mass graves. They hold the anonymous remains of generations of men, women, and children who were executed in cold blood solely because of their ethnicity. Many of the graves, like those UN investigators found on the Ovchara farm and in the hills surrounding Srebrenica, were dug during the recent wars in Croatia and Bosnia. Others date back to the Second World War when the predominately Croat pro-Nazi Ustache massacred tens of thousands of Serbs and Jews. Still others are the work of Serbia's Chetniks, anti-Nazi royalists who, in their zeal to re-establish a Serb-dominated Yugoslav kingdom during the same period, murdered Croats and Muslims.

After World War II, peace—though fragile and fitful—returned to the Balkans. But it was a hollow peace. The Ustache and Chetnik leaders who had ordered the killings of masses of civilians were never held accountable for their crimes. There were no "truth commissions" or courtroom spectacles where the nationalists, stripped of their weapons and uniforms, faced their accusers. There was no "coming to terms with the past." The perpetrators, like the dead,

remained nameless. And anonymity soon bred denial. Yet, it wouldn't be long before new nationalist leaders like Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic and Croatia's Franjo Tudjman would begin invoking the memory of the dead in their calls for retribution.

Germany, in the meantime, was not allowed to deny its Holocaust. Even before the final collapse of Hitler's Reich, the victorious Allied armies, sickened at what they had found in the death camps, rounded up Nazi and community officials and paraded them past the piles of bodies and crematoriums. Allied film crews recorded Nazi prisoners of war being forced to gather and bury the dead. Most importantly, the Allies established an international military tribunal, which convened in Nuremberg on November 14, 1945, to try suspected Nazi war criminals. Nuremberg introduced the concept of "crimes against humanity" and ruled that such crimes, by their nature, offended humanity itself. In effect, a person who committed crimes against humanity was, like the pirate or slave trader before him, hostis humani generis, an enemy of all humankind—over whom any state could hold jurisdiction.

For nearly a year, the court's chambers in Nuremberg echoed with accounts of the suffering and loss of millions of people. Dozens of witnesses for the prosecution took to the stand to testify about atrocities, while prosecutors marshaled documentary evidence to corroborate their accounts. Of the 22 high-ranking Nazis who stood trial, three were acquitted; seven were sentenced from ten years to life imprisonment; and twelve were sentenced to hang. The most important function of the Nuremberg trials and the strictly German war crime trials of the 1960s was to remove the stigma of war crimes and other atrocities from the German people as a whole and to place it on Nazi leaders and the Schutzstaffel (SS).

But Germany's coming to terms with its past was not confined solely to war crimes trials. After the 1950s, a period when German public life avoided any meaningful discourse about the crimes and horrors of Nazism, German academics and journalists began delving into the Nazi past with a vengeance. Hundreds of books, magazine articles, and plays about the Holocaust were published. Countless Germans, especially young ones, visited Nazi concentration camps. Films, such as Hitler A Career (1977), Heimat (1984) and, a decade later, although with much less acclaim, Die zweite Heimat (1992) and Stalingrad (1992), as well as Schindler's List (1993), became a part of the public discourse about the past. The TV series Holocaust, shown in the United States in 1978 and in West Germany and many other countries the following year, was viewed by more than 20 million Germans. After each episode, thousands of viewers called the TV station to discuss their experiences. These pedagogic treatments, coupled with the trial of the members of the Einsatzgruppen (SS murder squads) in the small city of Ulm (1958) and the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt (1964), helped Germany rise above its Nazi past by forcing it to confront and acknowledge the crimes of its leaders.

Five decades after Nuremberg, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague has, as of January 1998, publicly indicted seventy-nine people and issued an

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unknown number of sealed indictments. Two suspects—Drazen Erdemovic and Dusko Tadic—have been convicted and sentenced, and 20 more, mostly Croats and Muslims, are awaiting trial. Fifty-three more defendants, nearly all of them Serbs, remain at large.

Among those in the tribunal's custody is the mayor of Vukovar, Slavko Dokmanovic, who, along with three officers of the former Yugoslav People's Army (JNA)—Mile Mrksic, Mirsolav Radic, and Veselin Slijivancanin—is charged with "the mass-killing...of approximately 200 Croats and other non-Serb persons who had been removed from the Vukovar Hospital on 20 November 1991."

Unlike Dokmanovic, the three other defendants remain free, living under Slobodan Milosevic protection in Serbia and Montenegro. After the fall of Vukovar, Colonel Mile Mrksic, who had commanded the JNA Guards Brigade that captured the town, was promoted to general and later became commanding officer of the Army of the "Republic of Serb Krajina." When the Krajina fell to the Croatian army in August 1995, Mrksic returned to Serbia. Radic, a JNA captain, later left the military and started a private business in a town south of Belgrade. Veselin Slijivancanin, a JNA major during the siege of Vukovar, was promoted to colonel and sent to Podgorica, Montenegro to command an army brigade.

Dokmanovic was the first suspected war criminal to be arrested in the former Yugoslavia. While NATO commanders in Bosnia were not given full authority to seize suspected war criminals, Jacques Klein, the head of the UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES) in Vukovar, had always remained open to the possibility of using his UN police forces to bring them in. During the summer and autumn of 1996, Klein had taken a keen interest in the excavation of the mass grave on the Ovcara farm. He had provided the tribunal's police and forensic investigators with equipment and logistical support and posted UN Jordanian troops to guard the grave. As the evidence mounted, Klein warmed to the idea of making arrests. Together, he and Arbour hatched a plan to apprehend Dokmanovic.

Dokmanovic's lawyer, Toma Fila, meanwhile, has charged that her client was "kidnapped" and arrested "by trickery." According to Fila, immediately before his arrest on June 27, 1997, Dokmanovic received a telephone call from someone who claimed to be Jacques Klein's secretary, inviting him to talks about some "property problems" concerning Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. They agreed to meet on the bridge over the Danube that connects Croatia with Serbia. The man waiting for Dokmanovic at the bridge immediately introduced himself as a tribunal investigator and said that he wanted to talk about events in Vukovar in 1991. Dokmanovic got in the investigator's car, which quickly turned off the main road and stopped. Twenty armed and masked soldiers were waiting. A hood was placed over Dokmanovic's head and the journey continued for about an hour, ending at an airport. He was taken on board a small aircraft, where the hood was removed, and the investigator then told him why he had been arrested and informed him of his rights.

Chief Prosecutor Arbour later replied to Fila's charge of trickery by saying: "There is nothing tricky about arresting people without giving them advance warning. That's the way police forces operate all over the world."

During the summer and fall of 1997, a panel, assembled by the Office of the Prosecution of the Hague tribunal and comprised of forensic pathologists and anthropologists, reviewed the scientific methods and procedures followed during the investigations in Bosnia and Croatia a year earlier. The panel will make its findings available to both the prosecution and the defense during the trial of Slavko Dokmanovic, which began on January 19, 1998. Barring any difficulties with the forensic evidence, the 200 patients and staff who were gunned down on the Ovcara farm six years ago will finally have their day in court.

As of January 1998—two and a half years after the fall of Srebrenica—only one defendant charged with responsibility for the massacres along the Trail of Life and Death was in the tribunal's custody in The Hague. In June 1996, in tearful admissions before the tribunal, Drazen Erdemovic pleaded guilty to crimes against humanity for his role in the execution of dozens of Muslim men on the Pilica farm five days after the fall of Srebrenica. He then testified in hearings on whether to issue international arrest warrants against then Bosnian Serb President Karadzic and General Mladic in July. He said his unit's orders came directly from the highest echelons of the Bosnian Serb Army. The Hague tribunal sentenced Erdemovic to 10 years imprisonment in November 1996 for killing seventy people with the possibility of time off for good behavior. His case is now under appeal.

Despite the presence of 35,000 heavily-armed NATO troops in Bosnia, only four suspected war criminals had been arrested by January 1998. In the meantime, the two men who bear the greatest responsibility for the genocide in Bosnia and the mass killings after the fall of

Srebrenica—Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic—remain free.

Karadzic, who flatly denies that any executions occurred after the fall of Srebrenica, told The Times of London on February 12, 1996: "In connection with these so-called massacres of Muslims in Srebrenica, there was no order to kill them. Nobody under my command would dare kill those who were arrested or captured as prisoners of war. I am absolutely fully involved. Everything concerning the Serb Republic is in my hands." Karadzic resigned from the presidency of the Republika Srpska in July 1996 under intense international pressure. Since then, he has maintained a monopoly over the sale of gasoline, cigarettes, and other goods in Serb-controlled Bosnia that gains him millions of dollars and deprives the government of tax revenues.

Ratko Mladic, like his former boss, moves freely throughout Bosnian Serb territory, and even enjoys holidays at a beach resort on the coast of Montenegro. Although Mladic resigned as commander of the Bosnian Serb Army in November 1996, he still maintains tacit control of the military. He is also seen by many Bosnian Serbs as a hero and an honorable military man. Living with his wife in a vacation house inside the Bosnian Serb Army headquarters near Han Pijesak, Mladic reportedly spends his days caring for a small herd of

goats. According to the Associated Press, the retired general has named the goats after the former UN commanders in Bosnia and the leaders of the Western world.

During the months following the exhumations at Vukovar and Srebrenica, forensic anthropologists William Haglund and Clyde Snow and forensic pathologist Robert Kirschner took different paths. Snow, with several members of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, travelled to the Congo to join a UN team investigating massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees allegedly committed by President Laurent Kabila's rebel forces during the first five months of 1997. Kabila, however, repeatedly blocked access to the sites and the UN investigators, after being attacked by local residents near one of the sites, departed in frustration in mid-December. In late 1996, Haglund left the former Yugoslavia and returned to his original posting with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania. In December 1997, he conducted two forensic investigations on behalf of the US Department of State and the United Nations. Kirschner, meanwhile, returned to Chicago, Illinois where he continues to direct the International Forensic Program of Physicians for Human Rights and teaches at the University of Chicago.

What, in the meantime, has happened to the families of the men who were killed on the Ovcará farm and along the "Trail of Life and Death"?

In January 1998, Eastern Slavonia, the last Serbian-held enclave in Croatia, was handed over to the Croatian government by the UN authorities. UN troops had been stationed in the enclave, which includes the city of Vukovar, since early 1992. Croats who fled the area in 1991 are now returning. Among them are relatives of the Ovcará victims who plan to have a monument built in their memory either in Vukovar or near the site where the men were killed.

In Bosnia, the International Committee of the Red Cross ended its "death attestation" program in the autumn of 1997. In the meantime, Laurie Vollen and her team of Bosnian interviewers continue to gather antemortem information from the relatives of the missing men from Srebrenica, even though it is unlikely they will identify more than a small percentage of the bodies. Life remains grim for the Srebrenica refugees who still live in miserable conditions in collective centers and in housing settlements. They understandably feel betrayed by the United Nations, which, despite its pledges and countless Security Council resolutions, failed to prevent the Bosnian Serb army from seizing Srebrenica.

The intractable ferocity and magnitude of the killing and destruction during the war in the former Yugoslavia make it difficult to conceive of reconciliation. Yet, there are occasionally glimmers of hope. Relatives of the disappeared from all over the former federation have begun meeting in an effort to find common ground on a range of issues including a better means of gathering and sharing information about the missing. In a remarkable gesture of expiation, five Muslim women who lost husbands or sons at Srebrenica travelled to The Hague in September 1997 to meet face-to-face with seven of the 300 Dutch soldiers who had been in the enclave

when it fell. For the Dutch government, humiliated by accusations that their troops failed in their mission to protect the town from the Serbs, the tense three-hour meeting was a chance to show the world that they really cared about the fate of the refugees. For the women, the goal was simple: Find out what the Dutch knew, if anything, about the missing and try to determine what they could have done to avert the bloodshed.

During the meeting, organized by the Defense Ministry and held in a military barracks, the women grilled the soldiers for information about the missing husbands and sons. But the troops were unable to provide any new leads, further frustrating the women. At a press conference, which the Dutch failed to attend, one of the women, Hatidja Hren, told the press that while she and her colleagues remained troubled over the way in which the Dutch soldiers had handled their mission, they now had a better idea of who was to blame.

"We heard today that they were unable to protect us," Hren said. "It is our impression that they, too, are partly victims—victims of politicians higher up."

Hren went on to say that the women were strangely comforted by their encounter with the Dutch soldiers. "I still don't sleep well because of what happened," she said. "But, today, it was clear to me that they, too, have sleepless nights."

In their search for truth, Hren and her colleagues had touched upon one of the most fundamental moral issues which has lingered unresolved since the war ended in Bosnia over two years ago: Was it right for the UN and individual governments to have opposed ethnic cleansing and instituted "safe areas" in Bosnia, if they were unwilling to put the lives of their peacekeeping forces at risk to protect the people in those areas? Until the UN and those governments who supported the safe-area resolutions address this issue in a meaningful way, their moral authority remains tarnished.

"The great virtue of legal proceedings is that their evidentiary rules confer legitimacy on otherwise contestable facts," writes historian Michael Ignatieff. "In this sense, war crimes trials make it more difficult for individuals and societies to take refuge in denial."

But the process of coming to terms with the past, and of being reconciled to its painfulness, is much more complicated than merely distinguishing lies from truth. As important as The Hague trials are, they are taking place hundreds of miles away from the killing fields of Bosnia and Croatia. What the former Yugoslavia urgently needs is the creation of a civil society and democratic institutions which can reach through the morass of distortions, myths, and lies of the past and pull her societies out of the slipstream of denial. Trials can help that process, but for an enduring peace to prevail in the Balkans, future generations must come to understand, in the words of Ignatieff, "the drastic nullity of all struggles that end in killing and the demonstrable futility of avenging the past in the present."

To understand is not to forgive or forget—it is to accept things as they are. Forgiveness for those who massacred the men and boys in Srebrenica and Vukovar is not ours to give. Only the victims have the right to forgive. Forgetting is also unthinkable as it would be a dishonor to the dead and their memory. The most disturbing truth is that we are at the end of the "Never Again" century and genocide is happening again. Bosnia's nightmare—like Rwanda's—is not hers alone and, until we accept the moral imperative of acting swiftly to stop genocide and crimes against humanity and punishing those responsible, it will happen again.

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Photographer and Writer Identification at the End of the Book:

Gilles Peress is a member of Magnum Photos. His photographs are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Peress's other books are Telex Iran, Rwanda: The Silence, and Farewell to Bosnia, all published by SCALO.

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Testimony

**Diane Paul, Human Rights Watch Europe and Central Asia Division
 Sub-Committee on International Operations and Human Rights
 Committee on International Relations
 United States House of Representatives
 Honorable Christopher H. Smith, Chair**

March 31, 1998

Chairman Smith, Members of Congress, ladies and gentlemen, the events of over two and one-half years ago in Srebrenica must be remembered, and for this reason, your decision to hold this hearing is deeply appreciated. To the families of the missing, however, it seems the world has already forgotten; has moved on. Yet the survivors cannot. They are frozen in the trauma of not knowing the fates of those who disappeared. They must endure the cruelty of hoping against hope that some may still be alive, while knowing that few are likely to have survived.

Adding to this already unbearable burden; the two persons believed responsible for organizing the systematic deaths of thousands of people from Srebrenica are still at large. What message is being sent to Milosevic on Kosovo when Mladic and Karadzic are permitted to escape justice? It should not be forgotten that Milosevic is believed to have played a large part in what happened in Srebrenica.

We have been told repeatedly that those indicted for war crimes will be brought to justice "sooner or later." One senior diplomat, asked recently if it was true that Ratko Mladic had sought refuge in Serbia, responded, "I am satisfied that Ratko Mladic is in a cocoon—he is not interfering with the peace process. We can take care of him later." That U.S. government officials are satisfied with the status quo for reasons of political expediency is deeply offensive and wholly unacceptable. Patience has worn thin; the survivors demand justice. How long must they wait?

The questions raised in the title of today's hearing are critical—to rephrase them slightly, we might ask, "Could the people of Srebrenica have been saved?" and "Might we prevent further such tragedies?"

Despite everything that has happened, we believe the answer is yes, that most of those who died during those days in July might have been saved had the international community's response been more decisive, and that the possibility to protect civilians in Kosovo and elsewhere also exists. We heard President Clinton admit that early action could have prevented many deaths in Rwanda.

Reports of new attacks in Kosovo last week and the failure of Serbia to withdraw "police" forces—forces which act in every way like military forces—are not surprising developments. They were anticipated; in fact easily predicted, given the broken promises of the past. Milosevic, a master of brinkmanship, is thumbing his nose at the

international community, as evidenced by the recent arrest of Americans in Pristina and his refusal to accept an international mediator. A reported arms deal with Russia, which may even now be funneling sophisticated arms to Serbia, including attack helicopters, has gone unchallenged by the Contact Group. There are no international human rights monitors on the ground, and humanitarian organizations do not have full access. Full and unimpeded access to international monitors is an absolute imperative yet to date Milosevic has refused to permit the OSCE to reestablish a presence there since booting them out a number of years ago. The disunity within the Contact Group does not bode well and echoes the ineffective international response to the crisis in Bosnia.

Speaking more generally, the potential use of safe areas as a strategy to protect civilians should not be discarded, despite the failure at Srebrenica. "Zones of safety" have saved lives, even in the former Yugoslavia. The safe area in northern Iraq did provide some protection over time, until international will eroded. Designated safe houses established by the International Committee of the Red Cross, Raoul Wallenberg and others enabled thousands of Hungarian Jews to survive during the darkest days in Budapest during WWII, and an international safety zone created by fewer than a dozen internationals protected tens of thousands during the rape of Nanking. None of the safe zones mentioned provided complete safety; rather they mitigated the danger, enabling some persons to survive. The lesson is not to avoid the establishment of safe areas, but to ensure that they are indeed safe, and to glean what we can from the successes and failures of the past.

In the case of Srebrenica, the political will existed only to protect international troops, not civilians. UNPROFOR commanders were permitted to narrowly interpret their mandate to include only the protection of their own troops, despite clear instructions from the UN Secretary General, who in 1994 stated that:

UNPROFOR understands its mission as follows: To protect the civilian populations of the designated safe areas against armed attacks and other hostile acts, through the presence of its troops and, if necessary, through the application of air power, in accordance with agreed procedures.

Again and again in Bosnia, and elsewhere, we have missed the boat and failed to focus on the real issue--stopping attacks on civilians. Instead, efforts have focused on merely containing the conflict, preventing refugee flows, or pumping in humanitarian assistance. None of these constitutes protection.

Yet, Boutros-Ghali, confronted by journalists with the UN's failure at Srebrenica, said, "No, I don't believe this represents a failure. You have to see if the glass is half full or half empty. We are still offering assistance to the refugees . . . and we have been able to maintain the dispute within the borders of the former Yugoslavia."

Had the safe area been properly reinforced, the Dutch troops might never have found themselves in the position they were in in Potočari. Had air strikes been authorized earlier and in greater force the attack on the safe area might have been stopped. Instead, anxious to leave the enclave, Dutch troops deliberately failed to report troop movements and other activities to headquarters.

The U.N. Secretary General's report on safe areas stated that 34,000 extra troops were needed if UNPROFOR was to effectively deter attacks against the safe areas, although reinforcements of 7,600 would have provided a "basic level of deterrence."

UNHCR's head of logistics in Tuzla had prewarned the commander of peacekeeping forces in Srebrenica not to use any of the humanitarian supplies which had been stockpiled. "I knew that the enclaves would fall . . . I think most of us knew," she said ". . . it was obvious that no one was going to stop them [Serb forces] if they were serious."

Indeed, as Srebrenica fell, international reaction was divisive and undermined any hope of protection. The British threatened to pull troops out, the Germans recommended leaving Srebrenica to its fate and concentrating on Zepa, and NATO said it was awaiting orders from the UN. The U.S. refused to provide troops at all. A year earlier, UN troops had been pulled out of Rwanda at a critical moment with overwhelmingly devastating results.

Following the Dayton agreement, those responsible for orchestrating ethnic cleansing have continued to pull the strings not only at high levels but at the local level. Police continue to serve as the instruments of ethnic nationalists and the court systems do not function to protect human rights. For a lasting peace, we must bring indicted persons to justice and must put more energy on the development of rule of law to ensure the rights of citizens and protect ethnic minorities and returnees. Recent progress on property laws in the Federation is heartening, but changes in the Republika Srpska have largely been limited to rhetoric to date, with the exception of the surrender of a few lower level indicted persons. While the agreement on license plates is important to improve freedom of movement, for example, it still has a long way to go to effect real change.

In the meantime, current events in Srebrenica are disheartening, with the elected city council, now more than six months old, still unable to sit due to Bosnian Serb obstruction. The seats are split 24 out of 45 for the Bosniak coalition; 20 seats belong to Serb parties, and one to an independent candidate. A meeting this past Tuesday (March 24) was intended to install new officers, among them a Bosniak mayor, Serb deputy.

The Future Use of Safe Areas

Some of the principles which must be followed in the future if safe areas are to work include: [I will only mention a few]

- Safe havens or safety zones should not be set up without a protection plan. If peacekeeping troops are involved, the plan should include the specific measures which should be used to protect civilians. As David Breyer of Oxfam has said, "What can not be acceptable is to promise civilians that they will be protected and then not do it."
- Safe areas must be completely demilitarized. Part of the problem with the safe areas set up in Bosnia, Rwanda, and northern Iraq was that none were demilitarized or excluded the military. Attacks on safe areas must not be allowed to occur without consequences, which should be thought out beforehand. No attacks from safe areas should be permitted.
- Safe areas must not compromise the right to seek asylum. Contingency plans for the evacuation of the population from the safe area should be developed at the outset, in case the safe area should fall to hostile forces.
- Safe areas must not be used to shield suspected perpetrators of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. Those providing security for the safe area should have the right to arrest, detain, and transfer to the appropriate national or international authority such persons, but only with guarantees of due process rights.
- The designated safe area must be clearly defined, and according to former UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights for the former Yugoslavia Tadeusz Mazowiecki, safe areas "should be considered as a temporary solution aimed at solving humanitarian and not political problems . . . [not as] a substitute for a permanent peace agreement.
- Agreements with the parties to the conflict must include schedules for regular distribution of humanitarian aid. The defense of safe areas in peacekeeping situations should be guaranteed before relief organizations agree to supply them with humanitarian assistance.
- Guarantees of full access for neutral medical and relief workers must be granted, with clear consequences for non-cooperation.
- The possible negative consequences of implementing a safe area should be well thought out.
- Persons in a safe zone should be registered by a neutral international third party.
- Evacuations, if absolutely necessary, must be accompanied by internationals, who should travel in the same vehicles as the evacuees. (In Srebrenica, UNPROFOR escorts were simply turned back or their vehicles confiscated; evacuations from Zepa, however, were less disastrous because UNPROFOR troops rode on each of the buses). No agreements should be made which will permit the evacuation of civilians by forces hostile to them, especially if unaccompanied.
- Any attempt to separate women and children from male family members should be resisted. Families should be kept together.
- Intelligence information relating to impending attacks on civilians must not be withheld from the public or at the very least from international organizations with protection or human rights monitoring mandates. Clearly, evidence relating to the commission of war crimes must never be destroyed by peacekeepers or other internationals, as was the case in Srebrenica.

The Need for an International Investigation into the use of Chemical Weapons at Srebrenica

Human Rights Watch interviewed numerous survivors from Srebrenica who claim they were attacked with a chemical agent that caused hallucinations and disorientation.

The results of the Human Rights Watch research into the use of chemical weapons in Srebrenica in 1995 are inconclusive, but indicate that there were unexplained events which affected primarily the rear sections of the column of persons fleeing the town through heavily wooded areas. The testimony collected by HRW, and statements made by U.S. government officials, indicate the possibility that chemical weapons were used and strongly suggests that further investigation is warranted.¹

Some testimonies could be explained by a number of factors, including exhaustion, hunger and thirst, and psychological stress. Still, the combination of strange behavior and hallucinations experienced or observed by a number of persons cannot adequately be explained by these factors, according to experts consulted by Human Rights Watch.²

Human Rights Watch has conducted a study of allegations of the use of chemical weapons, primarily concerning "BZ" or a BZ-like compound. BZ is a chemical warfare agent which causes psychological and physical incapacitation. Prior to the breakup of Yugoslavia, the JNA's arsenal is known to have included BZ and other chemical weapons, as acknowledged in a NATO intelligence assessment. The FRY is one of the few states that has not signed the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention

The US government was aware of allegations of BZ use as early as August 1995 if not sooner, when Asst. Secretary of State John Shattuck, during a trip to Bosnia, reported

¹ For example, several marchers interviewed separately and in different places by Human Rights Watch gave consistent descriptions of artillery shells that produced thick smoke which instead of rising spread out, and of reactions of persons to this smoke including strange behavior and hallucinations. One marcher, while moving through the Kamenica area, both observed and experienced unusual behavior after two shells that produced no shrapnel and emitted a "yellowish smoke that spread horizontally" hit near the column. The man's brother, who had been close to the impact area of one shell, exhibited bizarre behavior, including ripping the hair out of his head, tearing at his body and clothing, scratching himself, and begging for water. He died sixteen hours later. Several others in the vicinity killed themselves; others were shouting and screaming. "The smoke seemed to affect me, also," the man told Human Rights Watch. "I suddenly started to feel very nervous and began to itch all over my body and face. I started to sweat and became very thirsty. Two hours later I fell into a stream. The water cooled me off, and I drank a lot of it. The water may have saved my life."

² Dr. Brian Davey, an expert from the OPCW who reviewed the testimonies collected by Human Rights Watch commented that "I have been involved with many individuals coming from combat and stressful battlefield situations, but have never encountered so many specifically described hallucinations." Dr. Matthew Friedman, professor of Psychiatry and Pharmacology at Dartmouth Medical School and executive director of the National Center for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) stated that "the kind of disorientation, bizarre hallucinations . . . and suicidal behavior [as described] are not the kind of symptoms usually associated with even the most severe acute traumatic stress reactions."

that "there were many credible accounts of the shelling of large columns of civilians attempting to flee, and four separate accounts of the use of chemical weapons that severely disoriented fleeing people, causing several to commit suicide."

Human Rights Watch interviewed a number of U.S. officials from various branches of the government. While none agreed to speak for attribution, they revealed the following:

- A small team of Defense Department experts interviewed a number of Srebrenica survivors in the summer of 1996 and concluded that their accounts supported allegations of the use of chemical incapacitants. The conclusion was deemed "highly significant" by the Department, and this information was sent up the chain of command.
- More than one person told Human Rights Watch that we were "on the right track."
- In late 1996, the U.S. intelligence community had information that chemical weapons may have been used in Srebrenica.
- A larger investigation which included physical sampling was undertaken in late 1996 or early 1997 by the U.S. government. The results of this investigation are not known to us.
- One official told Human Rights Watch in December 1996 that "We do not see an advantage in declassifying those documents relating to chemical weapons use in Bosnia . . . We have spoken with people and received assurances that other channels are being pursued that we believe would be more effective and achieve a more favorable outcome rather than simply publicizing them."

U.S. Public Law 102-182, the "Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Elimination Act of 1991," requires that a determination regarding the use of chemical weapons be made. If it is determined that chemical weapons were used, P.L. 102-182 would require the imposition of sanctions.

The U.S. government should release all information on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons in the former Yugoslavia which it may have in its possession.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Committee on International Relations
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**"The Betrayal of Srebrenica: Why Did the Massacre Happen?
Will it Happen Again?"**

Testimony of

**John W. Heffernan
Executive Director**

Coalition for International Justice

March 31, 1998

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for convening this hearing. For the countless victims who have been permanently silenced and for the family members and survivors who remain committed to finding out what happened to them, this hearing is welcome and long overdue.

For some, in particular the people of Kosovo, this hearing is ironically timely. Over the last few weeks, the Kosovars have witnessed the massacre of nearly 100 people, many innocent women and children, by Serbian paramilitary troops directed by the same man who directed the slaughter in Srebrenica. The Kosovo Albanians, might find the question, "will it happen again," a bit after the fact. It is all too familiar to them. The faces of the victims have changed, but the genocidal perpetrators remain the same. The anemic reaction of the international community -- expressions of outrage and, as yet, relatively empty threats -- are hauntingly familiar.

Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic indicted for genocide and charged with masterminding the largest single war crime in Europe since World War II remain free today, nearly three years after the Srebrenica massacre. And at the same time, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, although not indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal, is directing the crackdown in Kosovo while providing a "safe area" -- confirmed by a number of very well placed U.S. government officials -- for the twice-indicted, alleged architect of Srebrenica, General Mladic.

My message today is a simple one-- unless the perpetrators of these past heinous acts are arrested and brought to justice, the likelihood of the Srebrenica massacre being replicated in Bosnia or in other parts of the former Yugoslavia is almost certain.

I spent two and half years as a humanitarian aid worker in the former Yugoslavia at the height of the war. I know first-hand that none of the admirable goals set out in the U.S. brokered Dayton peace agreement-- from the return of refugees to the functioning of joint institutions and economically sound reconstruction efforts -- will be achieved unless the architects of the genocide and their henchmen are captured and transferred to The Hague. If you were a refugee, would you return to your home knowing that the man who ran the concentration camp now works at the local police station just down the road? How free and fair can elections be if candidates running for office from exile are prevented, once elected, from taking office by the ethnic cleansing that drove them from their home districts? Just last week it was reported that, despite the presence and diplomatic efforts of the international community, after a few minutes, the meeting of the Srebrenica Town Council ended in total chaos. Clearly, the legacy of the massacre lives on.

In answering the questions, "why did the massacre happen and will it happen again?", it is important to understand the extent to which an escalating series of human rights abuses in Bosnia before the war contributed to a complete breakdown of civil society. These events --and the negligible international response to them-- paved the way for the eventual tragedies in Bosnia.

To suggest, as many do, that ancient religious and ethnic hostilities are the cause of the most recent Balkan conflict ignores recent history. For nearly forty years, following World War II, the people of the former Yugoslavia lived in a relatively peaceful multi-ethnic state.

The fragile peace came to an end in the late 1980s, when Belgrade unilaterally dismantled the Kosovo government, stripping it of its autonomous status and created a police state. A few years later, as Croatia sought independence, fear of the denial of their rights sparked a rebellion among the Croatian-Serbs, which led to the massive destruction of Vukovar. The failure of the international community to react to these events sent the message to the perpetrators that no one would intervene to prevent exploitation of minorities by the nationalists. A pattern of human rights abuses was established and reinforced. The eventual result was the worst European bloodbath since World War II.

Threatened by Bosnia's desire for independence, a few insecure demagogues launched campaigns of hate and terror aimed at achieving ethnically pure states. Seizing the opportunity, some of these nationalists began to promote their grand designs of creating a greater Serbia, others, a greater Croatia. Each fastidiously worked to eliminate any and all who would interfere with their nationalistic, expansionist goals.

During this time, the major players in the international community refused to get their hands dirty in the Yugoslav conflict. Although there were ongoing attempts to negotiate a peace and to propose territorial boundaries, the parties could not reach consensus, and the killing continued. Sensing very little progress in the negotiations, the UN declared certain areas to be "safe," promising to protect the most vulnerable populations. The failure to protect the so-called "safe areas" set the stage for further human rights abuses, permitting the siege of Sarajevo and other "safe areas" and culminating in the Srebrenica massacre.

The United States, the Netherlands and other European governments, the United Nations and the international community in general should be condemned for their failure to act on reports of the impending Srebrenica massacre. Perhaps external force could have saved thousands of lives. But the ultimate culpability must rest firmly on the shoulders of the most senior Serbian politicians and officers who planned and authorized the crime. Evidence from the well documented massacre points to the complicity of the Bosnian Serb leadership in Pale as well as the Serbian leadership in Belgrade.

President Clinton said,

We have an obligation to carry forward the lesson of Nuremberg. Those accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide must be brought to justice. There must be peace for justice to prevail, but there must be justice when peace prevails.

Last week while in Rwanda, the President, acknowledging that the world did not act quickly enough to the 1994 genocide, repeated his vow, "Never again must we shy away in the

face of evidence." While the Serbian paramilitary forces were firing on Albanians in Kosovo, the President said in Rwanda, "Genocide can occur anywhere. It's not an African phenomenon."

In the case of Srebrenica the evidence is clear. Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic must not be allowed, as former Senator Dole so eloquently put it, "... to exercise their noxious influence on the people who they sought to destroy." An influence that threatens to jeopardize the entire peace process. Arresting these two suspected war criminals is not a panacea. But it could, in fact, influence the answer to the question, "will it happen again?" As long as war criminals are at large and justice is not done, the wounds of war cannot heal, reconciliation and a lasting peace cannot be achieved.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. I would, of course, be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Statement from the Committee of the Dispossessed from Srebrenica and Zepa

We are a community of three hundred refugee survivors from Srebrenica and Zepa living today in St. Louis, Missouri among 8,000 displaced refugees from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We appeal to our fellow citizens from Srebrenica and Zepa in other parts of the United States and in Europe to join us in calling for justice, accountability, and compensation.

We were promised the help and protection of the United Nations. We gave up our weapons and our ability to defend ourselves in exchange for the protection of Srebrenica and Zepa as "safe areas". When our cities were attacked in July of 1995, thousands of our fathers, sons, brothers, relatives and friends were slaughtered without resistance or opposition from the United Nations who had pledged to defend us, according to UN Resolution 836, by "all necessary means, including the use of force." We were guaranteed protection but instead our UN protectors were bystanders and accomplices to our genocide. We lost our homes, our possessions, and most, importantly, our loved ones and friends.

Many of us who survived were imprisoned in Serbia after escaping Srebrenica and Zepa. Officials of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Red Cross in Belgrade promised us special status after resettlement as refugees. More than two years later we have received little or no help. For example, we have received no systematic medical attention or treatment for war trauma.

As victims of the worst genocide on European soil since the second world war, we call for the following:

1. **The immediate arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the war crimes and genocide in Srebrenica and Zepa, including Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic.**
2. **Information about those killed or missing in Srebrenica and Zepa.**
3. **Material and medical assistance, including financial compensation for our loss.**

For the St. Louis Committee of the Dispossessed from Srebrenica and Zepa,

Alic Daut	Srebrenica	Jasarevic Nedim	Srebrenica	Osmanovic Ibro	Srebrenica
Alic Sejdalija	Srebrenica	Jugovic Ahmo	Srebrenica	Oric Huso	Srebrenica
Becirovic Alija	Srebrenica	Jugovic Amir	Srebrenica	Ramic Azem	Zepa
Becirovic Nedžad	Srebrenica	Karic Emsud	Zepa	Ramic Hamdija	Zepa
Cavic Esed	Zepa	Karic Semso	Zepa	Ramic Hamzalija	Zepa
Halilovic Izet	Srebrenica	Lemes Ramiz	Srebrenica	Ramic Hasib	Zepa
Hodzic Seudin	Zepa	Mehmedovic Fadil	Srebrenica	Ramic Mehmedalija	Zepa
Husic Mehmedalija	Srebrenica	Muratovic Ahmet	Srebrenica	Ramic Sead	Zepa
Husic Nedžad	Srebrenica	Muratovic Dzevad	Srebrenica	Ramic Semsudin	Zepa
Jasarevic Alija	Srebrenica	Muratovic Refik	Srebrenica	Salihovic Mirsad	Srebrenica
Jasarevic Juso	Srebrenica	Muratovic Sefik	Srebrenica	Salihovic Sefik	Srebrenica
				Salkic Ramiz	Srebrenica

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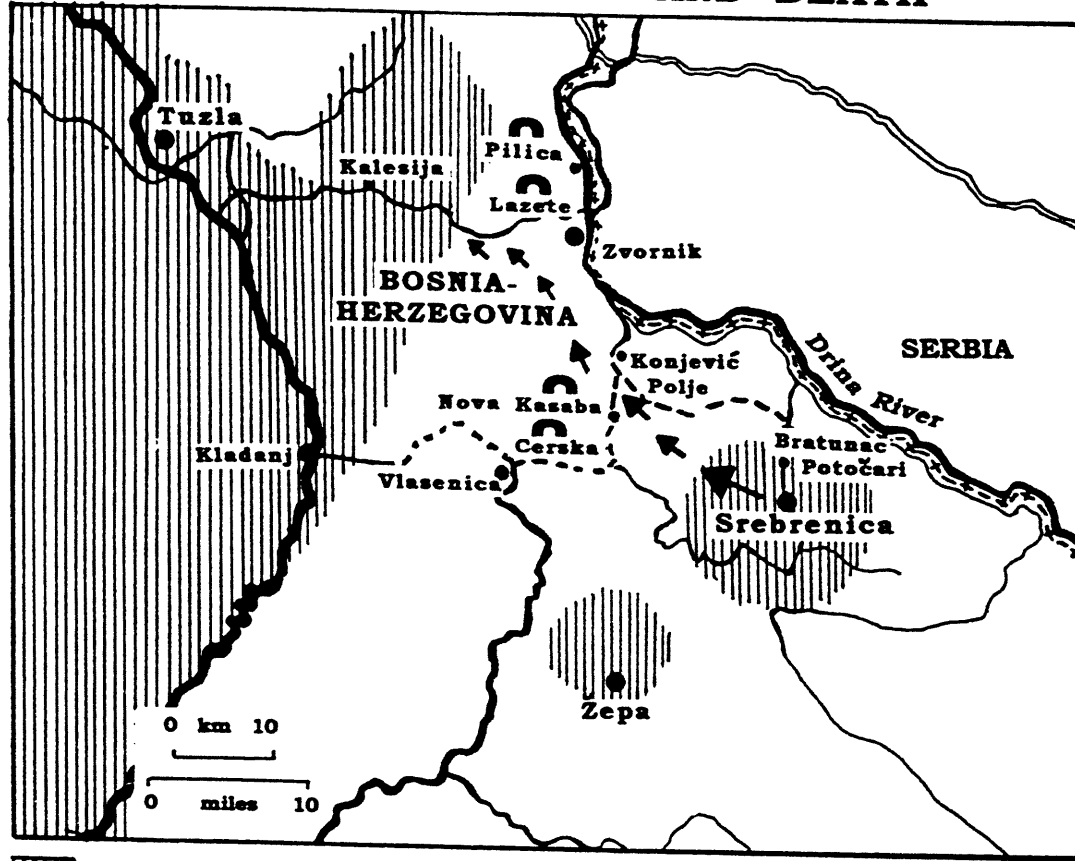
Our Srebrenica/Zepa group met yesterday and prepared this short statement for the record for your Committee meeting tomorrow. It can be included.

With thanks,

Patrick McCarthy

*Srebrenica
Heil (11)*

THE TRAIL OF LIFE AND DEATH



- Muslim & Croat-controlled
- The Trail of Life and Death
- Convoy Route, women & children
- Mass Graves Exhumed in 1996.



J'ACCUSE
Bianca Jagger blames UN
for Bosnian massacres *p14*

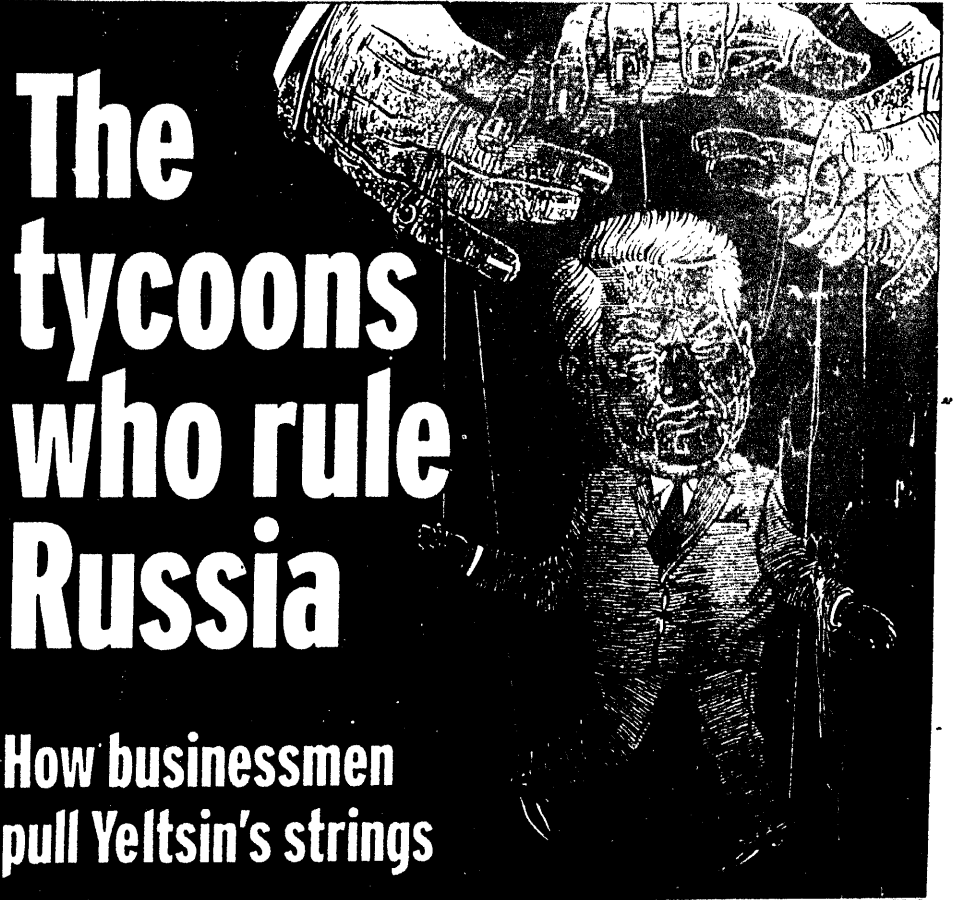


HAMMER HORROR
Top auction houses at
war in France *p56*



THE EUROPEAN

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France	FFr17.00	FFr34.00	FFr51.00	FFr68.00	FFr85.00	FFr102.00	FFr119.00	FFr136.00	FFr153.00	FFr170.00	FFr187.00	FFr204.00	FFr221.00	FFr238.00	FFr255.00	FFr272.00	FFr289.00	FFr306.00	FFr323.00	FFr340.00	FFr357.00	FFr374.00	FFr391.00	FFr408.00	FFr425.00	FFr442.00
Germany	Dm4.50	Dm9.00	Dm13.50	Dm18.00	Dm22.50	Dm27.00	Dm31.50	Dm36.00	Dm40.50	Dm45.00	Dm49.50	Dm54.00	Dm58.50	Dm63.00	Dm67.50	Dm72.00	Dm76.50	Dm81.00	Dm85.50	Dm90.00	Dm94.50	Dm99.00	Dm103.50	Dm108.00	Dm112.50	Dm117.00

THE EUROPEAN ESSAY



Your health: the Serb commander General Mladic (far left) tests his success at Srebrenica as the UN's Dutch General Karamanic (centre) looks on. Right: mass graves near Enns

Human rights campaigner Bianca Jagger accuses the United Nations of complicity in the worst atrocities on European soil since the fall of the Third Reich

THE BETRAYAL

MORE than two years ago, on 11 July 1995, the United Nations "safe area" of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia was overrun by Bosnian Serb troops. Some 8,000 civilians, women, children and virtually the entire male population, were systematically massacred during four days of carnage. They had been delivered to their executors by the international community: it was the worst massacre on European soil since the Third Reich.

When the Serbian onslaught rolled through Srebrenica, it made a mockery of United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's Resolution 819, passed in April 1993, establishing it as a "safe area" after an earlier brutal offensive. Resolution 836 "guaranteed" protection for Srebrenica by "all necessary means, including the use of force", stipulating that "all military or paramilitary units would either withdraw from the demilitarised zone or surrender all their arms".

The banned enclave was put into

the care of the UN's Dutch battalion in February 1995.

Instead of a safe area, Srebrenica under relentless shelling became a nightmare zone. The town was teeming with refugees, many living on the streets. As the Serbs prepared their final solution to the siege, they blocked most UN aid convoys into Srebrenica, cutting off food shipments, medical supplies and even the supply of shoes. The Serbs confiscated cooking salt from UN aid convoys, replacing it with industrial salt to poison the townspeople.

The title "safe area" became an obscenity. In June 1993 I denounced the safe areas as "legitimised concentration camps, unprotected from aggression and cut off from help and supplies", and the so-called experts frowned at me.

After the fall of Srebrenica there was one lonely voice which refused to be

an accomplice to the cover-up: Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the former prime minister of Poland, who had been appointed by the UN as envoy for human rights and had advocated the establishment of safe areas. In his letter of resignation shortly after the massacres, he wrote:

"Scenes from Hell, written in history's darkest pages"

"The concept speaks about the protection of human rights with credibility when one is confronted with the lack of conscience and courage displayed by the international community and its leaders... the very stability of international order and the principle of civilisation are at stake over the question of Bosnia. Crimes have been committed with savagery and brutality and, by contrast, the response of the international community has been slow and ineffectual."

The man who oversaw the slaughter was General Ratko Mladic,

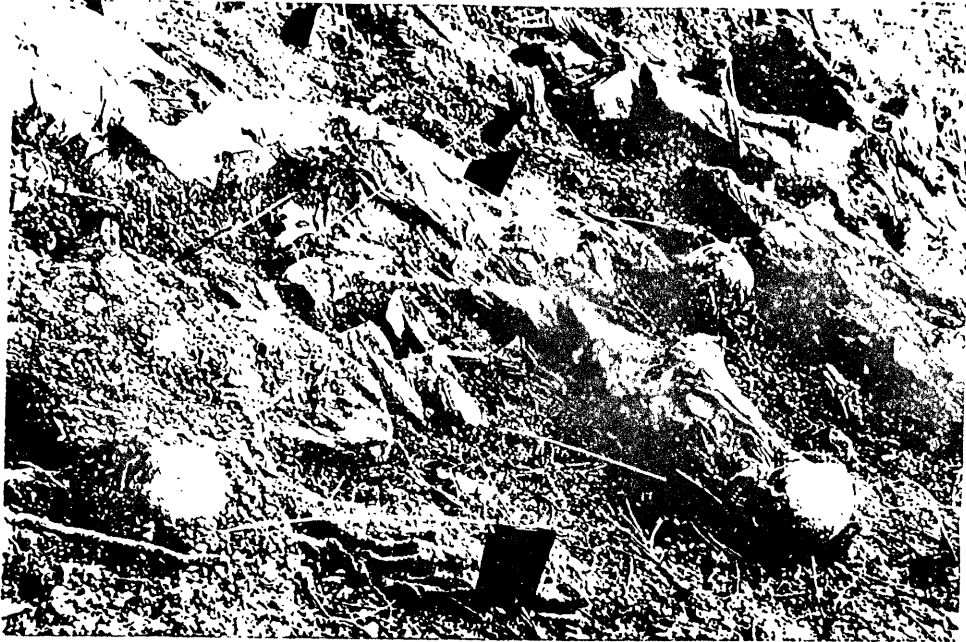
commander of the Bosnian Serb army. Today he is an international fugitive from justice, wanted for genocide, as is the political leader accused of giving him his orders, Radovan Karadzic. These men have been treated by American and European diplomats as legitimate partners in the peace process rather than as perpetrators of genocide.

In issuing the indictment against Mladic, Judge Ivo Vlad Radic at the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague said: "The evidence submitted by the prosecutor, consisting of more than 20 eye-witness statements, provides reasonable grounds for believing that Ratko Mladic personally supervised the slaughter of Srebrenica with great attention to detail."

The judge's ruling put the facts of the carnage beyond doubt or denial. After Srebrenica fell to the Bosnian Serbs in July 1995 a terrible massacre of the Muslim population appears to have taken place.

"The evidence submitted to the prosecutor describes scenes of unspeakable

Blanca Jagger was honoured at Amnesty International's Inaugural US Media Spotlight Awards in New York on 23 September. The award recognised her commitment to human rights campaigns over 20 years. She has worked across the world, from Nicaragua to Northern Ireland, collating evidence and producing reports on human rights issues



OF SREBRENICA

able savagery, thousands of men executed and buried in mass graves, hundreds of men burned alive, men and women mutilated and slaughtered, children killed before their mothers' eyes, a grandfather forced to eat the liver of his own grandson. These are truly scenes from Hell, written on the darkest pages of human history."

Judge Riad splits the massacre into three stages:

- **Massacres in the woods:** as Srebrenica's population fled the advancing army. The line which held the column of people who set off on reach Tutin on the night of 11 July 1995 and the morning of 12 July was an appalling one. The column was ambushed by Bosnian Serb soldiers on the Bratunac-Mladic road, attacking with artillery shells, anti-aircraft guns, automatic weapons and the like.

"Hundreds of Muslims were killed and many more were wounded. Many were driven back by the assault and eye-witness accounts described how people were so horrified that they committed suicide to avoid capture.

Many who were captured or surrendered, among them the wounded, were summarily executed. One eye-witness described how more than 100 captive Muslim men, women and children were slowly slaughtered by a group of Serbian soldiers using knives. Witnesses also saw hundreds of Muslim men burned in mass graves, some buried alive."

- **Mass executions at Karahaj:** "Thousands of Muslims from the enclave surrendered to Serb military forces under the control of Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, having been assured that they would not be harmed. The captive men were then taken to large assembly points, including a football stadium, where they were subjected by Mladic, who gave the same assurance, and thence to an assembly point in a school complex near Karahaj where Mladic was again present. I saw, too, many were summarily executed."

"According to the testimony of the few witnesses who survived, the men were the next day, on or about 14 July

1995, taken in trucks to at least two nearby fields and then shot where they stood. Mladic is placed at the scene of the killings by more than one survivor."

- **Summary executions at Potocari, the Dutch UN compound:**

"Most of the Muslim men, women and children who went to Potocari could not gain access to the UN compound and spent the nights between 11 and 12 July 1995 in nearby factories. During this time, and under the direct supervision of Mladic, men were separated from the women. Many were apparently summarily executed in the fields and rivers surrounding the compound. The witness statements described a frenzy of terror that led many to take their own lives. There is evidence that women were raped and killed."

"As a result of the Bosnian Serb

attack on Srebrenica, the Muslim population of the enclave was virtually eliminated. The two suspects are Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic." The judge concluded: "The evidence discloses, *prima facie*, the commission of crimes against humanity. The policy of 'ethnic cleansing' has genocidal characteristics."

More than two years have elapsed since the fall of Srebrenica, and despite the scale of the carnage, the recovery of shattering testimony to it and the warrants for the arrest of Mladic and Karadzic, there has been no effort by the international community to capture them. Indeed, there has been extreme reluctance to do so, with western diplomats and politicians continuing to deal with them. Furthermore, there has been no blame attached to the UN leaders and troops who delivered the men of Srebrenica to the hands

of the slaughter to the man who recommended the barely four year war across former Yugoslavia. President Slobodan Milosevic - a Serb

A REMARKABLE SET of documents obtained from inside the United Nations shows that Milosevic and the UN High Commissioner were acting as a close-knit cabal during the massacre at Srebrenica.

They were in constant touch with each other, even meeting in the Serbian capital of Belgrade in force agreements about the safety of their own soldiers and equipment while women were being raped and murdered, and the men of the town systematically shot and dynamited to death.

The UN Dutch battalion was even giving the Bosnian Serbs the fuel to drive the buses that brought the victims to the execution sites and the bulldozers which ploughed the corpses of their victims into the ground.

Before the fall of Srebrenica, a

More than two years later the suspects are still at liberty

continued on page 88

PROFILE

Jagger's war on injustice

BIANCA JAGGER was born in New York and educated at the Institute of Political Science in Paris. For 20 years she has campaigned for human rights throughout the world. During the Nicaraguan revolution and the Congo war that followed she condemned human rights violations. She made her first trip to Bosnia at the height of the war in February 1993 (pictured) for a campaign on human rights abuses against women. Appalled by what she saw, she devoted herself to drawing attention to the situation, which she described as "worse than anything" she had seen in Latin America. Her trip had been planned by the American group Equality Now, to draw attention to the hundreds of women who had been raped by Bosnian Serb forces. During her stay, Jagger sought to raise victims and even to register, reporting back to the Helsinki Commission on Human Rights and the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus. She told Congress: "There is no question that mass rapes were used as part of the strategy of war to defeat the race by impregnating them, destroying nuclear families." keen for a clearer picture, Jagger flew out again in April this year. Her trip saw the beginning of her conflict with the United Nations. She had arrived in Venica with \$4.8m of medical supplies. The plan was to airlift them into Tuzla, but UN officials refused to allow the flight into the no-fly zone. Some of the doctors decided against crossing the border but Jagger went ahead. Visiting the paediatric ward of Tuzla hospital, Jagger met Dr Muhamed Zukic, who begged help for two children in need of treatment. The eldest, 12-year-old Sabina Madic, was suffering from leukaemia, and the second, eight-year-old Mohamed

Rabic, had a congenital heart defect. Jagger agreed to help evacuate them but soon hit a stumbling block: UNaircraft refused to provide a helicopter. After five weeks of trying to secure passage out of Tuzla, Jagger gained help from a British army colonel, but it was too late for Sabina: the journey to Spalt took two days, and she died soon after arrival. Mohamed continued on the journey, and soon-recent summary in the United States saved his life. Sabina and Mohamed were the first of 22 children Jagger rescued, and in July she accompanied 100 women from the Srebrenica women's association on a visit to the former enclave. She says that being



vicarious gives her an affinity with the oppressed. She cites her experience of visiting a refugee camp in Honduras as a turning point in her life; she has since travelled to a variety of trouble spots, from Northern Ireland to Guatemala. She works with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Christian Aid, and is an ambassador for the Albert Schweitzer Institute, a member of the Balkan Institute and an advisor to Indigenous Development International at Cambridge University.

Major awards include an honorary doctorate of humanities from Stone Hill College in Massachusetts for her work on behalf of human rights; the 1994 United Nations Earth Day International award for her efforts to protect the indigenous people and forests of Latin America; the 1996 humanitarian award from the Hispanic Federation of New York City; the 1996 abolitionist of the year award from the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty; and the 1997 Green Globe Award from the Redforest Alliance.

CATHY SAVAGE

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proposal deal between the UN and Mladic had already been cast in stone. General Bernard Janvier of France, supreme United Nations military commander of former Yugoslavia and based in Zagreb, had met Mladic at the Karaj Veljovic in the town of Zvornik in the Dalmatian Serbian territory on 4 June 1995.

The meeting took place at a time when the Bosnian Serbs held a number of UN soldiers hostage. The two men struck a deal: if the Serbs released the hostages, many of whom were French, and stopped shooting at UN troops, the UN would in return cease to grant permission for Nato air strikes against them.

"We were the supplicants," one of Janvier's aides said. "Janvier proposed the meeting. Janvier proposed the deal." It was the latest in a miserable litany of acquiescence and capitulation to the Serbs by the United Nations, among which was the setting up of the doomed safe areas themselves.

The three-point agreement drawn up between Janvier and Mladic said: "1. The Army of Republika Srpska will no longer use force or threaten the life and safety of members of UN forces [the UN Protection Force].
2. UN troops continue to no longer make use of force which leads to the use of air strikes against the targets and territory of the Republika Srpska.
3. The signing of this agreement will lead immediately to the freeing of all prisoners of war."

The UN hostages were, indeed, freed by the middle of June. But Janvier's bond with Mladic drew the wrath of his immediate superior, General Rupert Smith, UK UNprofor commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina, based in Sarajevo. There was a meeting at the Dalmatian port of Split in Croatia on 9 June, chaired by Yasushi Akashi, the UN secretary-general's special envoy to former Yugoslavia, to try to resolve the differences. Akashi himself had established a consistent record of stifling attempts at intervention against the Serbs, using his close contact with Belgrade to do so.

Smith observed: "We have been neutralised." He argued that "if we hate them, they [the Serbs] will be more co-operative". Janvier disagreed: "I insist we will never use force to impose our will on the Serbs," he said, admitting that "the Serbs are controlling the situation."

The strategy was that the UN should, rather than defy the Serbs, placate them by abandoning the safe areas to the mercy of the executioners. "What would be most acceptable to the Serbs," he said bluntly, "would be to leave the enclaves. It is the most realistic approach and it makes sense from the military point of view, but it is impossible for the international community to accept."

He was wrong only on the last point. Such a betrayal was utterly unacceptable to the international community. By striking a treacherous deal with Mladic, General Janvier, who represented the United Nations, had already condemned Srebrenica to the sword.

BOSNIAN SERB troops began their final, bloody push into Srebrenica in the afternoon of 11 July 1995. The

first official UN document to mark the offensive is a full record of a meeting held by the "Blue Sword Crisis Action Team", the UN high command for the entire region, in Zagreb that day. The meeting was led by special envoy Akashi.

It is not clear who represented General Janvier's side, as was the chief of staff Brigadier General Steven, as well as the Nato liaison officer, British Air Commodore Rudd and three other senior military officers. The meeting started with the news that the Bosnian Serbs were attacking the Dutch UN battalion and that Nato planes were "forming a strike package en route to Srebrenica". General Janvier's deal with Mladic seemed to be in trouble. But two minutes after the bulletin Akashi told the meeting "show a telephone call he had with Mladic, who, in theory, had had nothing to do with the war since May 1992."

Akashi explained in Milosevic's defence before the tribunal "how an support" for his UN soldiers and "an strikes" against the Serbs, apparently stating that the Nato action was not an air strike and that the Janvier Mladic deal was intact.

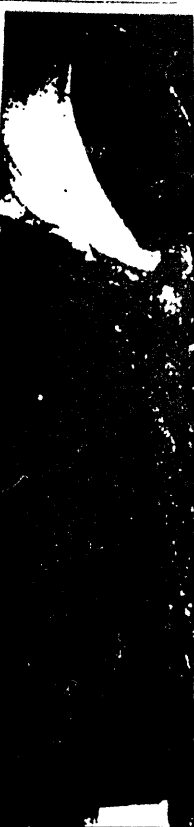
Milosevic replied on behalf of Mladic, saying that Mladic would not recognise the difference. At 2.40pm, Nato planes struck two targets, a tank and an armoured personnel carrier, missing the tank. Janvier then stepped in and ordered the Dutch soldiers to withdraw from their observation posts and retreat to the battalion compound at Potocari, near Srebrenica.

The Serbs were not 'harrassing' refugees, it was a massacre

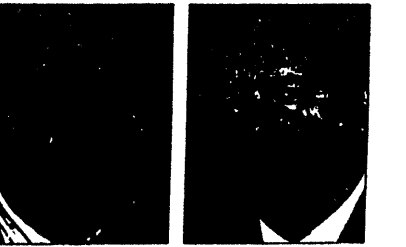
EXTRAORDINARILY, the phone rang. Milosevic was on the line, apparently outraged by the tank air strike. Akashi explained that the Nato action was in response to an attack on his men and, that if the Serbs withdrew, there would be no more strikes. Then, suddenly, Akashi started to talk to Milosevic about a Dutch soldier killed by the Bosnian army the previous week, saying he hoped these latest developments would not jeopardise the peace process.

The Bosnian Serbs were, by now, tearing into Srebrenica while Akashi was stalling Milosevic's position to the meeting that Serbian troops were advancing only in response to "terrorism" by the Bosnians.

At 8.08pm that evening, the town taken and the slaughter under way, Akashi wrote to Kofi Annan, head of UN secretary-general. For the first



time Akashi acknowledged that "Serbs harassed the column of Bosnians leaving Srebrenica for Potocari". There were "exploding shells so close to the column of the displaced" that they created "panic". What he referred to here was not panic, it was what Judge Rad called the massacres in the woods: the ambushing of civilians with shells and mortars as they fled the safe area declared by his own UN



BOSNIAN SERB troops began their final, bloody push into Srebrenica in the afternoon of 11 July 1995. The

It was the day the pound crashed out of the ERM.

The day the Bank of England spent billions propping up sterling.

The day when £4 billion was lost to speculators.

The day when the British government twice raised interest rates.

The day of humiliation and surrender that changed the course of British history.

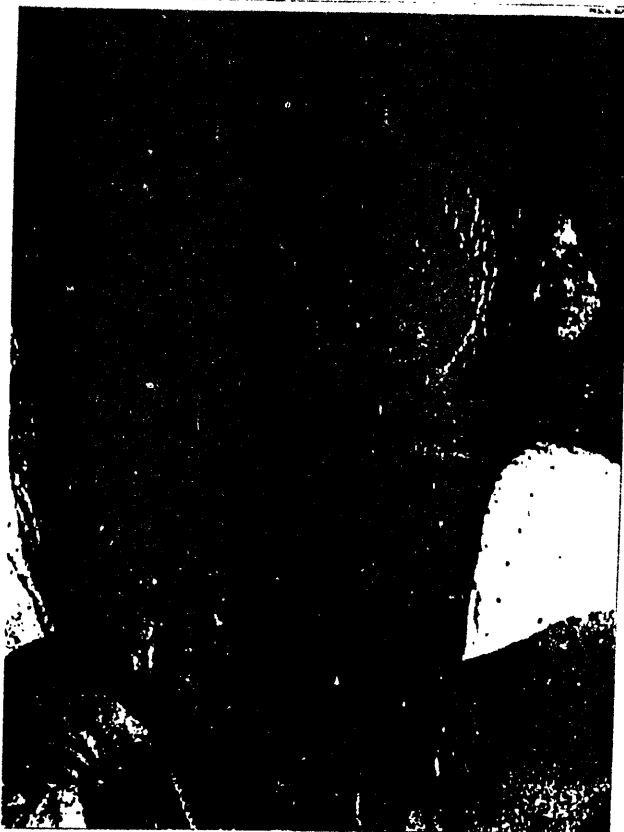
Tim Piggot-Smith narrates the behind-the-scenes story of

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It has since emerged that even during the morning of the day Srebrenica fell, intelligence documents were reporting that Mladic intended to exterminate the entire population of the town. Two-thirds of the population of 40,000 had fled to the Dutch base at Potocari. The Dutch had been given orders from Unprofor "to protect the refugees" and escort them to "safe areas". The Serbs, however,

insisted on the horrific separation of these people by sex in full view of the UN Dutch battalion commander and soldiers.

On 12 July, a column of between 12,000 and 14,000 able-bodied men and boys set off across the frontlines. More than half of them were ambushed or executed en route. During the days that followed, the rest were bused to a place of execution and

summarily murdered. On the 12th, a letter from the Dutch commander on the ground, Colonel Ton Karemans, detailed two meetings he held with Mladic on 11 and 12 July. At the first meeting Mladic, "in a most threatening way", said he would use "all his assets" to "outgun" the Dutch compound if it continued to harbour refugees. At a second meeting, he demanded the removal of all Bosnian

End of the line: a refugee breaks down as the UN convoy carrying 2,000 Muslims arrives in Tuzla

troops from the collapsed enclave. A debriefing by Dutch Brigadier General van der Wind, delivered in October that year to the Dutch government, told how Mladic set out his conditions for the evacuation of refugees. He insisted on the separation of women and children from the men. Karemans is reported to have objected in the screening, but also to no avail. That is to say, the process of separation was not only accepted by the Dutch battalion but that they participated in the screening as early as 12 July.

The debriefing continued. In order to prevent excesses with regard to transports, the battalion commander decided to operate in the evacuation. When the first buses arrived, they were stormed by a large number of refugees who wanted to board as quickly as possible. Dutchbat (Dutch battalion) personnel then formed an orderly pathway to the buses.

Next day the 13th, General van der Wind's debriefing report states that "the transports were resumed at 06.30hrs". Extraordinarily, the report

notes that "a list of men of fighting age was drawn up on the initiative of the deputy battalion commander (Major Franken). This was done partly on the compound itself". Approximately 60 men refused to give their names. Ultimately, there were 239 names on the list. At approximately 19.30hrs on 13 July the last refugees left Potocari, with the exception of a few who stayed behind. In fact, these individuals were handed over by Dutchbat to the Bosnian Serbs - they were never seen again.

The report notes that the "events which occurred from 6 to 13 July were particularly hectic, confusing and disorganised". This was the official UN description of the carnage summarised in Judge Rad's chilling verdict.

THERE is official acknowledgement of at least a portion of this direct delivery of men in a restricted memorandum dated 15 July from an Unprofor officer in Tuzla, Ken Buet, who cabled Zagreb to say that "239 persons, presumably draft-age males, were removed [from the Dutch compound] presumably to Bistovici near Bugojna in Bosnian Serb army-controlled territory". He went on to say that "of the 15,000 to 20,000 people in the area including Potocari, 700 were removed". There is an even more remarkable

piece of co-operation between the Dutch and the Serbs. General Van der Wind's debriefing specifies that on the second day of the handover of the Muslims, 13 July, Dutchbat was joined by the arrival of the 8th (Honour) Serb Army in Srebrenica with Mladic's elements. The Dutch were fueling the very vehicles the Mladic used to bring the executions in Tuzla and he reports this brought their victims to the killing fields.

General van der Wind argued that Mladic had a hold over the UN Dutch battalion. Professor Mark Almon, who, at the same time, the Dutch mission of defence was the shedding evidence of its dealings with the Serb general in prison away was video evidence were missing - though Serb television shows enough pictures of Dutch officers drinking champagne with Mladic to make one despair at the subsequent promise in the basis hereafter. "At this had the hallmarks of a diabolical deal.

MEANWHILE, during the delivery of the Muslims by the 8th Army in the Serb executioners, Colonel Karemans turned his attention to protecting his own troops.

The debriefing by Van der Wind later explained that the Dutch soldiers who were held by the Bosnian Serbs were repeatedly given a choice either to return to their posts in Srebrenica or in accordance with the RSA. Each time, they chose to go with the Bosnian Serb soldiers.

On 13 July, the Bosnian government warned the world that systematic slaughter was being "planned" at Srebrenica. Government minister Hasan Mujic told US Ambassador John Mears in Sarajevo that more than 1,000 men had been collected in a stadium at Bratunac. That evening, the Bosnian Serbs surrounded a column of men three kilometres long at the village of Glodjane and took an order from their commander, Major Ohrenovic: "You must fall everyone. We don't need anyone alive."

Another order pertaining to a second group of Muslims in flight came from Major General Zvanovic: "They must surrender with all their weapons, then shell the group with all your weapons and destroy it." Yet another group was surrounded in a forest "till they slowly" comes the order from a Serbian codenamed Hawk.

On the same day, Atashi again cabled Annan in New York. He focused on the murder of women - children to Tuzla, failing to mention the executions. But in a grotesque classic of understatement, he informed his superior that "we are beginning to detect a shortfall in the number of persons expected to arrive in Tuzla. There is no further information on the status of approximately 4,000 draft-age males."

ON 17 JULY, the United Nations-Serbian cable published in Belgrade, just as the summary executions of Muslim males by Mladic's death squads were reaching a bloody climax in Potocari, Karakaj, Nova Kasaba, Kravica and Pitica.

Almon met Annan a cable to report that "Carl Bildt (the European Union)

UN leaders delivered 239 people like lambs to the slaughter



Key players: (from left to right) Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic; Slavoljub Simic, president of Serbia; Vukoslav Adzic, UN special representative of the secretary-general; General Rupert Smith, UN Secretary-General; General Bernard Janvier, UN Secretary-General; General Rupert Smith, UN Secretary-General; UN Secretary-General in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

deliberate... a... 11/9

THE EUROPEAN ESSAY



continued from page 17
 errow). Mr Thorwald Stoltenberg (of the Geneva standing "peace" conference) and myself met in Belgrade with President Milosevic on Saturday 15 July. I was accompanied by General Rupert Smith. Mladic, at the request of Bilik, facilitated the presence of General Mladic at the meeting. Mladic and Smith had a long, halting discussion. Despite their disagreement on several points, the meeting re-established dialogue between the two generals. Informal agreement was reached on a number of points.

He concluded: "In view of the highly sensitive nature of the presence of Mladic at the meeting, it was agreed by all participants that the fact should not be mentioned at all in public."

Carl Bildt, a former Swedish prime minister, has since discussed this meeting in a briefing, unpublished, given to US daily paper *Newsday*. "We had to meet with Milosevic," he said, "because he was the only person who could get the two generals [Smith and Mladic] together. Milosevic ordered Mladic to Belgrade."

This leaves little doubt who was pulling the strings, when and without the now ravaged enclave of Srebrenica. The point of the meeting, said Bildt, was to arrange access for the International Committee of the Red Cross to an enclave in which, the UN knew well, no Muslims were now living. Bildt made it clear that he knew details of the violence: "There were two categories of atrocities. BSA soldiers taking bottles of alcohol and brandy in the evening [of the 11th] and killing and raping women. Ambushes against men escaping into the woods. We knew about men being separated."

Newsday asked Bildt: "Did you raise the issue of massacres with Mladic and Milosevic?" "No," replied Bildt. "We had unconfirmed reports of massacres, but we didn't raise the issue." Later in the interview, he contradicted himself directly: "Of course we raised these issues," he is quoted as saying.

THE UPSHOT of the meeting was an "agreement" between Smith and



Mladic at another rendezvous two days later. Smith's adjutant wrote up the minutes, warning in his cable that "General Smith does not wish the agreement to fall into public domain. We view it as a first, limited step towards a normalisation of relations with the BSA."

The terms of the agreement are well known, they pertain to access for the Red Cross and for "human aid convoys" into what was, by now, a ghost town which was being freely looted and pillaged.

Unproven or own freedom of movement was high on the agenda, but there was scant mention of the fact that the rules of the exclave's "guns" was now beginning to subside because most of the men of Srebrenica were dead.

The minutes does, however, record Mladic's chilling, and apparently unchallenged, version of things. He was at pains to point out that Srebrenica was finished in a correct way. He stated: "The population who moved to Potocari were evacuated at their own request and with the full help and co-operation of UN troops." He accepted that "some atrocities had taken place, with casualties on both sides", and that some unfor-

nate incidents had occurred." He had just described to his opposite numbers from the United Nations the most horrific, cold-blooded mass murder of our age.

The UN listened, impotent... com- plicit? There is no suggestion that Smith had been party to the over- running of Srebrenica, but what about his superiors, Janner and Akashi? When Srebrenica was declared a "safe area" in 1993, those who had for 18 months tried to defend the town were obliged to hand over their weapons. In return, they were promised the sur- vival and protection of the UN and its professional soldiers. In how many who are placed in a position of responsibility (not least to the weak and vul- nerable) are Babiak if they fail to fulfil it. Does that premise alone qualify Janner, Akashi and the UN Dutch bat- talion's commitment to be considered to stand trial?

But Srebrenica was no isolated butchery. The massacres were the cul- mination of three years of continuous slaughter, a programme of violence that was exposed to the world. It could, and should have been stopped at any time by the leading and pro- fessing politicians and diplomats with the authority for clinical air strikes which

Scenes of desecrated bodies from two sets of images that shocked the world - a refugee from Srebrenica who had hanged herself with a torn blanket; children poor from a lorry on the way to Mladic's General Mladic hands out food to Bosnian Muslims.

would have stopped the Bosnian Serb army from its persecution of civilians. But it was not stopped; the pogrom was deliberately allowed to go on and on, to the debacle at Srebrenica, and beyond. From the international com- munity, there were consistent lies, duplicity, cowardice, intrigue, appeasement and deals, deals like Janner's treachery at Zvornik, the evidence of which Akashi has devalued over and over again. Janner was once asked at a press conference what he thought of Mladic. His reply: "I think he is a professional soldier trying to defend his people."

The international community wants to forget Srebrenica, and it is reluctant to approach the war crim- inals. It knows all too well that to bring to trial those responsible for the mas- sacres will highlight its own liabilities. Indeed, I learn on my last trip that Karadzic and Mladic have stated privately that they are assembling their defence and are prepared to implicate those who were "accomplices" in their crimes.

The UN, which was supposed to be guarantor of the civilians of Srebrenica, has not seen fit to establish a commission of inquiry to determine whether its personnel should be held accountable for the crimes against humanity and violations of the laws of war. Do Janner and Akashi share some responsibility with Mladic and Karadzic for the carnage that fol- lowed, since they cut deals with the BSA that led to the sacrifice of Srebrenica?

Should the Dutchbat officers and soldiers be brought to trial for deliv- ering the civilians of Srebrenica into the hands of their persecutors when they had the mandate and obligation to protect them?

Why has the French government

not set up a commission of inquiry to determine Janner's share of respon- sibility in the massacre at Srebrenica. Did his negotiations with Karadzic and Mladic give them the green light to annihilate the enclave? Why has the French government prevented as the recent action taken by British troops to arrest indicted Serb war criminals?

Why are the US government, the CIA, the State Department, the Pen- tagon and the National Security Agency signposting important documents and photographs requested under the Freedom of Information Act by human rights organisations, by the Hague War Crimes Tribunal and those seeking to establish that Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) violated the Geneva Convention?

Why did the US government keep secret, for almost a month, crucial satellite photographs of men kneeling in the field near Srebrenica awaiting execution when many lives might have been saved if they had been released immediately?

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright recently went to Bosnia for six hours to demand the arrest of war criminals. This is another example of the US government's double stan- dards. It is up to the US government to set the arrests in motion.

These are all profoundly serious questions that remain unanswered. There will be no lasting peace in Bosnia until the war criminals are apprehended.

The international community from the outset defined the conflict in Bosnia as a "civil war". It prevented the Bosnian government from defend- ing its people through an arms embargo (the only mandate rigorously enforced). It crossed the unambiguous concept of the "safe area" - nothing other than legitimised concentration camps. It negotiated with and legit- imised the position of Slobodan Milosevic, the architect of Greater Serbia. It betrayed the people of Bosnia and delivered them to their executioners.

The many of false promises, hollow threats and betrayed to civilians. Was this the product of a deliberate policy

of appeasement and collaboration". The trial of Karadzic and Mladic will be the real test of British prime minister Tony Blair's commitment to put human rights at the forefront of his foreign policy.

The president of the Hague tribunal, Antonio Cassese, said "That will establish individual responsibility over collective stigmatisation of guilt, otherwise the entire Serbian nation will bear responsibility for the genocide committed against the Muslim people of Bosnia. We must bring to justice the individual perpetrators." Cassese also said "Justice dissipates the call for revenge because when the court meets out to the perpetrator his just deserts, then the victims' calls for retribution are met. Victims are prepared to be reconciled with their erstwhile tormentors because they know that the latter have now paid for their crimes."

Cassese recalled the annihilations and deportations of the Armenians by the Turks in 1915. The same powers, he said, Britain, Russia and France, had called for those responsible to be tried for their crimes, but they never were. The Armenian massacres became, he said, "the forgotten genocide." He went on "The result of the immunity of the leaders and organisers of the Armenian genocide is that it gave a nod and a wink to Adolf Hitler, and others, to pursue the Holocaust some 20 years

later." Yesterday it was the Armenians and the Jews. Today it is the Muslims in Bosnia, and if there is no call to account, then it will become another "forgotten genocide." Who knows who will be next?

There will be no lasting peace with our justice. If American and European leaders turn their backs on the dead and missing of Srebrenica, they will have traded away everything that democratic nations claim they stand for.

During a recent visit to Bosnia I was repeatedly advised that it was not safe for me to visit Srebrenica. "It is too dangerous. There is a security alert at the moment and it is politically unwise." Of course they do not want some one like me who has so often denounced the atrocities committed in Bosnia to attract attention to this issue. But I am not easily dissuaded. So I went.

I arrived in Srebrenica with a Bosnian translator and a driver. Right away I knew we were entering a forbidden city. People were looking out from their windows, shocked to see strangers. There was no question that we all felt apprehensive and threatened. After the takeover the town was occupied by Serb refugees, some forced to do so by their leaders, others because they had no other place to go. But it was obvious that they were as apprehensive as we were. They perceived us as

invaders who wanted to uncover the unspeakable atrocities that had taken place on the soil.

Although Srebrenica is uninhabited again, it feels like a ghost town. But the marks of the mortars and shells are only too real. One can almost feel the presence of those massacred. The stench of sewage is still coming from the filthy brook that runs through the town.

I visited the hospital. It lacks some of the most basic medicines. A nurse from Sarajevo explained to me how difficult it was for them to live in that town in abject poverty (forced upon them by their leaders) and to deal with the "lies" that have been told about Srebrenica. I believe that the genuinely thought she was telling the truth - such is the power of propaganda.

I stopped by the Dutchbat base at Potocari - by the football pitch at Nova Kasaba - and many other places that were scenes of execution.

For two years I have been haunted by the atrocities perpetrated in Srebrenica. How can I forget those who were executed, massacred, tortured, burned alive? If I forget them, I will be completing their extermination.

How can I forget the grief of the women of Srebrenica: those mothers, daughters, wives, sisters and grand mothers who agonise, not knowing if their loved ones are dead or alive? They need to know the truth, even if it is the brutal certainty that their loved ones are indeed dead, so that they can stop clinging to their vain hopes. They need to come to terms with the pain

of reality and be able to mourn them. The women of Srebrenica are convinced that there is a conspiracy on the part of the international community to stall the exhumation and identification process. I believe they are right. In two years, of the 8 000 missing persons, only 800 bodies have been recovered. At that rate it will take 20 years to find the rest.

No, I cannot forget the horrors, the sheer brutality that I witnessed against the Bosnian people. There are images sacred to my memory, those of thousands of women victims of mass rapes and abuses, paediatric wards filled with amputee children whose limbs had been blown off by mortar shells, who underwent operations performed without anaesthesia, sometimes by medical assistants with a hack saw; Sabina, the little girl suffering from leukaemia who died because Unprofor refused to help me evacuate her from Tuzla, although helicopters were often leaving empty from the airport.

I cannot forget the testimonies of unspeakable atrocities that describe the strategy of "ethnic cleansing." I cannot forget the look in the eyes of Hasan, a young Bosnian who worked for Dutchbat - a survivor of Srebrenica who is still desperately searching for his family two years later, despite the fact that his father, mother and brother were among the 239 people

delivered by the Dutch helicopter command detachments in the USA and never seen again.

Throughout the conflict and its aftermath, there are those who have advocated a policy of neutralisation and inaction in Bosnia because, they argue, it keeps the blood off our hands. The blood may not be on our hands, but it is already on our consciences. Justice waits. "The darkest place in Hell is reserved for those who in a period of crisis, claim neutrality." Bosnia has also been an indictment of international law and order.

The real question is how we will live with the blood of Bosnia on our conscience after working so hard to keep it off our hands. The world is a different place because of what has happened in Bosnia. Confidence in some of our most trusted institutions has been shattered. Our hopes for the post-Cold War era have been cast into

doubt. Is this the New World Order? Perhaps the biggest irony of all is that if we fail, the victims are not just the Bosnian people who died from violence and indifference but also ourselves.

The message will not be lost on those who challenge international justice and international order, from Rwanda and East Timor to Guatemala and Tibet. If we let that happen, may God forgive us all.

Responses to these crimes have been slow and ineffectual

'We will never use force to impose our will on the Serbs'

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UNITED NATIONS
United Nations Mission in
Bosnia and Herzegovina



NATIONS UNIES
Mission des Nations Unies
en Bosnie-Herzégovine

27 May 1997

Dear Mr. Nuhanovic,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 March addressed to the SRSG. As I understand, on 10 April you met with the Head of Civil Affairs, John Almstrom, to discuss your personal situation in the matter of missing persons. I would like to reiterate the message imparted to you at that time.

During your meeting you informed Mr. Almstrom that you had appealed to the Ambassador of the Netherlands in Sarajevo for help in obtaining information from the RS Government on the fate of residents of Srebrenica. You had arranged to contact the Ambassador in three months' time to see whether she had made any progress. Mr. Almstrom noted that this was an important initiative and encouraged you to follow up.

Mr. Almstrom also explained to you that the mandate of the UNMIBH mission with respect to missing persons is limited to facilitation and referral rather than being an operational one, and that current information and practical assistance should be sought through the offices of ICRC and OHR. We are aware that you already have contacts there which it is suggested that you maintain in order to follow the most timely and accurate developments on the issue of missing persons, which is of great concern to you.

It is hoped that you will make some advance in the search for information on the fate of your family, and that the tireless efforts you have made in that regard will eventually lead you to a conclusion.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Jones
Senior Officer/SRSG



COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

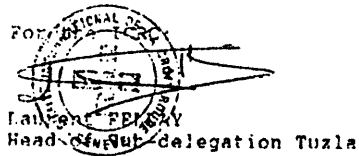
Tuzla, May 23, 1986 .

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the ICRC Tracing Agency received Tracing Requests concerning:

- NUHANOVIC Ibro (father: NUHANOVIC Hasan)
- NUHANOVIC Nusha (father: MEHNAGIC Nezir)
- NUHANOVIC Muhamed (father: NUHANOVIC Ibro)

Up to date the whereabouts of the above mentioned persons remain unknown to the ICRC.



**VISOKI KOMESARIJAT
UJEDINJENIH NARODA
ZA IZBJEGLICE**



**UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR REFUGEES**

**UNHCR SARAJEVO
Office of the Special Envoy
for Operations Related to
Former Yugoslavia**

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Sarajevo
Bosnia & Herzegovina

PERSONAL and CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Hasan Nuhanovic,
Language Assistant,
IPTF Regional HQ,
Tuzla

9 June, 1997

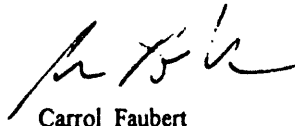
Dear Mr. Nuhanovic,

I wish to refer to your telefax transmission of 21 November 1996 in which you raised certain allegations concerning the behaviour of UNHCR staff members Mr. A. Kazakov and Ms. R. Sam during the Srebrenica crisis. The long delay in sending you this formal reply was rendered necessary by the need for me to consult the Division of Human Resources Management at UNHCR's Headquarters in Geneva regarding the applicable procedure for examining allegations of this nature, and to ascertain facts through administrative documents, statements by the persons concerned and by others who had witnessed the situation as well as records of field reports pertaining to that period.

Having thus carefully examined all the information made available to me, I have to inform you that I have found no grounds that would justify pursuing any disciplinary procedures against either Mr. Kazakov or Ms. Sam. Their conduct during that difficult period fully met the standards of the United Nations and of UNHCR.

I regret to have to add that I have also not found in the various reports available to UNHCR any element that could help you in your efforts to ascertain the fate of members of your family.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Carrol Faubert', written in dark ink.

Carrol Faubert

Ministerie van Defensie

Postbus 20701
2500 ES 's-Gravenhage
Telefoon (070) 3 18 8188
Telex 34576 MVD/GV/NL
Telefax (070) 3 18 7888

Aan:
Mr. Hasan Nuhanovic
Language assistant
Headquarters UNIPTF
Tuzla
Bosnia-Herzegovina

Uw brief	Uw kenmerk	Ons nummer	Datum
27-11-1997		D97002950	7 november 1997

Onderwerp

Dear Mr. Nuhanovic,

Thank you for your fax of September 27, 1997. Progress on the issue of missing persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina has indeed been very disappointing. You may be aware that a delegation of women from Srebrenica paid a visit to the Netherlands in September and testified to the agony this causes the families of those involved.

I can assure you that the Netherlands government is very much aware of the urgent need to determine the fate of missing persons. It remains highly supportive of the efforts of various international organisations in this field and has provided funds to this end. Furthermore, during my visit last month to the Dutch SFOR-troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, I met with representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Committee on Missing Persons (ICMP) at the embassy in Sarajevo to underscore the Netherlands commitment in this regard. They assessed that approximately 19,500 persons are still missing in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Of those, 7,335 are reported missing since the fall of Srebrenica. Unfortunately, they had no new data concerning the list of 239 men drawn up at the UN-compound in Potocari by your father - and others - at the request of major Franken (I informed you about the available data in my letter of 16 January 1996).

In response to your specific request, the Netherlands ambassador in Bosnia and Herzegovina informed me that a call on Ms. Plavsic at this moment is highly unlikely to be successful. The main problem is that the authorities of the Republika Srpska so far have been uncooperative in clarifying the fate of missing persons. Ms. Plavsic is no exception. I sincerely hope that recent developments will contribute to the development of a different attitude in the Republika Srpska so that perhaps at some future date a more successful approach could be made.

I have deemed it more useful at this time to address relevant international organisations. They have far more expertise in this field than the Netherlands Ministry of Defence and are also more experienced in pressuring the Bosnian Serb authorities to release any information on missing persons they might have. I have therefore used the above-mentioned occasion at the Netherlands embassy to deliver an aide-mémoire regarding your case to the representatives of the ICRC and the IMCP (enclosed). I encourage you to stay in touch with these organisations - and any other organisation that may be active in this field. Unfortunately I do not think that the Ministry of Defence can be of further help at this time and I very much regret that I am not able to do more. If you have further questions as to how the Netherlands might assist, I would advise you to contact the embassy in Sarajevo.

Yours sincerely,
and with best regards,



dr. ir. ~~J.J.C.~~ Voorhoeve
Minister of Defence
of the Netherlands