



NEW WALLS...

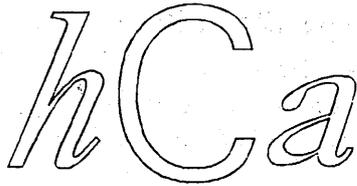
Last month *Moscow News* carried three photographs of the war in Iskhinvali, a city near the Georgian-Ossetian border. The first photograph showed a young boy with a gun guarding a stairway; the second showed an old lady in a lace shawl cradling a gun on her shoulder with one hand and brandishing a pistol in the other. The third showed a man weeping over his dead.

As nationalist, ethnic and racial conflicts become clearer in the territories of what was the Soviet Union, the fragile peace signalled by the Commonwealth is threatened by the struggle for control over the Black Sea fleet. Four months ago, Neal Ascherson asked whether, in the event of such a struggle, the fleet would split into two national wings, one swearing loyalty to Russia and the other to Ukraine. Could this struggle end up in a tragic and horrifying waste of human life, such as we have witnessed in Yugoslavia where a nationalist army is fighting a nationalist guard to determine whether, and what, the new nation states of Serbia and Croatia will be?

It has now been close to six months since the civil war in Yugoslavia began and the European Community has not only failed to curb its terrors but is itself divided on most of the issues. Some commentators argue that either Milosovic, Tudjman and their respective militaries should be given a firm ultimatum to cease their fire and begin political negotiations,

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Bratislava
March 26 - 29

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA

We are pleased to announce the next Assembly of the HCA. Below you will find the program of the Assembly and the proposed schedule. Like our Founding Assembly in October 1990, we hope this Assembly will bring together active citizens from the entire region of the Helsinki process. If you are interested in attending, would like more information, or have ideas and suggestions, please contact the HCA coordinator in your country (see back cover). If there are any questions concerning national committees, please contact the Secretariat in Prague. We encourage the participation of individuals and organizations in the preparation and realization of the Assembly.

Program: The next general Assembly will be titled: "New Walls: Nationalism and Racism." Nationalism and racism are defining the political scene both East and West and have resulted in violence and deaths of new proportions. We would like to devote the Assembly to this theme in order to increase debate and develop new responses to these issues. Although this theme will serve as the backbone of the Assembly, we will also address other issues. For the Opening Plenary, one of the Co-Chairs will open the Assembly with a report on the previous year's activity. We have also invited other people to speak, including President Vaclav Havel, Jan Carnogursky (Prime Minister of Slovakia) and someone from the Slovak HCA. For the Closing Plenary, Mary Robinson, President of Ireland, and Dr.

Ahmet Al-Khatib, leader of the pro-democracy movement in Kuwait have been invited. One of the Co-Chairs, plus Radha Kumar, Director of the HCA Secretariat, will sum-up the work of the Assembly.

The working plenaries will be devoted to discussing the main theme of the Assembly: nationalism and racism. We would like the speakers to represent civic initiatives and groups that have been active in the HCA and have firsthand experience in these issues. In selecting speakers, we will aim for a diversity of perspectives, so as to encourage debate and exchange of views. The evening roundtables have been devoted to special themes which aren't addressed directly in the rest of the Assembly.

We have designed the structure of the Assembly to give less time for plenaries and allow the Assembly to have more of a working character. We will keep the commission structure for the working groups but break them down further, in some cases devoting them to HCA projects. We will also include a special working groups devoted to networking (e.g. trade unions, youth groups, churches, physicians) and regions (e.g. Mediterranean, Britain and Ireland, Balkans, former Soviet Union etc.).

The specific character of the working groups and content of the working plenaries will be formulated at the next meeting of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), January 17-19, 1992 in Bratislava.

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or Western governments should turn their back on Yugoslavia and "leave the Serbs and Croats to decimate each other." For most of us, the reduction of the Yugoslav war to a battle between Serbs and Croats is one of the greatest dangers of all.

Not only Europe and the USSR, but large tracts of the world today have seen the recent emergence of nationalism based on ethnic, racial or religious identity. In India, the last few years have seen the rise of Sikh and Kashmiri nationalism, Hindu chauvinism, intensified struggle for Assamese, Mizo and Nage independence, and an embryo Tamil nationalism, which might lead to a Tamil state comprising parts of India and Sri Lanka. In South Africa, the prolonged and bitter struggle over finally becoming a nation state, with the extension of universal suffrage to "the blacks" who are the majority of the population, is deadlocked over the carving out of constituencies. Meanwhile, as democracy seems finally at hand, the various communities which constituted a non-white bloc (which included many white Catholics, democrats and communists) have fragmented into separate interest groups. The rise of the Inkatha and current debates around it symbolize many of the issues which this year's Assembly will address.

The Inkatha has made a tribal identity the basis for claims to an independent nation. The DeKlerk government is using the new language of "pluralism through separation into nations" which leads to the possibility of South African nation states based on ethnic and perhaps even racial identity. The Enlightenment theories which were dear to so many of the East European democracy movements of the 1980s, and which formed part of the vision of the HCA and a reformed Europe, might end up providing a rationale for white separatism.

One of the dominant themes in the rhetoric of the Gulf War was the civilized, white Christian against the barbaric, black Muslim. We have seen how Jean-Marie Le Pen com-



bined demagogic warnings of an Ottoman revival with racist attacks on the threat from immigrants. Earlier we saw how a German identity could be the ground for attacking Turkish immigrants in the West and Vietnamese immigrants in the East. And in England there have been a series of battles between Islamic fundamentalists and neo-Nazi racists on whether the British state should embody a pluralism based on the right of fundamentalists to rule their own community or uphold the dominant culture of the Church of England.

The same arguments underlie both the new nationalisms and racisms which are engulfing us. Does pluralism mean living separately is the best guarantee for peace, or does it mean living differently to-

gether, having forged a consensus on rights and values? As battles for control over the state turn increasingly towards erecting more and more states, it is time for us to ask what happened to last year's dream of strengthening the rights of citizens through building a community across national boundaries.

Radha Kumar

In January, Radha Kumar became Director of the HCA Secretariat in Prague. She has been actively involved in the women's movement and in campaigns around Bhopal in India. During the 1980's, she formed a Solidarnosc support group in Delhi and participated in various East-West meetings, including the Prague '88 seminar which called for the formation of a Helsinki Citizens' Assembly.

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NATIONALISM and Nostalgia

Smaranda Enache

Since the revolution of December 1989, two political strains have emerged in Romania: the old structures trying to preserve their privileges and those working for a democratic transition. It is not easy to discern which parts of society belong to which group. Even in the army and some parts of the secret service for the National Salvation Front, there are people who support a democratic transition and others who belong to the conservative opposition groups and parties.

In the midst of all this is an aggressive nationalism which is being used by some clearly fascist right-wing groups such as Vatra Romanesca and Big Romania. In the fall, a group of deputies presented a report in the Parliament on two areas of Romania--Harghita and Covasna--which have mainly Hungarian inhabitants. Seven Securitate members were killed there during the revolution but the Parliament has since had no time to investigate the event. Now they have made an enormous report trying to establish the collective culpability of the Hungarian minority. The representatives of the National Salvation Front are even more nationalist and exclusivist than Vatra Romanesca. Unfortunately, some opposition parties, such as the Social Democrats and the National Liberal Party, also use the same nationalist, exclusivist discourse.

Despite this, in October the Civic Alliance succeeded in organising the first meeting of Romanians and Hungarians together in a Transylvanian city (criticised in the Parliamentary report). More than 5,000 people attended, including trade union leaders and Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant priests. We adopted an appeal stating that Hungarians and Romanians want to live in peace which was addressed to the Prime Minister, the Parliament and the President. It was a real achievement for civil society. The idea did not come from a political party but from a small group of people within the Civic Alliance from Sfintu Gheorghe, including Romanians, Hungarians and Gypsies. They had the courage to organise it at a time when some people from the Securitate were interested in provocation.

Tension is growing. People from the army, the Securitate and the old nomenklatura are trying to keep their privileges, using nationalism as an instrument. Now they are very frustrated because all the anti-Hungarian slogans have failed to produce ethnic violence. Nothing has happened because the real problems now are inflation and a lack of food and energy.

Several months ago, at the Congress of the Hungarian Democratic Union, it became clear that Hungarians in Romania are following two political streams: moderate and radical. However the Union doesn't allow different political platforms; all Hungarians have to be together if they are to be "good" Hungarians. Due to the nationalist hysteria in the Parliament, there is a great possibility that the Union will leave the Parliament and those representing

the more radical tendency in the Hungarian political scene will gain more support. After the Congress of the Hungarian Democratic Union, it was clear that radicalism had triumphed and that there are extremist Hungarians, too. A teacher from the Siculi region in Transylvania teamed up with another group during the Congress to call for a referendum on territorial autonomy. They proposed to hold the referendum in the two counties where Hungarians constitute a majority. The leadership of the Union immediately disagreed and several people walked out of the meeting, including the Union's president. He said he would never support such an idea because it would endanger the coexistence of Romanians and Hungarians, particularly in Transylvania.

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Tair
Tairov

The End of an EMPIRE

The disintegration of the USSR, which we have been talking about since the beginning of perestroika, has finally taken place. The emerging nation states proved to be much more viable and stronger than Gorbachev's mythical center. The developments in the USSR following the abortive coup reminded me of a kind of cosmic reaction following the birth of a new galaxy. The Commonwealth of Independent States again seems to be a temporary agreement. It will exist as long as every state is to conduct its own independent foreign and domestic policy.

Today many democrats in Russia are saying that if Gorbachev had not made certain mistakes, the Union could have been held together. They recall Sakharov's early proposal to start with the conclusion of the new Union treaty rejected by Gorbachev. But thanks to the mistakes of Gorbachev, real freedom came to millions of people who were under the domination of Russian imperialism for decades and centuries. We undoubtedly have to pay tribute to the new but fragile civil society for all the democratic changes. These democratic forces united around Yeltsin and were not only able to resist the reactionary coup but were courageous enough to put on the agenda the peaceful disintegration of the largest colonial empire.

Europe had to adjust to two different leaders. Even Gorbachev, who seemed to represent the peak of democracy, could not push this country forward. Somebody like Yeltsin needed to rise up to continue the democratic reforms to their logical end. Although he is not as cozy a partner as Gorby, he did a good job from a historical point of view. We know that Yeltsin is surrounded by very influential nationalist politicians. This may bring a new and unpredictable situation. Before the three Slavic leaders met in Minsk on December 8, chauvinist forces were trying intensively to stir up nationalist feelings of Russians living in non-Russian republics in order to raise territorial claims on a number of republics, including Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Even Gorbachev attempted to raise territorial claims on Kazakhstan as a last resort, as if it would help to consolidate ethnocentric forces and save the declining empire.

We also need to pay tribute to the Ukrainian people who overwhelmingly voted for independence during the referendum. Ultimately it was the Ukrainians who broke the backbone of the colonial communist empire. It was not clear until the last moment what kind of confederation Gorbachev was preparing for his comrade-presidents. Ukrainians finished any illusions about the future of the Union.

One should consider it a miracle that the emergence of the new independent states occurred without continuous bloody wars or any other cataclysms. Could Kazakhs or Uzbeks think of their freedom coming so easily? Before this miracle happened, the empire tried to spill some blood in Baku, Tblisi and Vilnius. This did not help. Besides, Europe would not forgive or forget violence caused by those who pretend to be civilised. The August coup in Moscow also demonstrated that you cannot spill the blood of your own people in the last decade of the 20th century.

Western alarmism about the fate of nuclear weapons is understandable, especially given possible conflicts within the new Commonwealth along the lines of a Yugoslav scenario. We hope that Yeltsin and Kravchuk will learn from the tragedy of the Serbs and Croats. Even if they don't, there will not be any war between former Soviet republics. I have the impression that talks about possible conflicts between independent states are initiated and spread in Russia by the same political circles that are interested in preserving the strong political and military dominance of Russia. Surprisingly among those who speak about possible civil war between former republics you can find right-

*Watch Kiev, look at Alma-Ata,
think of Tashkent and don't
forget Yerevan if you want to
understand what is happening
in the Commonwealth of
Independent States*

wing politicians like Vice-President Ruts koy or very democratic Shevardnadze. I do not think that civil war is a possibility. What may happen, however, are local ethnic conflicts and territorial disputes. But all-out war between the former republics like the one that is taking place between Armenia and Azerbaijan is almost impossible.

I feel very positive that the community of world nations, particularly the EC members, officially recognized the new independent states. I also think that a Western initiative to accept newly born states into the International Monetary Fund would help in the long run, not only economically but also by creating favorable political conditions for the harmonious development of the new Commonwealth.

Nineteen ninety-one marked one of the most outstanding years in human history - the return of the lost members of the family to the homeland. But the basis of this land is a capitalist economy. From the second day of January, we in the former Soviet Union will all live in a new world, not brave but old and sophisticated, hard working and rational. This world of capitalism is totally unknown to us; we will be very vulnerable and sensitive upon entering and getting accustomed to it. Privatization and liberalization of prices are now at the forefront of politics in the new states. Each state is bound to introduce more and more dilemmas for their future survival.

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A major war is taking place in the Balkans. Thousands of people have already died. Thousands more have lost their homes and have had to flee. Cities have been bombed. Churches, historic buildings, hospitals and schools have been destroyed. In the region that used to be Yugoslavia, war is becoming a way of life.

Values have been turned upside down. Criminals are turned into heroes and patriots. Adolescents are taught to be killers.

The causes of this war are varied and complex. They include the disintegration of state structures; the legacy of past wars both national and global; the suppression and manipulation of cultural identities; the break-down of political ideologies; the economic and social hardship associated with the transition to a market economy; and, above all, the pent-up anger generated by years of totalitarian rule. All of these factors are present in other post-communist countries and there are signs of the "Yugoslav virus" elsewhere in Eastern Europe, especially in some of the Soviet republics. And in Western Europe, brutal attacks on asylum-seekers and immigrants suggest that racism, xenophobia and chauvinistic nationalism are not only a post-communist phenomena.

The war in Yugoslavia could be a harbinger of the spread of violence throughout Europe.

The war is teaching us how fragile and dearly bought are peace and civic values.



APPEAL

to stop the War in
YUGOSLAVIA

ASTRIT LEKA, ALASTAIR HULBERT, JIRINA SIKLOVA, VACLAV TROJAN, ANNE KNUDSEN, TONI LIVERSAGE, ERIK SIESBY, KNUT VILBY, HAKAN WIBERG, JEAN LUC BENHAMIAS, BERNARD DREANO, PIERRE BOURDIEU, JEAN PIERRE FAYE, SOLANGE FERNEX, FELIX GUATTARI, ALAIN LIPIETZ, MAURICE NAJMAN, JEAN PIERRE OLIVESI, MGR. JACQUES GAILLOT, MARCEL RIGOUT, ULRICH ALBRECHT, BAERBEL BOHLEY, GERD POPPE, ULRIKE POPPE, DANIEL COHN-BENDIT, ROSHAN DHUNIBOY, DIETER ESCHE, MARIANNE FRISCH, GERD GREUNE, CHRISTINE M. MERKEL, HANS-GEORG RAUCH, JENS REICH, PETER SCHNEIDER, CHRISTIAN SEMLER, DIETER SENGHAAS, JOHANO STRASSER, REINHARD WEISSHUHN, GYORGY KONRAD, FERENC MISZLIVETZ, JULIA SZALAI, ANTONIO PAPISCA, MARIA CUFFARO, CHIARA INGRAO, MAURIZIO MAGGIANI, FAUSTO POCAR, SERGIO PISTONE, CARLO SECCHI, MICHELE SIMONETTI, ENZO PACE, MARCO MASCIA, GUALTIERO HARRISON, RAZARASOA, MIENT JAN FABER, KOEN KOCH, GEZA TESSENYI, GABRIELA ADAMESTEANU, GABRIEL ANDREESCU, CALIN ANASTASIU, PETRE MIHAI BACANU, PETER BANYAI, MARIANA CELAC, DORU COSMA, SMARANDA ENACHE, RADU FILIPESCU, RODICA PALADE, VASILE POPOVICI, SORIN VIERU, ADAM MICHNIK, JOSE PALAU, FRANCISCA SAUQUILLO, KARL BIRNBAUM, JAQUELINE BERENSTEIN-WAVRE, MARGA BUEHRING, JACQUELINE BURNAND, CHRISTINE GOLL, ANDREAS GROSS, WILLIAM JACQUES, WOLFGANG LAUTERBACH, PIERRE-ALAIN TSCHUDI, ROLF ZIMMERMANN, MURAT BELGE, HALIL BERKTAY, NEIL ASCHERSON, ANTHONY BENETT, ERNEST GELLNER, JOYCE GRAY, FRED HALLIDAY, MARY KALDOR, REV. ANDREW MORTON, M. THOMPSON, STUART WEIR, CATHERINE FITZPATRICK, JOHN FEFFER, THOMAS HARRISON, BEVERLY WOODWARD, MARINA PAVLOVA-SILVANSKAJA, NATALIA BELITSER, ADA RIBACHUK, VLADIMIR MELNICHENKO, ROMAN LENCHOWSKI, ELEONORA ISAYEVA, SVETLANA KARPILOVSKAYA, VALENTIN SELIBER, ALEXANDR BURACOVSKI, MARUSA KRESE, SASO GAZDIC, MARKO HREN, JUVAN JANEZ, ADEM DEMACI, IBRAHIM RUGOVA, VETON SURROI, SHKELZEN MALIQI, GAZMED PULA, SONJA LICHT, THE EUROPEAN STUDIES UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION.

There is widespread concern in Europe about what is happening. But there is also silence. Many people feel impotent in the face of the seemingly inexorable slide towards chaos.

We appeal to everyone in Europe to overcome this silence, this reluctance to act. We ask you to raise your voices and do whatever you can to prevent this growing barbarism from engulfing Europe. The war in Yugoslavia has to be stopped! The value of human life has to be reaffirmed!

This cannot be achieved by governments acting alone. It is more and more becoming the responsibility of civil society. Many people in the region do not want this war and understand that they have to undertake their own peace initiatives. Many young men are refusing to serve in the army. Many groups organise demonstrations, round tables and other projects involving different national or religious groups and collect signatures for a referendum against the war. Local authorities are developing peace programmes and sometimes declare themselves zones of peace.

We pledge ourselves to do everything to support these courageous efforts and we appeal to others to join us in a movement of civic resistance all over Europe.

This appeal is part of a series of HCA activities leading up to a Citizens' Peace Conference scheduled for fall 1992. If you would like to sign this appeal or participate in our activities, please contact your National HCA Committee or the Prague Secretariat.

In the last issue of the HCA Newsletter, Tomaz Mastnak argued that the way to stop the war in Yugoslavia is for Serbia to be "pushed back." Mastnak says "there is no symmetry between Croatia and Serbia in this war" and he compares Milosevic to other fascist aggressors like Hitler or Saddam Hussein. He is also extremely critical of the activities of the European Community which he regards as tantamount to support for Serbia. "There is speculation," he writes, "as to how long we will have to wait for Mr. Van den Broek to nominate Milosevic for the Nobel Peace Prize."

Yet since Mastnak wrote his article, EC policy has shifted 180 degrees. The EC is now willing to recognise any republic which declares independence. In practice, this means at least Croatia and Slovenia. Will this stop the war? Or does Mastnak suggest that the EC and the UN go further than sending in a peace keeping force? Is he in favour of a liberation force in order to push Serbia and the Serbs out of Croatia?

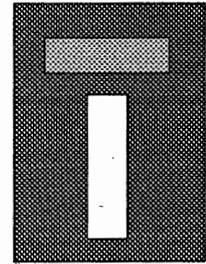
To regard Serbia as the *only* aggressor builds on a silent assumption, namely, that we should recognise the right of Croatia (and other republics) to exist as *ethnic states*. That is to say, Mastnak assumes that it is acceptable to declare the right of self-determination for an ethnic group even if the territory is inhabited by a mixed population. To be sure, it is the Federal Army, backed by Milosevic, that is shelling towns and villages in Croatia, but the *casus belli* was the conflict between Croatia and the Serbian minority. Likewise, Milosevic needs a credible enemy in order to maintain his political position. Tudjman fits the bill.

To argue that the only way to stop the war is to drive Serbia out of Croatia implies that the EC and the international community should not only recognise Croatia and Slovenia, we should send a liberation army. Taking into account the size of the Yugoslav Federal Army, this would have to consist of at least 100,000 soldiers, comparable to the Gulf War! And who would command such an army? The UN, the EC, NATO? Would not such an intervention merely aggravate the war further? So far, the international community has only discussed an intervention to guarantee a ceasefire, i.e. to maintain the status quo. Both Croatia and Serbia claim to be in favour of such an intervention.

The decision to recognise Croatia and Slovenia is increasing the likelihood that the war will spread to Bosnia. Indeed, for Bosnia there was no alternative than to ask for official recognition as well. But this will probably lead to the secession of the Serbian minority and possibly of the Croatian minority. This means war, I fear. So if the first priority is to stop the war, then politically speaking the international community should have done nothing more than attend the disintegration process with diplomatic resources and confirm the end results, the post-war status quo.

A DEAD END STREET

M.J. Faber responds to Tomaz Mastnak



The EC has certainly made mistakes but not the ones which Mastnak outlined. Initially, the EC stepped into the process with a well-defined goal: Yugoslavia must continue to be a state. This goal, unintended perhaps, played right into the hands of Milosevic and the Federal Army. Moreover, the EC came much too late with its diplomatic intervention.

It had been clear for years that Yugoslavia was on its way to disintegration. Still, the federal government under Prime Minister Markovic was able to convince the six republics as late as 1989 to work together toward economic recovery. Inflation declined in one year (1989-1990) from 2,000 to 20%, and this seemed to lay the basis for some kind of "mini-EC" in Yugoslavia, a loose union of sovereign republics. At that time, the EC should have presented new and far reaching association arrangements to Yugoslavia. It also should have made separate agreements with the republics and the minorities within the different republics.

The basic philosophy of these arrangements should have been the idea that a tendency to integrate on the basis of smaller units--regions, provinces, states--is pervading Europe. A Yugoslavia that wants to

be a member of the EC eventually will have to follow this trend!

But just like in the case of the Soviet Union, the EC realised too late that a more intensified and differentiated policy was needed to let the disintegration process develop peacefully. Although some EC members and almost all EC members--Italy, Germany and Austria--anticipated the approaching independence of Croatia and Slovenia (while mostly ignoring the other republics), the EC gambled on the preservation of the union. There was no coherent policy. The EC only woke up when Slovenia implemented its declaration of independence (in June) with the "Slovenization" of its border patrol, which started the war. The toil and moil of the EC-troika that followed has been all over the media. But still, even though the EC was late and it took too long before it distanced itself from its old federalist ideas about Yugoslavia, could and should it really have done a whole lot more than what it already did?!

In December '91, under German pressure, the EC took a bold new step, announcing that a declaration of independence from any republic in principle would get the blessing of the EC. Instead of trying to hold Yugoslavia together, the EC is now stimulating the break-up of Yugoslavia. A perfect example of inconsistency.

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The Caravan Citizens for Peace



From September 25-29, 1991, the HCA Peace Caravan, called "Citizens for Peace," travelled through the republics of Yugoslavia. Over 400 participants from all over Europe, both East and West, went from Trieste to Rejeka, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Subotica, Novi Sad, Belgrade, and Sarajevo. They met with local peace groups as well as parliaments and political leaders. The Caravan was organized by HCA activists in Italy and Yugoslavia together with the Prague Secretariat. Local groups in Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina, Serbia, Macedonia, and Bosnia Herzegovina organized the program at each stop. Below are excerpts from some of the reports and speeches given during the Caravan.

"On behalf of all the people of Slovenia to whom peace is the highest value, I cordially greet and welcome the participants of the international Peace Caravan. More than 40 different organizations, movements, associations and unions have joined the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly to stop the war in Yugoslavia. I am convinced that we are also supported by all those who for months have followed radio and television reports from morning till night, hoping to hear some cheering news about the ceasefire in Croatia. I welcome the caravan of peace, representing non-violent solutions to conflicts. Instead of the dreadfulness of war, the caravan offers other possibilities. Instead of blood, death and ruins, it puts forward peace, tolerance, respect for human dignity, and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms."
Dr. Lubo Bavkon, Slovenian Committee for Human Rights, Address to the Peace Meeting in Ljubljana, September 25, 1991.

"Last Sunday, 10,000 people formed a human chain in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, linking a mosque, an Orthodox church and a Catholic church. It was the culmination of the Citizens' Assembly "peace caravan" - a convoy of some 400 peace activists, trade unionists, feminists, clerics and politicians from all over Europe and North America, which travelled throughout Europe for several days. The idea was to show the citizens of Yugoslavia that people from all over Europe care about peace and want to stop the war. No one pretends that such initiatives can, by themselves, solve Yugoslavia's deep-rooted problems. But neither should they be belittled. The real achievement of the caravan may be to have broadened the political space for an autonomous peace movement in Yugoslavia."
"People Power in Yugoslavia?" New Statesman and Society, October 1991.

*The peace caravan finished in Sarajevo. Despite, or maybe because of the tension which reigns in Sarajevo, it was here that the caravan had the greatest success. A series of meetings with peace movements took place in the peace centre, which used to be the Party headquarters. We learned here that, in some Serbian towns, more than 50% of young people had refused their mobilization. Groups of mothers had tried to organise themselves and march to Belgrade to meet the Minister of Defence, but were arrested. The President of Bosnia-Herzegovina told a delegation of the caravan that "this republic is the most militarised in Europe... Bosnia-Herzegovina is a miniature Yugoslavia, with Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats and Moslems" (recognised as a nationality in Bosnia). "Irresponsible persons," the President added, "are provoking conflicts and plotting to divide up Bosnia... Bosnia demands to be demilitarised. It feels occupied." In Bosnia, all three ethnic groups share power. The opposition is made up of interethnic-multinational parties. They say no to the break-up of Bosnia because they feel the ethnic mix is impossible to unravel." **Gilles Roman**, French HCA*

*"The 40-person German delegation, mostly organized by the Committee for Basic Rights and Democracy, Life Without Arms, and Women for Peace, gained many new insights into the complex conflict in Yugoslavia. We discovered that there are many people from all sectors of society and all nationalities that do not accept the militaristic and nationalistic orientation of their societies. Many young men, also in Serbia, have deserted and refuse to go to the army. The participants spoke with thousands of people in the republics, held gatherings and seminars, and spoke with high-ranking members of parliaments and government. The main message of the caravan was "cooperation instead of war." The caravan wanted to provide courage to every person in Yugoslavia who has spoken out against the war and to show these people that they can count on international support." **Klaus Vack**, Committee for Basic Rights and Democracy, Frankfurt.*

*"I feel that the European Community could and should do something to ensure the continuation of initiatives like the "peace caravan" organized by a "people's Europe" since such initiatives can play an important role in spheres where governments cannot intervene so easily. For example, why not broadcast European radio and television to Yugoslavia? Why not invite European conscientious objectors to join a "civilian peace corps" in Yugoslavia which could help re-establish dialogue and networks of solidarity? Why not invite representatives of the different Yugoslav peoples to try to find positive ways of solving ethnic conflicts in Europe? Since the "European peace caravan" has demonstrated how non-governmental organizations can be effective in working for peace, why not support or even finance similar organizations?" **Alexander Langer**, presentation to the European Parliament, October 7, 1991.*

Last summer, the HCA initiated a campaign against the war in Yugoslavia with the belief that we could make a significant contribution to reconciliation efforts, protection of minorities and the democratic process. Our aim is to work with civil society and anti-war forces to exert democratic control over leaders. While the HCA does not take a position on the future of Yugoslavia, we believe that cooperation and dialogue are essential to resolving conflicts of this kind.

HCA actions in Yugoslavia did not cease following the successful Peace Caravan we organised in September. Many European participants are organising meetings and projects (such as the German HCA's conference on Yugoslavia and Europe), and sending letters in support of peace campaigns within Yugoslavia. Clearly the HCA Peace Caravan not only helped citizens to better understand the situation in Yugoslavia, it also inspired them to action.

One of the main ideas resulting from the Caravan was to organise a Citizens' Peace Conference for the fall of '92. We have proposed a series of preparatory activities: fact-finding missions to meet with local grassroots people and representatives of municipalities, and expert meetings on different topics, such as the problems of minorities. We hope to combine these expert meetings with other events, such as the Minority Gathering which the HCA and Forum for Ethnic Relations is planning for the spring to bring together minorities and minority scholars. There are also several conferences planned in Budapest, Belgrade and Rome on the topics of nation states, nationalism and minorities which will serve as a theoretical background to the Citizens' Conference. Lastly, we believe that our Bratislava Assembly, devoted to nationalism and racism, will serve as a valuable point of departure for our future work on this project, as well as for issues related to the former Soviet Union.

The HCA has also issued an appeal to the European public calling for an end to the war in Yugoslavia (See page 6). We hope the signatories of the appeal will help us with the

hCa and the **WAR** in *Yugoslavia*



preparation of the Citizens' Peace Conference and our other activities.

One such activity is our project on "peace zones" which aims to twin cities from different republics in Yugoslavia with cities abroad. Already the city of Subotica has established relations with the region of Perugia, and other cities have decided to take part. At the Bratislava Assembly we will have a special workshop devoted to the "peace zones" project.

The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly has also established, with the Forum for Ethnic Relations and the Open University of Subotica, the European Civic Centre for Conflict Resolution (ECCCR) which we hope to use in preparation of the Citizens' Peace Conference. The Centre consists of four units: research of ethnic and other conflicts, education in non-violent conflict resolution, information

and documentation and, finally, resolution of ethnic and other-civic conflicts. Several research projects have already started and the first courses in conflict resolution will be organised in the spring. We will work with the HCA in Romania to start our first conflict resolution project in Transylvania this year.

Finally, *Yugofax*, an information bulletin published by the HCA and War Report in London, began in September and has become an important source of information. We started this publication to provide an alternative source of information; at that time we could not know that it might become a forum for authors from all over the country and a valuable source, even for major newspapers and news agencies.

Sonja Licht, HCA co-chair

Municipalities Convene in Belgrade

Dion van den Berg

Thirty-five representatives from all the Yugoslav republics, as well as from Central and Western Europe, met in Budapest at the end of November for the International Municipal Peace Conference on Yugoslavia. The conference was a joint initiative of the cities, Zaanstad (Netherlands), Pula (Croatia), and Budapest (Hungary). It was not an easy conference. In one particularly horrifying moment, representatives from Zagreb applauded when a Serb talked about the genocide of 700,000 Serbs by the Croat Ustasha during the Second World War. A Belgrade representative then explained that most federal army officers were Croats who were fighting their own country.

At the end of the two day conference, a declaration was issued calling for UN peace-keeping forces to be sent to Yugoslavia. The main part of the declaration focused on municipal activities. Municipalities were urged to look after their minorities, aid refugees and develop a program for peace. When the war ends, the municipalities should cooperate in the reconstruction effort. International city twinning agreements were also encouraged. The conference showed that some Yugoslav cities are committed to peace. Some have decided to declare themselves "zones of peace." The conference is likely to give a certain boost to cooperative peace initiatives between citizens and local governments. The delegates to the conference have returned home with a text that clearly calls for more involvement. A second conference will probably take place in Sarajevo this year.

Democratic Charta

The idea of a Democratic Charta stems from George Konrad. In the summer of 1991, the idea was promoted by Adam Michnik. Both declared that the citizens of East European countries should formulate democratic principles to which every person can agree. Konrad suggested that this Charta not be built "from above" but "from below." This means that each group, nationality etc. should formulate their own democratic principles and have them signed by sponsors. The various Chartas could then be brought together into a larger Charta to encompass the entire region. The foundation of this idea comes from Konrad and Michnik's belief that similar anti-democratic tendencies have arisen in the former communist countries. In October 1991, a liberal group of intellectuals formulated the following version of the "Democratic Charta '91." The text was signed by approximately 3,000 Hungarian citizens. When former Prime Minister Jozsef Antall fired the President of the Hungarian National Bank, Gyorgy Suranyi, (with the explanation that Suranyi had not been loyal to the Cabinet because he signed the "oppositional" Charta) several Hungarians became convinced that it was finally time to clarify the boundaries of democracy. Today one can read 7,000 signatories beneath the Charta. In December the signatories elected their speakers: Peter Gyorgy, Tel: 361/1566-581; Mihaly Kornis, Tel: 361/1380-693; Zoltan Hajto, Tel: 361/182-1064.

We, as the signatories of this Charta, Hungarian Democrats with no respective party affiliation, came to the conclusion that the democratic transition is stalled in our country.

A lot of people have turned away from politics not only because of their worsening living standard but because of their conflicting images of democracy.

We know that this historic period in our country, like every significant transition, has undeniable advantages and deficiencies.

We would like to protect the positive results and because of this, we consider it necessary to describe the Republic of Hungary that we find desirable:

1. There will be democracy if we respect the legal system and the democratic institutions of the Republic of Hungary in accordance with the idea of a legal state.

2. There will be democracy if citizens do not have to fear the current powerholders, because the autonomy of the private sphere will be defended by law from the overpowering state.

3. There will be democracy if the state withdraws from the sphere of the economy without delay; and there will be democracy if the pace of privatisation accelerates and if the companies and banks owned by the state do not become the "fidei - commissum" of the current government, meaning that their leaders will not be appointed according to the political intentions of the powerful governing parties, but according to their high level of expertise.

4. There will be democracy if new businesses can implement their corporate strategies on the basis of neutral and supportive legal measures, and if new entrepreneurs can launch their projects irrespective of the opinions of state officials and other politicians.

5. There will be democracy if the state provides each and every citizen of the country with basic social care.

6. There will be democracy if trade unions of employees represent and protect their own interests, independent from the intentions of the state and employers, and if there are legal guarantees which defend trade unionists from all kinds of distortions.

7. There will be democracy if the current governing political forces do not intervene in the activity of the independent judicial power and if the state, with reference to the intention of social reconciliation, refuses the idea of introducing arbitrary and exceptional legal acts, and if there is no political distortion taking place in the Republic of Hungary.

8. There will be democracy if the current governing majority acknowledges that its legitimate legislative and executive power is limited by the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary which is guarded by an independent Constitutional Court.

9. There will be democracy if the local governments elected by the people are not regulated by the authority of the central power and if they do not try to prevent their electors from controlling their activity and surveying their administration.

10. There will be democracy if every citizen of the Republic of Hungary can consider him/herself as a member of the Hungarian nation, according to his/her own choice.

11. There will be democracy if the legitimate legislative and executive powers do not confuse the ideas of nation and state and, besides being aware of its responsibility for the members of the nation living outside Hungary, always respect the fact that they are the citizens of another state. There will be democracy if the ruling power considers East-Central Europe as a region in which all kinds of changes concerning all the nations living here can happen only on the terms of international agreements, the common will and peaceful consensus of nations.

12. There will be democracy if the national minorities of Hungary are entitled to keep and protect their identity and if the state and the current majority support this intention.

13. There will be democracy if the state manifests neutral tolerance towards the convictions and world view of each citizen as long as these views do not threaten other people.

14. There will be democracy if the current legitimate power does not try, either implicitly or explicitly, to have any kind of ideology accepted as a state religion or state ideology and if the educational institutions of the state do not force any kind of obligatory world view on students and if the current power supports the pluralism of educational methods with benevolence.

15. There will be democracy if the current government warrants the freedom of science and culture and does not differ with the actors of these spheres with references to political loyalty, world view or authoritarian manners. There will be democracy if the independent bodies of experts are competent in appointing the leaders of state owned cultural institutes and in supporting culture and science.

16. There will be democracy if the public radio and television become independent from the government, parties and local governments.

17. There will be democracy if the liberty of the press is not limited by any kind of state monopoly or by the financial predominance of banks dependent on the state or by the terrorizing of journalists and if the current power provides all of the legal press organs with the same information.

Since even the best law or the best institution cannot protect freedom if citizens themselves do not intend to protect the law and citizens' freedom with a strong and active will:

We, the signatories of the Democratic Charta raise our voices against the phenomena which endangers constitutional democracy and claim that intolerant, discriminative, authoritarian intentions of power can not destroy the authority of the constitution of the Republic of Hungarians, which guarantees the freedom of all citizens.

Those who agree with this Charta, express this agreement by publicly signing this Charta.

Martin
M.
Simecka

The Slovak SURVEY

Today Czechoslovakia is a federation of two republics, the Czech and the Slovak.

Both republics have their own parliaments and governments. The federation, as a third entity, also has a directly elected parliament and government which represents Czechoslovakia abroad. This current model could have been suitable (the federal parliament is bi-cameral and enables the weaker Slovak part to prevent the taking of decisions against its interests) but it was thought up in 1968 as a construction of an ideal situation, and envisaged the natural authority of the federal institutions. These federal bodies were supposed to be a continuation of previous ones, while new republican institutions were supposed to be created alongside them. However, over the last 20 years these republican institutions never acquired real authority, mainly because power only came from the Communist Party and not from state institutions.

The current dispute basically comes down to the demand of nationally-inspired Slovak parties that the state be reorganised to give the republics the central role in decision making. The main danger of such proposals is that they envisage the dissolution of the state and its subsequent re-formation. There are sufficient reasons to fear that the interruption of the continuity of the state would lead to a crisis, the result of which would be the formation of an independent Slovakia. That is to say, many Slovak demands would be posed in a way that would be unacceptable to the Czech side.

The Communist regime after 1948 was as bad for Slovaks as it was for Czechs. However, the regime operated rather differently in the two parts of the state. While in the Czech republic it persecuted the middle classes and the intelligentsia, in Slo-

vakia the regime tried to destroy the Church and traditional Catholicism as pillars of social identity. Over the last 40 years, several generations were largely secularised but without acquiring the liberal democratic values of Western Europe. For strategic reasons, Slovakia was heavily industrialised; the economy, based on heavy industry, had its resources and primary production in the East. It was this, among other things, which brought rapid growth to the Slovak standard of living. This experience with communism is one of the reasons why the contemporary Slovak political scene is oriented more to the left than in the Czech lands.

The reasons for the rapid growth of nationalism in Slovakia after November 1989 are similar to those in other parts of Eastern Europe. The end of a firm system of values based on collectivism caused a crisis in individual responsibility. People have now begun to look for an alternative model of collective thinking.

However Slovak nationalism has its own specific roots and characteristics. Slovak history is often seen to be the history of a nation's struggle for survival. Slovakia was part of Hungary for almost 1,000 years. In the 19th century, when the nations of Austria-Hungary rallied for their national rights, Slovak intellectuals led a struggle for the recognition of the Slovak nation, its language and culture. Czech educators and nation-builders strongly supported them in this struggle. After the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, Slovakia became more and more aware of its weak position in relationship to Prague as it began building modern institutions of education and culture. It was during this period that Slovak politicians began to demand autonomy. Czech antipathy and misunderstanding of these demands introduced a neurosis on the political scene and influenced, to

certain extent, the tragic division of Czechoslovakia in 1939 when Slovakia, following Hitler's will, became an independent state under a fascist regime. Slovak politicians didn't find enough strength to reject German domination, though at the same time some of them were satisfied with the Czechs. While political parties and their representatives define themselves as nationalist against the Czechs, the majority of the Slovak population has very good relations with Czechs, just as it was at the time of the formation of the Slovak state in 1939.

The relationship between Czechs and Slovaks is markedly different from the historical and economic claims for independence argued by the Slovenes and the Croats. For them Serbia is a neighbour burdened with communism and intolerance making cooperation clearly futile. The Slovaks do not even have the same reasons as the Baltic republics who see their independence as a natural return to freedom deprived from them by the Soviet Union.

Paradoxically, nationalism in Slovakia is not very popular. People are somewhat ashamed of it, especially when it is directed toward the Czechs. According to public opinion polls, barely 20% of Slovaks support the division of Czechoslovakia. The majority supports a federation. Part of the Slovak population even supports a unitary state with one government while another part is for a confederation. Politicians and those that are striving for an independent Slovakia know this. They believe that nationalism should ripen and distrust should grow. These are the dangers of the future. The growth of aggression is supported by several papers with a nationalist orientation which are looking for an enemy for the Slovak people. A good measure of intolerance in the society is anti-Semitism which unfortunately is strong now and often found in the nationalist publications. However, politicians and their supporters are rarely anti-Semitic and insist that it is a marginal and atypical phenomenon for the society and the Slovak people.

The media and big periodicals, TV and radio in Slovakia mainly comment on the policy of the federal government in an exclusively critical and suspicious way. In two years they have managed to develop the feeling that the federal government is an alien object which is harming Slovakia. The existence of the federal TV and radio is in question; it is possible that they will cease to exist which would only widen the gap between Czechs and Slovaks. This gap has also been widened by the political orientations in Slovakia which, including the Christian Democrats, are more oriented towards the left and have a tendency to hinder the continuation of reforms. It seems that Czechoslovakia will continue to exist not because of the idea of a joint state, the historical basis or a joint sympathy but only because of the fear of the impact that independence could have on Slovakia.

Martin M. Simecka is a writer and editor of Archa Publishing House in Bratislava.

Communism = Fascism?

Jan Kavan

In December, democracy in Czechoslovakia took one step further in an unknown direction with the Federal Parliament's revision of article 260 of the Penal Code. The revised article equates communism with fascism and all movements that suppress the "rights and freedoms of citizens, or promote national, racial, class, or religious hatred." To "support or to promote" communism can be punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to five years.

Some communists have reminded us of some really unpleasant policies carried out in the name of Christianity. No law, let alone a penal code, should be used as an ideological or political weapon. The chairman of the Supreme Court, Otakar Motejl, pointed out that the new law would not be applicable retroactively and thus the millions to whom it may otherwise apply need not expect the early morning knock on the door. He also argued that the term "communist" in the name of the party would not be sufficient to ban the party and arrest its members, for it would still be necessary to prove that it aims to suppress the rights and freedoms of citizens.

Other lawyers I spoke to were less sure. They pointed out that the absence of a clear definition of "communism" may lead to differing interpretations of the law. Many lawyers have argued that the law is primarily symbolic in value because its practical implementation would be very difficult. However, it is clear that all those who are opposed to the current version of 260 are perceived to be "soft" on communists.

Our communist colleagues in Parliament felt like second-class citizens for a while and expressed that by wearing red Stars of David on their lapels which read "I am a Communist"; two even went on hunger strike for roughly a week. Whether such gestures are appropriate or not is a matter for debate, which in the Parliament is very passionate. Suffice it to say, the passing of 260 did not occur on a day when democracy, tolerance, and the provisions of our Bill of Human Rights guided everybody's thoughts and votes.



Mient Jan Faber -- continued from page 7

A border war is being fought in former Yugoslavia. Serbia is trying to control those parts of Croatia and Bosnia where the majority of the people are of Serbian descent. I suspect that the international community, after a peace-keeping effort of the UN, will accept some kind of status for these Serbian areas in Croatia and elsewhere, in reality bringing them under the control of Belgrade (the same thing happened in the border war between India and China). The independence of Croatia and Slovenia will be recognised (and maybe the same thing will happen for Macedonia, Montenegro and whatever will be left of Bosnia). The rest - named Serbia or Yugoslavia - will then consist mainly of Serbs, Montenegrans, Albanians, Hungarians and Macedonians. What else to do with a few million Macedonians, taking into account the geographic position of their republic (or will the call for a Greater Macedonia become stronger and stronger and drag Greece and Bulgaria into yet another civil war)? The bitterness

Borders can be necessary, even new ones, but they must be stripped of their separating characteristics.

and hate between Serbs and Croats will give rise to many limited conflicts for years to come. But Europe will once again learn to live with that, just as it learned to live with the Basques and Northern Ireland. Forces inside and outside Yugoslavia, including the EC, have driven the process in this direction. Let's be frank. We are still on a dead end street, and the wall, which will probably look like I have just described it, is in sight.

Against this background, the peace movement in general, and the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly in particular, have determined their place and role in this conflict. We chose to hold on to our basic values, regardless of the battling parties. However gloomy the current developments are, only a disposition towards reconciliation, tolerance, peace and justice can break the future open. We must provide support and solidarity wherever this disposition can be found in Yugoslavia. The wall now being built between the Serbs and Croats, and many other people in Yugoslavia, will have to be broken down. The HCA Peace Caravan, which travelled through Yugoslavia in September, was our first-large scale campaign toward this goal. Local groups, churches, minorities, authorities, and 'random' people were encouraged everywhere to keep working for peace. People bonded, actual help was given, and plans for further cooperation were developed. In a resolution about Yugoslavia, the European Parliament supported the Peace Caravan. The EC, however, ignored the caravan,

and although the Dutch Defense Minister Ter Beek supported the effort in public, he did not deliver his promised material help. It is no surprise that many people in Yugoslavia--and not only there--feel betrayed by both their own and foreign politicians.

The next big HCA activity will be a "Citizens' Peace Conference" to make up for the failure of the political peace conference in the Hague/Brussels. Many places in the Balkan area will host round table meetings, to which all citizens will be invited who are willing to support reconciliation and peace in their area. They will discuss proposals about minority rights, freedom of speech, interreligious tolerance, reconciliation and other matters. In particular, they will also discuss their ties with Europe. Representatives of the local round table meetings will then be invited to an all-Balkan Citizens Peace Conference, where a "Peace Program" will be drawn up. Participation from the rest of Europe is welcome and necessary during the process leading up to this big conference.

Are we trying to re-establish Yugoslavia in this way? No, we are not! What we are trying to do is bring and keep people together. Just like we did when Europe was still separated by the Iron Curtain. Borders can be necessary, even new ones, but they must be stripped of their separating characteristics. That is the intention of the HCA. No more, no less.

Smaranda Enache -- continued from page 5

Some members of Vatra Romanesca then protested, saying the Union supported a declaration of autonomy even though the it criticised the idea of a referendum and reiterated its respect for the integrity of Romania. The Union supports local autonomy for everyone and decentralization of administration, but not on an ethnic basis. The Hungarian Democratic Union is an ethnic party which wants to preserve the unity of all Hungarians and to distance themselves from the extremists. Even though there was no document requesting local autonomy, it was a good enough occasion for nationalist groups in Romania to start a campaign against the Hungarian minority.

There are some newspapers in Romania that use a neo-fascist ideology and argue that Hungarians should go back to Asia, that they are barbarians. This kind of declaration says that Romania is for Romanians. These newspapers have a circulation of more than 200,000 per week. Moreover, there is a growing nostalgia for Ceacescu's dictatorship; many are reconsidering Ceacescu as a good patriot and someone who succeeded in preserving the integrity of Romania. These slogans can also be found in the Parliament. Some MP's have called for the closing of the Romanian borders and for the jailing of Hungarian leaders and Romanian "traitors" who are selling Transylvania to the Hungarians. Vatra Romanesca even declared that the real patriots are the Securitate members who were jailed for the genocide in Timisoara.

In December the new constitution was adopted by a referendum. But in reality only a very delicate majority supported it; nearly half either did not vote or voted against it. The constitution has no clear separation of power:

continued on page 19

PROJECTS and ACTIVITIES

Converting Europe

Marlo Planta

Post-Cold War Europe needs to reduce not only its armed forces and weapons, but also its capability to produce them. In order to achieve a comprehensive demilitarization of the economy and society, a strategy for converting military firms and bases to civilian work is required.

On December 2-4, 1991 the HCA hosted, together with the Institute for East-West Security Studies at Stirin near Prague, a seminar on conversion, bringing together experts, policy makers, trade unionists, representatives of firms and institutions such as the EEC, World Bank and the North Atlantic Assembly.

The conversion challenge, as demonstrated by the papers presented at the meeting, is a serious one. In the former Soviet Union a major part of the industry is searching for new civilian markets. In Eastern Europe the problem is particularly serious in Slovakia and other regions where military production is concentrated. In Western Europe a half million military-related jobs could be lost by 1995, according to SIPRI. Britain, France and Germany will be especially hard hit. In the US massive layoffs are spreading, while the economy is deep in recession. Up until now, conversion, in the sense of converting factories from military to civilian production, has had very little success. One "successful" conversion was described by the director of a large American defence corporation: it involved some 800 layoffs.

The problem is especially serious in the former communist countries.

First of all, these countries have not experienced unemployment before; the rapid rise in unemployment in defence dependent regions gives rise to nationalism and other exclusivist ideologies. Secondly, a kind of privatization of the arms industry and armed forces is taking place in which military institutions compensate for their losses by selling services and armaments both domestically, sometimes on the black market, and abroad. This could lead to a loss of democratic control over the defence sector and contribute to the growth of paramilitaries, terrorist groups, autonomous armies etc.

The proposals discussed at the seminar included the need for alternative products and new design of technologies, new forms of financing, and imaginative initiatives at the local level. The possibility of establishing an international agency was also discussed, perhaps linked to the CSCE. Particularly important are environmental policies for cleaning up military bases and enterprises. Environmental projects could utilize some of the same skills as defence production.

It was agreed that it is important to move beyond the conversion campaigns that have emerged from the peace movement and trade unions in recent years. There is a need to push local governments to action. National policies remain important, and conversion legislation is needed, but new specific regional policies should be developed, involving local groups and institutions such as enterprises and environmental campaigns. International bodies such as the EEC and CSCE must also play a new role. The HCA will develop its programme on conversion along these lines. New initiatives in the future will focus on the hardest hit areas of Europe, East and West.

Institutions and Integration

Julianna
Matral

Europe is in transition today. But will this transition be brief or a long, extended process? Will intergovernmental institutions cooperate or compete? What role will civil society play? These were the main questions of a recent seminar on November 16-17 in Turin, Italy entitled "Europe and the European Community." The seminar, organised by the HCA's commission on Civil Society and European Integration together with the European Federalist Movement, dealt primarily with the European Community and questions of security, nation states and human rights.

When analyzing the different European institutions, the participants agreed that competition predominates. NATO, the WEU and the CSCE are competing for the leading security role in Europe, each with different national interests behind them. The Yugoslav crisis has demonstrated that the EC is not above these national interests either.

The participants agreed that the deepening and broadening of the EC must be discussed together. Many questioned, however, whether the EC can develop in both directions at the same time. They also expressed concern that the level of democracy within individual countries will not be preserved on the supranational scale. For example, at what level will social policy be decided? Questions like this must be answered in order to decide civil society's role in the process. The participants agreed that a new European architecture would most likely consist of concentric circles.

A Danish participant used the term "Europe of different speeds": some countries accept political and

military union now, while others do not. A Scottish participant argued for regional cooperation, which gives space for national and regional identity within the integration process. She also made a distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism. Civic nationalism, as a cultural identity with full respect for the rights of citizens and minorities, can be associated with integration, she said. Finally, a campaign to democratise the EC was proposed.

There was also a long discussion on the CSCE. It remains to be seen whether the CSCE will be a more effective institution in the process of European integration. The participants agreed that NGOs could play an important role in supporting the human rights aspect of the CSCE. It was suggested that the HCA try to get official NGO status with the CSCE to stress the importance of working with other civic processes in the Helsinki region.

Concerning integration in general, participants suggested the HCA generate a discussion on civil society's understanding of European integration. Is the West European model for integration compatible with East European development? Is it possible to formulate one model for integration, or is it more complex? Perhaps the attitude of "community building" (Karl Birnbaum), is a better approach.

The framework of the seminar illuminated new aspects of European integration and the role of civil society, forming a good basis for the commission's workshop at the Bratislava Assembly in March.

Reproductive RIGHTS



Stephanie
Baker

Domestic policy changes in East and Central Europe are noticeably affecting women, particularly in the realm of reproductive rights and healthcare. Across the region, new and independent women's groups are sprouting up throughout the region to meet these challenges and try to influence policy decisions.

Their work and the challenges they face was the subject of the Women's Commission workshop in Liblice, Czechoslovakia over the weekend of 6-9th December. Forty women from all over East and Central Europe, including Albania, as well as participants from Western Europe and the United States shared information and experiences concerning women's healthcare and reproductive rights in their countries.

The country reports showed that, although the situation varies from country to country, women in all of East and Central Europe are confronted with new challenges to reproductive rights and healthcare. Many women mentioned environmental degradation as a serious problem, linked to high rates of cancer and infertility among women. Growing anti-abortion campaigns, combined with the rising costs of healthcare, have presented a new and dangerous situation for women in this part of the

world. Moreover, in order to restrict abortions, state policy has opted to increase the cost of an abortion in countries where it is politically unfeasible to ban them all-together.

With the creation of new nation states throughout East and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, state policy often prefers higher birth rates as a way to "strengthen the nation," as reports from Serbia explained. Frances Kissling from the US-based Catholics for a Free Choice pointed out that a common tendency in this region is the inclusion of anti-choice clauses in the formation of new constitutions, usually couched in terms of the human rights of the fetus. Discussions of this kind have already occurred in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Slovenia.

However the fear is that social policy decisions, like abortion rights and healthcare, will be decided with haste due to the myriad of other problems which are consuming parliaments. When the storm is over, women may be left with a set of policies which do nothing to improve their lives and, if anything, make things worse. Yet statistics show that restricting a woman's right to an abortion does nothing to limit the actual rate of abortions. One participant pointed out that in Romania where Ceacescu banned abortion, 86% of female mortality was due to illegal abortions; this figure dropped dramatically after abortion was legalized following Romania's revolution.

Many women at the meeting expressed the need for more information on different methods of contraception, healthcare, sex education, and arguments to combat anti-choice campaigns. Women broke down into working groups and developed a leaflet on abortion rights and guidelines for developing sex education material. We will publish a booklet gathering all the country reports and discussions from the meeting as a way of providing both practical information and organizational ideas for women's groups working on these issues. The HCA will follow-up this project by working with women's groups in East and Central Europe to develop and produce material to be part of an information campaign.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe has recommended that the HCA be granted consultative status, stating:

"The HCA is a particularly representative and active organization in the field of its competence. The HCA has already established close working relations with the Council of Europe. It appears from our previous contacts and the examination of the file that the HCA could contribute in a useful way to the work of the Council of Europe."

This recommendation will be finalized by May 1992 if no objection is raised by either of the two Council of Europe organs.



NO. 3 UPDATES

Canada

Metta Spencer

According to a spokesperson at the Canadian Ministry of External Affairs, "the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is the centrepiece of Canada's European security policy." The Canadian Citizens Assembly for the Helsinki Process (CCAHP), which is the HCA committee in Canada, intends to promote that avowed support.

For example, during the autumn, the Canadian peace movement sponsored a travelling group of experts, the "Citizens Inquiry," which received submissions and heard testimony on security policy from citizens across the country. Among the many documents the "Citizens Inquiry" received was from Science for Peace which urged that security issues be addressed through "wider, non-military groupings such as the CSCE." It observed that former Foreign Minister Joe Clark had taken much the same position, but went further than Clark in urging Canada withdraw from NATO.

CCAHP held meetings in mid-September during the International Peace Bureau conference in Toronto. Between September and November, Canadian member organizations and activists attended meetings at the Moscow CSCE, an NGO parallel activities seminar, the United Nations, and the Summit Watch Conference in Rome.

In March, CCAHP will be organizing a Canadian speaking tour for two women peace activists from Croatia and Serbia.

Ukraine

Natalia Beltser

Despite the absence of a meeting space, the committee in the Ukraine convenes once every other week. Most participants are intelligentsia; workers are missing. The main goal of the committee is to protect human rights while building a democratic, independent state and integrating with the rest of Europe.

We have close relations with political parties, movements and organizations; some members of the committee are also members of Rukh, Zeleniy Svit, URP and the Party for the Democratic Revival of Ukraine. The committee has participated in some local and regional projects, including an independent public investigation of the Chernobyl disaster and an international conference on Ukrainian-Jewish relations.

We have also participated in some meetings of the international HCA (Conference in Venice, May '91, Seminar in Moscow, August '91). On October 5-6 we helped organize a conference on "Problems of National Security of Sovereign States" in Kiev.

Up until recently the Ukrainian HCA has focused on human rights issues. We have gathered information and issued appeals on human rights violations, discriminations and arrests of political prisoners. Given the new situation, we need to expand our activities beyond human rights work. The problem of political prisoners has been replaced by new challenges such as ecology, economy and defense.

The main problems the committee is encountering are the lack of equipment, adequate working space, and money. Some minor funding was provided by Canadian Ukrainians but money is still needed. Nevertheless, the committee is registered with about 30 members, a council, and co-chairs responsible for different activities.

France

Bernard Dreano

The French HCA Committee has been in a paradoxical situation in 1991. On one hand, "HCA oriented" activities were numerous, especially concerning the Mediterranean region: participation in the HCA Istanbul meeting (March '91), the Grenada MPDL's conference on "Mediterranean Citizen Dialogue" (April '91), the University of Corsica's meeting on "Nationalism, Liberation or Oppression" (May '91).

All of these initiatives were occasions to cooperate with movements like Young Women from Maghreb in France (EMAF), the Moroccan and Tunisian Workers in France (ATMF, UTIT), and the anti-racist movements.

Yugoslavia is, of course, part of the Mediterranean, and associations from Lyon, Montpellier, Corsica and Paris participated in the Peace Caravan in September and the Montpellier HCA committee is the backbone of a Christmas Peace Caravan from Ljubljana to Titograd (December 26, 1991-January 4, 1992). The "Citizen of the Mediterranean" conference, organized by the French HCA in the prestigious Arche de la Defense in Paris on February 7-9, 1992, will be a strong point of these Mediterranean oriented activities. The conference aims to be a platform for the construction of necessary dialogue between groups from civil society working for peace, justice and democracy.

On the other hand, the French committee was not able to structure itself. In Corsica, the HCA is autonomous. A committee is also being built in Brittany. But nationally the structure is loose and the financial situation is bad. Nineteen ninety-two must be the year of consolidation.

One Year After

Suad Kheiri

Since seizing power in 1968, Saddam Hussein has tried to divide and destroy the Iraqi opposition, dissecting it group by group so it couldn't hinder the fulfilment of his destructive plans.

Iraqis and the democratic forces supporting them hope to see a unified Iraqi opposition which can carry out its duty of freeing Iraq from dictatorship and installing a democratic alternative. This is especially apparent now after Iraqis expressed their rejection of Saddam Hussein in the uprising of March 1991. The regime is responsible for disasters and losses of a vast magnitude: for repeatedly bringing the country into war and causing such destruction.

Everyone was ecstatic about the declaration of unity by the four streams of the Iraqi opposition: the democrats, the Kurdish nationalist movement, the Islamic stream, and the Arabic nationalists. All of these political streams were represented by their political parties and independent personalities in the first meeting of the Iraqi opposition in Beirut in March 1991 after which the Joint Action Committee formed.

The Joint Action Committee faced its first challenge when the Kurdish nationalist movement broke the consensus and entered into negotiations with the government. The general response to this act varied from energetic condemnation, calling for the ousting of the Kurdish movement from the Committee, to a constructive condemnation which cared for the unity of the opposition and the joint struggle against the dictatorship.

It is extremely difficult for the Joint Action Committee to retain a democratic working structure and remain open to all forces opposed to Saddam Hussein. Iraqi opposition

forces both in and outside the Joint Action Committee have been struggling during the last six months to convene a meeting, the task of which will be to create an alternative political structure to Saddam Hussein's government with a national assembly which would include all the opposition groups.

The meeting will work out strategies to increase international support for Iraqis working against the dictatorship with the idea of holding a referendum sponsored and monitored by the United Nations. The government, the temporary constitution and all legislation which contradicts civil rights should be suspended during the referendum in order to guarantee all citizens the freedom of expression and will. In addition, the meeting will work out mechanisms to provide humanitarian assistance to avert the threat of famine and reduce the suffering which has resulted from the economic embargo. These mechanisms envision joint efforts and coordination between the UN and other international organisations, together with the Iraqi opposition. The meeting also hopes to work out ways to bring Saddam Hussein to trial for crimes committed against Iraqi citizens, world peace and the environment.

Suad Kheiri is an Iraqi writer and journalist who left Iraq in 1979 after Saddam Hussein launched an offensive against democratic forces in the country. She has written several books on women's issues and contemporary Iraqi history.

Tair Tairov--continued from page 4

Today politics are made not just in Moscow like in the good old days. Watch Kiev, look at Alma-Ata, think of Tashkent and don't forget Brevin if you want to understand what is happening in the Commonwealth of Independent States. As the new constellation of states becomes a reality, a multilateral and diverse approach is needed to understand us. One thing is certain however: Nationalism will continue to be a stable political trend in almost every state. Those who consider themselves democrats should do their best to learn from world history the importance of tolerance and understanding in avoiding confrontations and transforming conflicts inherited from the past. We have crossed the point of no return. The future is unclear. The hardships of the new political and economic order seem to grow more and more. But there is no alternative other than to move ahead. This is happening almost every day. Events and news from the territory of the former Soviet Union may remind us of a popular serial with an unknown script. For 1992, one would wish a happy end.

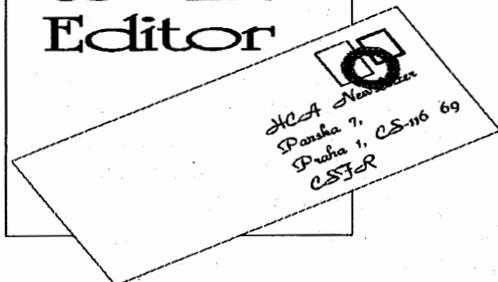
Tair Tairov is a founding member and chair of Civic Peace in Moscow.

New Zealand **NUKES**

Under ongoing US pressure, New Zealand's National (conservative) government is attempting to modify and weaken the 1987 Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Bill in order to facilitate US naval access to New Zealand's ports. Write in support of New Zealand's nuclear-free stance to: Prime Minister Jim Bogler, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, NZ/ Aotearoa.

To have your name included in an international one-page advertisement opposing changes to the Bill, in the New Zealand Herald, please send you name, address and contribution to the cost of the advertisement to: Barbara Einhorn, 91 Hanover Street, Brighton BN2 258, England

Letters to the Editor



I would like to express my opposition to the viewpoint expressed by Tomaz Mastnak in his article *The Gaze of Fascism* (see HCA Newsletter, No. 2, Fall '91). Mr. Mastnak is unarguably correct in his comments about the authoritarian nature of the Serbian regime and the atrocities the Serbian-led Yugoslav army has committed in Croatia. However, in his analysis Mr. Mastnak presents only one side of the situation. It is what he fails to mention that renders his analysis invalid.

There is no doubt that a great many Serbs in Croatia have legitimate reasons, rooted in past and present realities, to be afraid of living in an independent Croatian state. Croatian and other human rights organizations have documented numerous cases of human rights abuses of ethnic Serbs in Croatia including home burnings, beatings and forced loyalty oaths. While it would be unfair to describe Croatia as a fascist state, there are elements in the republic and in the parliament who have expressed nostalgia and even support for the genocidal Ustasha regime. During the summer, an extremist member of the Croatian legislature

ended his speech with the words *Pro Patria* and a Nazi salute. The Croatian constitution refers to racial purity. And finally, in a recent document co-authored by Mr. Mastnak and the Slovenian Movement for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence, it is acknowledged that "... (while) Serbia is communist and anti-democratic, Croatia is anti-communist and undemocratic."

Thus, neither side in the conflict can legitimately present itself as perfectly virtuous and the other as the devil incarnate. There are asymmetries in the situation, but the truth is not the simplistic "good versus evil" image presented by Mr. Mastnak. As reality is rarely as simple, truth is a casualty. And without truth and realistic understanding there is little hope for peace.

Indeed, diabolical enemy images are one of the major factors contributing to war and destructive conflict and preventing communication, realistic understanding and peaceful resolution. Mr. Mastnak argues that "an anti-Serbian position (is) the only anti-war position (he) can imagine." I disagree. On the contrary, such one-sided, unbalanced analyses promote war, not peace, and strengthen authoritarian, anti-democratic and pro-war forces on both sides.

The current war is not between Serbian and Croatian people. Indeed they are its victims. The conflict is between the forces of authoritarianism, chauvinism and violence in both Serbia and Croatia on one side and the forces of peace, democracy and reason on the other. Peaceful resolution needs to be built on a foundation of truth, not one-sided analysis and propaganda, and must involve guaranteed protection of the rights of minorities.

Andrew Pakula
Toronto, Canada

Open Letter to Environmentalists

The HCA has begun discussions with environmental groups about ways we can contribute to ecology issues. Given that there are already existing environmental networks, what angle can the HCA take? The following are three possible projects. We present them to incite discussion and generate feedback and involvement. Please contact the Secretariat with ideas and suggestions

1. The exchange of experiences and ideas between environmental groups East and West has often been limited to technical issues. A major point remains forgotten: how to initiate an environmental group and how to organise an environmental movement. One of the things the HCA can do is bring environmental groups from

the East and West together with other civic organisations to exchange experiences and organisational ideas on fundraising, membership, legislation, relations to governments, freedom of information and other issues related to the role of an environmental movement in a democratic society.

2. Environmental problems in Eastern and Central Europe have unfortunately reached a level where they have a severe impact on human health. This situation requires close cooperation between physicians and environmentalists. We would like to select three regions where damage to the environment and health problems are both severe. Local environmental groups and physicians concerned with the environment will then

assess the situation and work out a joint program based on their findings.

3. The distorted and collapsing economies of Eastern Europe complicate the tasks of the environmental movement. Yet the transformation and conversion of industries and the economy in general is a unique opportunity to build a new system that is not only economically prosperous but also environmentally friendly. Today it is often true that the environmentally friendly solution is also the most economically efficient, despite opposing views of special interest groups.

The crux of this subject is unemployment which should be taken into consideration at the onset of any transformation project. We would like to organise a workshop involving environmentalists, economists, sociologists, representatives of trade unions and other civic organisations to discuss the relationship between the environment and employment.

Klarissa Neihuys

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS CALENDER

- January 23-24** Public meeting on Yugoslavia, Madrid, organised by the Spanish peace groups and MPDL
- February 1** Public meeting in support of civic initiatives in Serbia, Belgrade, organised by the HCA and ARCI.
- February 2-4** Conference on Minorities and European Integration in Maribor (Slovenia) organised by the Center for Regional & European Studies.
- February 7-9** Conference of "Citizens of the Mediterranean", Paris, organised by the French HCA and other groups
- February (2nd week)** Meeting of European institutions and civil & political forces in Serbia organised by the HCA
- February 15-16** HCA meeting on Romania, Bucharest
- Febr 24-27** Roundtable on nationalism, Rome, organised by ARCI
- March 7-8** 2nd International Women's Conference of the CSCE, Brussels, organised by the Women's CSCE
- March 24 -** The Fourth Follow-up CSCE Meeting, Helsinki.
- March 26-29** HCA General Assembly
- April 6-10** Northern Ireland Human Rights Assembly, London, organized by the National Council for Civil Liberties
- October 4-11** International Minoan Celebration of Partnership, Crete, organized by Women for Mutual Security

For more information, please contact the HCA Secretariat.

The HCA newsletter is published quarterly. Articles represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the HCA. We welcome responses and letters to the editor. We also welcome submissions, including articles, artwork, and reports on your activity.

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Smaranda Enache -- continued from page 13

between the executive and the judiciary. There are no institutions to guarantee human rights and minority rights. The Hungarian minority was against the constitution because it did not ensure use of their official realm. Then the voices advocating the return of King Michael chimed in and began questioning whether we shouldn't first ask if Romania should be a monarchy or a republic.

Will Moldavia become part of Romania? It is an idea supported by many parties. Romania has officially recognized Moldavia. The Civic Alliance has good relations with some of the leaders of Moldavia. Hopefully there will be better solutions than to modify borders. Everyone is obsessed with borders now. In Moldavia, 34% of the population consists of minorities, all of which are very different from the minorities in Romania. If the Romanian Parliament cannot even responsibly address the issue of minorities now, how can they address a sizeable new minority in Moldavia?

Meanwhile there is no real privatization or reform. The private sector consists of people who had capital before and are reselling products. This, combined with low production, has resulted in very high inflation. Consequently people are fixating on one point: to belong to a nation. Many are confused and fear the future.

In Timisoara from December 14-16, the second anniversary of the revolution of 1989, community leaders and Orthodox and Protestant priests met with Romanians, Hungarians, Gypsies, and Jews for a roundtable discussion about interethnic reconciliation. The initiative came from Bishop Laslo Tokes. Important members of the Civic Alliance, the Hungarian Democratic Union, the Group for Social Dialogue, Church and lay groups came together. They addressed an appeal to the Patriot Pavle of Serbia and Cardinal Kuharec of Zagreb asking them to do everything for peace in Yugoslavia and ensuring them the support of different groups in Romania.

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