

Demonstrators rally to end rape of Bosnia

by Ortrun Cramer

Demonstrations, marches, and rallies were held in several European cities on or around Jan. 9, to demand an end to the genocide in Bosnia. "Stop the rape of Bosnia!" was the battle cry of the demonstrations, which were mostly sponsored by the Schiller Institute and, in Germany, the newly founded Civil Rights Movement Solidarity, as part of an international day of action. Demonstrations were also held in the United States and Ibero-America.

In general, response to the demonstrations in Europe was very favorable, since European citizens find it more and more incomprehensible that such horrors as the media and other sources are reporting daily, can be tolerated by responsible governments of Europe. Croatia and Bosnia are European states, where hundreds of thousands of European tourists have been spending their holidays for years; there are now hundreds of thousands of refugees living in other European countries, either in camps, or with relatives and friends.

Thus, the war in Bosnia touches the life of virtually every European citizen, in one way or another. Many private initiatives have now been started to help, by sending clothes, food, and medicine to Croatia, to support Bosnian refugees there.

During the demonstrations, Schiller Institute leaflets were distributed which detailed the suffering, death, and destruction in Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Kosova, and Sanjak. While all these statistics about those dead, wounded, raped, or made into refugees, about homes, hospitals, and cultural sites destroyed, were based on official publications and government calculations, the real numbers may be much higher.

Betrayed by the western powers

"Who are the ones really responsible for this genocide?" the demonstrators asked. They did not stop with blaming the Serbs, but also those who were aiding and abetting them in the genocide. Quoting the statements of betrayal from former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, President Bush, Russian Gen. Viktor Filatov, and others, the speakers demanded that those responsible be brought before a new Nuremberg Tribunal and tried for genocide.

In many cities, several organizations joined the effort, after the Schiller Institute's initial call to action. In Glasgow, Scotland, a demonstration was organized by Dr. Ali Sayed of the Scottish Friends of Bosnia. There, about 300 persons marched through the city, addressing the public, and distributing leaflets. A later rally in the center of town was addressed by the mayor, by several members of parliament, and by Jacques Cheminade, president of the Schiller Institute in France.

Dr. Sabri-Tabrizi of Edinburgh University, one of the speakers, emphasized the hypocrisy of the British, the French, and the Americans, in having launched all-out war on Iraq allegedly for having invaded Kuwait, but having done nothing against the Serbs, guilty of crimes 100 times worse than anything Saddam Hussein has been accused of. He stressed that what we are seeing now is the "new world order" which came out of that war against Iraq. Jacques Cheminade denounced the rotten political institutions which made this possible, saying that citizens had to muster the moral strength to fight for justice and peace, even when their governments fail to act.

Muslims join the mobilization

In the Danish capital of Copenhagen, Schiller Institute spokesman Poul Rasmussen was invited to address a rally organized by Muslim organizations, which had already issued a call for a "demonstration against genocide in Bosnia-Hercegovina." In a short speech, which was warmly welcomed by demonstrators and passers-by, Rasmussen said: "I want to speak loudly enough to reach the Danes walking by, and tell them they should come join this demonstration. The shooting of the deputy prime minister in Sarajevo today will lead to war throughout Europe, unless it is stopped. To the Muslims, I want to stress that this is not a religious war, but that Christians and Muslims have to stand together. You should go home and get your Christian neighbors to demonstrate next time."

The Copenhagen demonstrators marched to the U.N. headquarters, where they continued their protest, reading out the full text of the Schiller Institute leaflet.

Several demonstrations took place in France, in Paris and in Strasbourg, which is the seat of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe parliamentary assembly. A march of about 150 people took place in Lyons, where Muslim organizations joined the Schiller Institute, bringing together numerous refugees from Croatia and Bosnia. A delegation from the demonstration was received by a deputy mayor of Lyons, after the march had ended in front of city hall.

Government inaction denounced in Germany

In Germany, there were protest actions held in several cities. Concerned individuals joined the protests, handing out leaflets in neighborhoods, churches, and other arenas. In

Mainz, the capital of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, around 250 people heeded the call for the demonstration, including representatives from the Bosnian and Croatian communities, as well as a representative of the Islamic community in Wiesbaden. Demonstrators carried a banner: "The Serbian Lion Rips Up Bosnia, and Europe Looks On." Speakers during a rally at the central square stressed the necessity to end the war, and to have a Nuremberg war crimes tribunal to try those responsible.

Muriel Mirak-Weissbach, one of the speakers at the rally held in Mainz, read out quotes from a speech which Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger had delivered to the New York Council on Foreign Relations just two days before, on Jan. 7. Eagleburger reiterated the State Department policy that gave a green light for Serbia to go ahead with its aggression against those nations which declared their independence in 1991, thus dismantling the former state of Yugoslavia. (See excerpts from his speech, page 37.)

Listeners in Mainz were shocked at hearing Eagleburger's blatant apology for the Serbian genocide, a fact which was also reflected in press coverage on the demonstration in the press the next day, which reported prominently on Mirak-Weissbach's intervention. The intervention gave support to the demonstrators' demand that a new Nuremberg Tribunal should also deal with those "behind the scenes," for aiding and abetting Serbia's war of aggression.

The mobilization to save Bosnia and end the war is continuing. There are many humanitarian efforts under way to ease the life of the refugees from the war, and also to help dying people in Bosnia itself. One group, Culture of Peace, in Tübingen, Germany, organized children to collect parcels for children in refugee camps in Croatia: 10,000 children contributed 10,000 parcels, a truckload of 40,000 tons, which was transported to refugee camps in Croatia just before Christmas.

Governments must act

But also, political pressure is mounting for the European governments to stop their impotent posturing and finally act to end the war. Whenever protest is voiced, by politicians, or other personalities, strong public support can be seen. Such is the case with a German member of the Bundestag (parliament), Stefan Schwarz, who has repeatedly made extremely strong appeals on television for an end to the war, and a lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia. His office reportedly has been flooded with mail and phone calls from citizens expressing their agreement.

The demonstrations on Jan. 9 also called on the citizens to take personal responsibility. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the street in German cities, in impressive candlelight vigils, demonstrating for solidarity with foreigners and against racism. Why not hold such rallies for Bosnia? Thousands of such rallies, all over Europe, would send a powerful message to those responsible for government.

'New Atlanticism' aims to contain Germany

by Kathleen Klenetsky

It's no secret that Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Britain's Labor Party responded ecstatically to Bill Clinton's presidential victory. They consider him a fellow thinker, and believe that his rise to power presages an upward turn in their own political prospects.

Now, buoyed by Clinton's win, an influential faction of the SPD, with myriad personal links to the President, has linked arms with the thugs in the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), to promote a retreaded version of the old "Atlantic Alliance" that would keep Germany tied to the Anglo-American geopolitical geometry.

Karsten Voigt, an SPD leader and member of the German Parliament, toured the United States in early January to propose the forging of a "new Atlanticism," which would be aimed at preventing Germany from emerging as the core of a new, independent Europe capable of challenging Washington and London's international economic and political dominance.

Voigt laid out his perspective in a Jan. 8 speech at the Friederich Ebert Stiftung, the SPD's think-tank in Washington, where he was joined at the podium by Dan Mariaschin of the ADL. "A new type of Atlanticism is needed," Voigt declared to an audience that included "old Atlanticists" Paul Nitze and Paul Warnke. "We can't have a 'Fortress Europe' attitude toward the United States." He said that his party, which in the 1970s and 1980s held strong anti-American positions, had "reformulated our policy toward the United States," and now thinks that "we should try as hard as possible to draw the U.S. into new common economic and security structures" with Europe.

Given Voigt's insistence that Moscow no longer represents a danger to the West, one can hardly avoid concluding from his proposal that the object of his "new Atlanticism," the looming new security threat, is Germany itself. He reported on the recent neo-Nazi upsurge in such a way as to imply that Germany requires outside controls to keep on the democratic path. Attacking Chancellor Helmut Kohl's handling of the Nazi revival, Voigt asserted that "we need a strong U.S. presence in Europe, and U.S. troops on German soil, to prevent Germany from doing what it wouldn't do anyway." This was apparently Voigt's coy way of saying that, without continued U.S. domination, Germany will inexorably revert to the days of Hitler and the Third Reich. Not once did Voigt point to the evidence that this neo-Nazism is, to a great