
Interview

Bosnian Muslim nails fake British 'Muslims'

On Jan. 5, a Bosnian Muslim source who has been closely following the situation in central Bosnia spoke to EIR from Zagreb, Croatia.

EIR: As you remember, there were articles in the Croatian media, in particular *Danas* magazine, saying that the role of the U.N.—i.e., the British Special Forces deployed as U.N. troops there—needed to be investigated. They were talking about the famous Cheshire brigade—normally deployed in Northern Ireland—trained in guerrilla, counter-guerrilla, and psychological warfare, and provocation operations. Even [Bosnia-Herzegovina] Vice President Ejup Ganic, in a recent meeting in Petersberg near Bonn said on Dec. 2: “These fundamentalists—they could be counted on the fingers of my hands, but suddenly they begin to pop up; they don’t speak the Bosnian language well, but they do speak good English.”

A: As far as I know there is no fundamentalist danger; the point is, however, that the Bosnian Army is advancing. Central Bosnia is very soon to be controlled by the Bosnian Army. The Croatian media, and as well some media in Europe have been constantly repeating that there is a fundamentalist danger within the Bosnian Army circles, but we don’t know exactly how many fighters from all over the Islamic world have come to Bosnia to fight as mujaheddin.

We do know that there are perhaps several hundred of them—200, 300 at most—which have been formally submitted to the Bosnian Army, III Corps command. But only formally. In reality they are taking orders from others. That’s the first thing.

The second thing is: There are clues that the so-called Muslim brigades have been financed by Saudi capital, and that some of the platoons and companies of this Muslim brigade *have* committed some of the crimes which have been proclaimed as Muslim crimes.

EIR: These are people who formed their brigade before joining the official army.

A: Originally these brigades were formed in Bosnia without any input from the central government. They were formed

by local elements who allegedly have committed their lives to Islam. So these would be the fundamentalists. The reality is different. For example, when the city of Vares was liberated by the Bosnian Army—these guys were filmed, videotaped, drinking alcohol. This was two months ago.

EIR: It’s not a good sign of Islamic faith—to drink alcohol?
A: Yes. Of course. These guys are definitely not devout Muslim fundamentalists. The problem is that some of the platoons of this brigade; some of even the companies of this brigade—it seems—have committed some crimes in some villages. There are clues. The problem is: What we know is that these brigades are being financed by Saudi capital. And it is not controlled—as far as we know—either by the Bosnian government or by the Bosnian Army. Even though it is formally under the III Corps of the Bosnian Army command.

EIR: And of course there could be reason for embarrassment for the central government to admit that these people are not under control.

A: That’s right.

EIR: And what about the analysis from some of the Croatian papers that some of these so-called fundamentalists have been, in reality, trained and “invented” by the British.

A: It seems as though a lot of so-called volunteers who are coming both to Croatia and Bosnia—to volunteer both for the Croatian Army and the Bosnian Army—didn’t come there to promote truth and democracy for their respective peoples but to be there to spoil things, to muddy the waters.

The problem is that what the Croatian press has noted in central Bosnia is that some of the leaders of the massacres—the military leaders of the Croatian units which have committed massacres in the Bosnian villages, the Muslim villages—were actually British. These were “former” British officers who came as volunteers to fight for the Croatian people, during the period when Croatian extremist Mate Boban began his chauvinist drive against the Muslim population. These brigades committed crimes against the Muslims in central Bosnia. . . . The second thing is that there is a similar process which has been going on in the Bosnian Army. So some of the former British soldiers—special forces soldiers and officers—have offered their good services to the Bosnian Army, allegedly embracing Islam and giving their good services to train the Bosnian Army. We have some clues that some of these units were led by those people, claiming that they are fighting for the Muslims and Islam and blah-blah, but still committing crimes against the Croats in central Bosnia.

EIR: Rumors are circulating that some of these people now have ultra-orthodox Islamic names. Their original names were British. . . .

A: For example, there is a gentleman who was a colonel or

captain in the British Special Forces, his name is David Owen, no relation to the so-called mediator. At least for what I know. Two years ago David Owen suddenly converted to Islam and he became . . . Sheik Dawud.

EIR: What is he doing now: Is he in the army?

A: As far as we know, he has offered some of his very good services to the Bosnian Army. We don't know where he is right now, but for sure he has been operating there. Apparently, some of the officials of the Bosnian Army didn't believe him; but I think he has found his way to go there. Honest, competent military people, both Croatian and Bosnian, are in the best situation to identify these provocations. For the politicians it's more difficult.

EIR: The solution to this would be, basically, for the best people in Croatia and Bosnia to get together and denounce this manipulation.

A: That's right.

EIR: Do you see any possibility of this?

A: There are some clues that we might do it; Haris Silajdzic, the prime minister of Bosnia, has stated recently—I don't know exactly when—that the problem is that these so-called Muslim brothers, allegedly mujahideen, who have come to fight for Bosnian freedom, and have been warmly welcomed, did not play their role in that regard, but on the contrary.

He made the remarks when he was asked: What about these mujaheddin? He said: The problem is that we were not cautious enough. People came and we have accepted any kind of help. But it appears that all of a sudden, they didn't do what they have committed to.

As far as the Croatian side is concerned—I think the military would be much closer to this conclusion than the government. They know better; these idiots in the government, they don't know anything.

EIR: Do you think the military could do something about this?

A: I think that there is some kind of a positive mood within the military to solve this problem in a proper manner. Meaning that there are some generals who are very, very disappointed with developments; they would like very much to see a shift in policy. How strong they are, that has to be discussed with them. . . . There is a push to establish peace between Bosnians and Croatians. But there is one war that is visible and another war behind the scenes. Every time anything positive happens to reduce the Bosnia-Croatia hostilities, then it always follows that there is a massacre. Something happens, somewhere. And then there are the British, to film it, to show it to the world. Every time! If they are not there someone else is there—like a Canadian battalion. And then they simply call the British battalion to help them. And the artificial war between the victims continues. . . .

Pakistan-India talks hold a ray of hope

by Ramtanu Maitra

The outcome of the recently concluded seventh round of talks at the foreign secretary level between India and Pakistan, held in Islamabad Jan. 1-3 to normalize bilateral relations, has turned into an enigma. While some senior Pakistani leaders, almost all Pakistani media, and the western press were quick to dismiss it as a failure, what has emerged in subsequent days suggests otherwise. Although the talks did not achieve a breakthrough in any of the disputes that plague the two countries' relations, there is reason to believe that the talks will continue, and therein hides a ray of hope.

There is, perhaps, no definite measuring stick to evaluate such talks, which bring to the fore more than four decades of hostilities and built-in suspicions, fostered further by three wars over the possession of Kashmir. At the same time, it is almost amusing to watch the swiftness with which some labeled the talks irrelevant, the responsibility for which lies squarely on Pakistan Foreign Secretary M. Shahryar Khan, who is second in the ministry after Foreign Minister Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali. The day the Indian delegation left the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, he told newsmen that the next round of talks was dependent on an improvement in the situation in Kashmir to Pakistan's satisfaction.

Subsequently, the former prime minister of Pakistan and leader of the opposition, Nawaz Sharif, who has been accused of channeling funds to the Kashmiri militants involved in violence in the Indian-held part of the Kashmir Valley during his reign, called for cutting off any further talks with India. While visiting Uzbekistan, Pakistan Foreign Minister Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali said that unless the Kashmir dispute is solved peacefully on the terms of international law and the U.N. resolution, "there is always a danger of a fourth war in South Asia." He warned, "This time around, the concern of the world, the concern of South Asian countries is that if a war takes place in South Asia, it might become a nuclear war."

The contradictions

From such bluster one could easily interpret the talks as a failure. However, on Jan. 6, Pakistan President and a senior member of the ruling Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP) Farooq Leghari said in Karachi that the Islamabad talks set in motion the process of a "peaceful" resolution of the Kashmir dispute and that the bilateral talks must continue in order to find "a just and right solution to this issue."