

War damage to the cultural heritage in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina

Eighth information report

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1. CULTURAL HERITAGE REPORT

by the European Community Monitoring Mission (Humanitarian Section)

Zagreb, 20 April 1995

Preface

1. Since June 1994 ECMM has begun to collect systematically information on the situation of the cultural heritage in former Yugoslavia, concerning mainly the areas directly affected by the war. The system was initiated with the assistance of Dr Colin Kaiser, consultant expert for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. It is based upon the work of all our teams, which use a check-list drawn up by Dr Kaiser. This consultant presently working for Unesco (though in co-operation with the

Parliamentary Assembly), is continuing to provide invaluable help, and will be working with ECMM out of the Unesco antenna at Mostar. He has assisted with the drafting of this report.

2. This report contains only that information that has been confirmed on the spot by ECMM. However, our database also contains a large number of information (lists of buildings established by religious and cultural authorities and by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, from the media, various publications) that has not been checked by ECMM in the field. This is a challenge for our monitors in continuing their efforts to give an objective overview of the former Yugoslavia.

3. ECMM is the only international body in the former Yugoslavia to attempt to monitor the cultural heritage, which is an enormous task, considering the extent of damage. The operational capabilities of ECMM are not limitless, and there are urgent humanitarian matters that take precedence. The success of the cultural heritage monitoring depends not only on the activity of our teams, but also on inputs and co-operation with other authorities and organisations. We require good information on the different types of heritage, which only the local heritage authorities can provide. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Unesco have taken an active interest, but we welcome further assistance from national and local cultural authorities and from European and international organisations. Accordingly, we welcome your comments about this report, but also your help.

ECMM Cultural Heritage Monitoring: June 1994 - April 1995

A. Introduction

4. The ECMM cultural heritage database was set up in the early summer of 1994. To date it contains a total of 833 entries. Of these entries only 186 have actually been monitored by ECMM teams, beginning in June 1994 with the joint ECMM/Parliamentary Assembly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former UNPAs North and South. Since then the teams have steadily monitored on their own, being tasked specifically by the Humanitarian Section (HUMSEC) through the Regional Centres (RCs).

5. The teams have monitored mainly sacral heritage. This is partly because this type of heritage is especially singled out for destruction on account of its symbolic importance to the people, but also because identification of specific civil heritage is sometimes difficult, and ECMM often does not have detailed information from cultural authorities.

ECMM, with the help of Unesco and the Council of Europe, will try to remedy this in the future.

B. Monitoring June - December 1994

6. A report, released 30 December 1994, presented the results of monitoring activity from June until December 1994. However, the individual reports were given without an analysis, and the results are summarised here.

7. A total number of 133 buildings, cemeteries and other structures were visited, many of them seen during the joint ECMM/Parliamentary Assembly mission in June. Of these 33 were in Croatia and 100 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Damage in Croatian territory

8. In Croatia 9 were located in government-controlled territory, and 24 in the so-called Serbian Republic of the Krajina (RSK).

9. In the government controlled territory the buildings and sites can be broken down according to the following typology:

sacral buildings	Catholic	1
	Orthodox	6
cemeteries	Catholic	0
	Orthodox	0
civil structures	buildings	0
	other	0
museums and galleries		1
archaeological sites		1

memorials		0
total		9

10. In the RSK the following were visited:

sacral buildings	Catholic	13
	Orthodox	6
cemeteries	Catholic	0
	Orthodox	0
civil structures	buildings	1
	other	0
museums and galleries		2
archaeological sites		2
memorials		0
total		24

11. In the government controlled areas the breakdown of damage was as follows:

		no damage	light damage	moderate damage	heavy damage
sacral buildings	Catholic			1	4
	Orthodox			2	
cemeteries	Catholic				

	Orthodox				
civil structures	buildings				
	other				
museums and galleries					1
archaeological sites			1		
memorials					
total		0	1	3	5

12. In the territory of the RSK the breakdown of damage was as follows:

		no damage	light damage	moderate damage	heavy damage
sacral buildings	Catholic	2		2	11
	Orthodox				4
cemeteries	Catholic				
	Orthodox				
civil structures	buildings				1
	other				
museums and galleries		2			
archaeological sites		1			2
memorials					
total		5	0	2	18

13. These figures show the extremely heavy damage suffered by the "minority" sacral heritage - Orthodox in government controlled territory, and Catholic in the ex-UNPAs. This serious level of damage was accountable to frequent resort to explosives and firing.

Damage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

14. ECMM has only infrequent access to the so-called Serbian Republic (RS), but access to almost all the territory of the Federation of the Bosnians and Croats of BH. Accordingly, all the following information concerns heritage in the Federation.

15. The heritage can be broken down according to the following categories:

sacral buildings	Catholic	12
	Moslem	53
	Orthodox	11
cemeteries	Catholic	3
	Moslem	12
	Orthodox	0
civil structures	buildings	8
	other	0
museums and galleries		0
archaeological sites		1
memorials		0
total		100

16. The breakdown of damage was as follows:

		un- damaged	light damage	moderate damage	heavy damage
sacral buildings	Catholic	5	5	1	1
	Moslem	17	19	8	9
	Orthodox	2	5	2	2
cemeteries	Catholic	2			1
	Moslem	4	6	1	1
	Orthodox				
civil structures	buildings	5	1	1	1
	other				
museums and galleries					
archaeological sites			1		
memorials					
total		35	37	13	15

17. Although the sample is a small one, it reflects the generally known situation of Bosnia - that quantitatively the Moslem heritage has suffered the most, and much of this damage took place in HVO-controlled territory. Heavy and moderate damage is often due to dynamiting and firing - projectiles often cause lighter damage.

C. Monitoring January - beginning of April 1995

18. During the first months of 1995 the monitoring has continued along the lines established in 1994. The total number of buildings, cemeteries and other monuments monitored was 24 for Croatia and 35 for Bosnia and Herzegovina (entirely in Bosnian territory). Below we present a more detailed analysis of the results of this monitoring.

Damage in Croatian territory

19. A total of 14 buildings were monitored in the government-controlled territory, and 10 in the co-called RSK. The heritage can be broken down according to the following typology:

sacral buildings	Catholic	4
	Orthodox	10
total		14

20. In the RSK the following were visited:

sacral buildings	Catholic	8
	Orthodox	2
total		10

21. In the government-controlled areas the breakdown of damage was as follows:

		no damage	light damage	moderate damage	heavy damage
sacral buildings	Catholic		2	1	1
	Orthodox			1	9
total			2	2	10

22. ECMM visited the Franciscan Monastery in Cavtat in the Dubrovnik Prefecture. This establishment showed some damage from JNA projectiles from the 1991-92 war, and while the monastery is in use, the church interior has not yet been repaired. The Orthodox Bishop's Refectory in the Lapad district of Dubrovnik was also found to have

suffered similar damage from the JNA, and is also in use; it is worth noting that the brochure on the destruction of Orthodox heritage by Slobodan Mileusnic, Spiritual Genocide, 1993, p. 87, incorrectly describes this building as "mined from the inside and ruined, only the walls survived".

23. Orthodox churches were also visited in the area of Slavonski Brod, and here the damage was extensive and often intensive: the church in Slavonski Kobas was totally destroyed by explosives in the autumn of 1993. Other churches seem to have been heavily damaged by explosives in 1991 - Holy Trinity (a small rebuilt Baroque-style church - the original was badly damaged in World War II) in Klokocevik in November 1991, the church in Stari Slatinik possibly during the summer of 1991, and the church in Bebrina in August 1991. All of these buildings require rebuilding and obviously none can be used for services. The Church of the Virgin Mary (destroyed in World War II and later rebuilt) Trnjani was dynamited in October 1992 and only the "skeleton" of it remains. In Ratkovica the Church of St Paraskeva (built in 1874, destroyed in World War II and rebuilt later) was also badly damaged by explosives (December 1991). These last reports confirm Mileusnic, op. cit., p 142 and 146; The ECMM team could not find the sites of two Orthodox churches in Malino and Luzani, said to have been destroyed in Mileusnic op.cit., p. 138, but will visit the villages again.

24. One of the most serious cases of destruction was St Jovan's in Nova Gradiska, dynamited then bulldozed, and replaced by a park.

25. The Orthodox Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul (1828) at Kucanci, north of Nasice in Slavonia, was found to have been dynamited, confirming the report of Mileusnic, op.cit., p. 138.

26. It has been pointed out in the Council of Europe reports that damage to Orthodox heritage is especially significant because it touches a stock of cultural heritage that suffered greatly during World War II. The findings in the Slavonski Brod region are of particular concern because of the more frequent resort to explosives than in, for example, the region north of Daruvar.

27. In the territory of the RSK the breakdown of damage was as follows:

		no	light	moderate	heavy
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		damage	damage	damage	damage
sacral buildings	Catholic		3	1	4
	Orthodox		1		1
total			4	1	5

28. Only one of the Catholic churches was in ex-UNPA East, in Popovac. This building showed light damage to roof and walls and according to the mayor the church was not damaged through war action by individuals whose identity was unknown.

29. In ex-UNPA South ECMM visited the Catholic Church of St Martin's (12th-15th centuries) near Donji Lepuri, dynamited, with only the foundations left; this destruction is presumed to have been carried out by the RSK army.

30. The Orthodox Church of St Elijah (1872) in Kasic was also visited, and found to have suffered heavy damage from Croatian artillery and is consequently in an unusable state. The claim of Mileusnic op.cit., p. 56, that the cemetery had been seriously desecrated by occupying Croatian soldiers seemed supported by the fact that 50% of the graves were open. However, according to Dr Kaiser, who visited the cemetery in June 1994, many of these vault tombs had been recently built and had never been used, which is not to say that Croatian troops did not use them for shelters.

31. The largest number of Catholic churches visited was in ex-UNPA North: in Glina the ruins of the Catholic Church of St John Nepomuk have been bulldozed for "security reasons" (the joint ECMM/Parliamentary Assembly mission of June 1994 saw that the church was badly damaged but the walls remained). At Maja in the Glina area the Church of St Elijah (1826-27) was destroyed by explosives in 1991. The Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary (mainly 19th century) at Gora was heavily damaged, probably in 1991. In Hrastovica near Petrinja the Church of St Bartholemew the Apostle (1843) was badly damaged by explosive charges in 1991, and the 18th-century Church of St Anthony of Padua and the Monastery in Cuntic Hrvatski near Petrijna were damaged by projectiles and the interiors vandalised and burned in October 1991; they are no longer in use. In Vukmanic the late 18th century Church of Anthony of Padua was found to be abandoned; it had been damaged to the roof and walls in 1991. The Church of St Rok the Confessor (1802) in Skakavac was damaged by fire and projectiles (October 1991), and is in a state of abandon.

32. It should also be noted that the Orthodox Church of the Nativity of St John the Baptist (built in 1826, but rebuilt after its destruction in World War II) was dynamited in the summer of 1991, by Croatian forces according to Mileusnic op.cit., p. 36.

33. The most important monitoring exercise in Croatia concerning sacral heritage in ex-UNPA North adds considerably to our knowledge of the fate of the Catholic churches; when added to the earlier monitoring exercise of June 1994, the results indicate widespread and frequently total devastation of these churches, mainly in 1991, but also more recently, in the form of bulldozing of supposedly dangerous ruins.

Damage in Bosnian territory

34. The breakdown of heritage visited is as follows:

sacral buildings	Catholic	11
	Moslem	6
	Orthodox	4
cemeteries	Catholic	3
	Moslem	8
	Orthodox	2
civil structures	buildings	0
	other	0
museums and galleries		0
archaeological sites		0
memorials		1
total		35

35. The categorisation of damage for the monuments was as follows:

		no damage	light damage	moderate damage	heavy damage
sacral buildings	Catholic		2		7
	Moslem	1	2	1	4
	Orthodox		3		1
cemeteries	Catholic	4	2		
	Moslem	1	4	1	1
	Orthodox				
civil structures	buildings				
	other				
museums and galleries					
archaeological sites					
memorials				1	
total		6	13	3	13

36. ECMM visited the Maglaj-Novi Seher area, and examined mainly mosques and Moslem cemeteries. The mosque in Novi Seher was dynamited between June 1993 and June 1994, probably by Serbs, and two cemeteries outside of the village were damaged by firearms. The cemetery at nearby Strupina had also been damaged by small arms fire, and the village masjid showed damage from attempted firing, also during the same period, and is not in use. The masjid in Tujnica was damaged by fire and cannot be used. The masjid at Medzici near Maglaj had sustained light external damage only.

37. The Orthodox church of Zavidovici was also visited and was found to have suffered only a few broken windows from a shell that fell nearby.

38. The mosque in Hamici near Vitinica (Tuzla area) was found to have been heavily damaged by artillery in March 1994; this mosque is not far from the confrontation line with BSA.

39. ECMM also visited the Orthodox cemetery at Erići, northeast of Kalesija, and found it to be almost completely destroyed by vandalism.

40. The Orthodox church at Puracic, near Lukavac, was found to have been slightly damaged by fragments of a BSA shell that exploded nearby, while ABiH soldiers damaged the facade with small arms fire and children threw rocks through the windows (1993-94).

41. ECMM also visited the Orthodox church at Gracanica (late 19th century), which had suffered light damage from BSA rockets and mortars in 1994.

42. In the western part of Bosnia ECMM inspected the Catholic church at Bistrica north of Gornji Vakuf, whose interior had been fired, the Catholic Church of St Martin's in Humac, also fired (neither of these buildings can be used).

43. The resistance memorial in Bugojno was destroyed by explosives, presumably at the order of the local authorities of the town, and the graveyard damaged: this incident took place on 14 February 1995. The Orthodox church was badly damaged by artillery, attributed to ABiH and to HVO, though not destroyed, as mentioned in Mileusnic, op.cit., p. 45. Significant damage was also found to Catholic sacral heritage north of Bugojno - the chapel and cemetery at Causlije had sustained damage from mortars and explosives, with 40% of the gravestones destroyed (though no trace of grave opening was found), the church at Drvetine showed heavy damage from mortars and rockets, and is unusable, the chapel at Bristovi was heavily damaged by projectiles and the cemeteries damaged (60-70%).

44. In the area around Jablaina ECMM visited Catholic churches in Dreznica (interior badly vandalised, some damage from firearms and other projectiles, the cemetery was slightly damaged), Obri (interior burned out after 10 March 1994) and the nearby chapel (badly vandalised inside) - none of these buildings are in use. The Catholic church in Kostajnica was found to have been fired, apparently by children in March 1994, and children were similarly blamed for ruining the interior of the Catholic church in Celebic near Konjic on 9 March 1995 and for damaging the cemetery.

45. The worst recent damage was encountered in the Bihac area, in the villages of Sokolac and Zavalje when RSK and BSA withdrew - in the former the mosque was destroyed by dynamiting, probably in November 1994, and the Catholic church in the latter badly damaged by various projectiles, including artillery, and perhaps by set explosives, and the ossuary inside was emptied and the bones thrown about, along with other vandalism to the interior (November 1994-February 1995).

46. The pattern for Bosnia corresponds to earlier findings - the worst damage is caused by setting of explosives, in this case by RSK and BSA forces; there is extensive damage - though sometimes "intensive" - from mortars and artillery in front areas, and there is even more widespread damage from vandalism that takes the form of firing by troops or other elements and wrecking of interiors. In the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina this third type of damage is particularly common for Catholic churches. The serious vandalism of the Orthodox cemetery in Erić is a particularly unusual incident in Bosnian territory and merits further monitoring.

47. The damage perpetrated by RSK and BSA forces in the Bihac area (which also includes the firing and vandalising of the villages of Sokolac and Zavalje) is especially worrisome, because it reveals continuing indifference to the laws of war and deliberate destruction of other peoples' sacral heritage.

48. However, recent incidents of vandalism in RBiH territory demonstrate that there is sufficient concern for the security of sacral heritage and also some historic symbols (such as resistance memorial in Bugojno) to which all local people are attached. Such vandalism can only weaken the Federation and increase the sense of insecurity of minorities within it.

D. General conclusions

49. In Croatia the ECMM monitoring of the preceding few months adds to our knowledge of what had happened to Catholic sacral heritage in the ex-UNPAs, and also to the Orthodox heritage in a border area controlled by the government. In both cases the serious damage is proof of what the Council of Europe reports call "cultural cleansing". This destruction is, for the most part, already several years old, though total elimination of traces continues in RSK. The fact that this destruction had happened clearly stands in the way of reconciliation between Croats and Serbs.

50. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is different - the destruction is usually more recent, and continues on active front areas and sometimes far behind the front lines (in the form of vandalism). Political authorities can only foresee worsening relations among Bosnians of different origins if these forms of destruction cannot be stopped.

51. The inefficacy of the Hague Convention during the present conflict makes the ECMM monitoring exercise all the more important. It is devoted, of course, mainly to information-gathering, but in its modest way may have prevented destruction here and there, which means that it is also working in the spirit of the Hague Convention.

(Albert Hittmeyer

Chief Humanitarian Section)

2. NOTE ON CULTURAL HERITAGE MONITORING

(June 1995)

by Dr Colin Kaiser, consultant expert

1. General Situation

Since March the war has grown in intensity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the cease-fire, which ended officially at the end of April. There was fighting west of Travnik, northeast of Tuzla, in the Livno area and west of it in Herzegovina, and around the Ozren south of Doboj. There was also heavy shelling of Sarajevo, shelling of Gradacac and Konjic (among other towns), in the Orasje pocket, in the Bihac pocket and the other UN protected zones in eastern Bosnia. Mostar too was shelled in June, but not heavily, and with the current Bosnian offensive in the Sarajevo area it can be expected that the capital and its heritage will suffer severely from shelling, as will other front towns of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Military operations have also continued sporadically in Croatia in the southeast part of ex-UNPA South (near Knin) and the Croatian army and special police units rapidly occupied ex-UNPA West in May. The Zupanja area of Croatia is also subjected to regular bombardment by the BSA. Dubrovnik airport, and the nearby area, but also the village of Orasac northwest of Dubrovnik on the main coast road has been shelled, clearly to persuade foreign tourists to change their travel plans.

Uncertainty about what the UNPROFOR will do has caused some international organisations to scale down their operations - the case of UNHCR and others in Sarajevo, but this is also due to the sheer difficulty of maintaining operations in the face of renewed shelling and sniping from BSA. It has caused problems of access near active fronts, which means that information about the cultural heritage is not always easy to come by in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

While this information looks like "more of the same", it should not hide an important development: the Croatian army, the HVO and the Bosnians have made significant gains in territory. It is now possible to have an more exact idea about what the Serbian forces did in territory they occupied for several years; it is equally important to know how the re-occupying forces are behaving, and it may be possible to have some influence over these forces. Information given below indicates that there have been improvements.

This short report deals only with cultural heritage monitoring and with a brief mention of the situation in Mostar where the consultant has been working for Unesco.

Subsequent information reports should attempt again to document the activity of the governmental organisations involved (such as Unesco or the Council of Europe) as also the NGOs such as BHHR, which has been especially active for the Zemaljske Museum in Sarajevo, and Icom.

2. ECMM cultural heritage monitoring

With the help of the consultant the Humanitarian Section of ECMM compiled the April cultural heritage report. Appended to this are certain more recent cases of monitoring extracted from the weekly ECMM bulletins.

To note is the reference to 76 houses burned or blown up on 2-3 May 1995 in the Serbian villages of Gredani-Okucanski, Covac and Vrbovljani. The ECMM report states very pertinently that this was not "the work of a single individual"- in other words this is a case of organised reprisal activity such as those noted in previous information reports of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Still to be documented are the results of ECMM visits to some 30 Orthodox churches in the Moslavina area of the eparchy of Zagreb, which seem to have been untouched by war vandalism and reprisals.

The ECMM has also to check out the following reports received:

- desecration of cemeteries (those visited by the consultant expert showed no signs of disturbance)
- burning of the remains of the Franciscan library in the Church of St Lawrence in Knin in the summer of 1994
- the firing of villages by Bosnian forces south of Bihac in May 1995
- reprisals against Catholic scaral heritage in the Banja Luka area (reported by the World Council of Churches) and the possible destruction of Orthodox churches in former UNPA West in Croatia (reported in Croatian press agencies) in May 1995

The reintensification of military activities (including the takeover of ex-UNPA West) has however meant that ECMM resources have been stretched to the limit, and monitoring of cultural heritage has been understandably cut back.

The consultant carried out some monitoring activities in Herzegovina and southern Bosnia during his April-May mission, sometimes in conjunction with ECMM, and sometimes alone. The results of this monitoring are in the following section.

3. Monitoring carried out by the consultant expert

(i) Mostar area: Blagaj and Buna

These villages are southeast of Mostar. Blagaj marks the southernmost area in Bosnia-Herzegovina controlled by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is consequently an area that has suffered from BSA shelling since the beginning of the war (and still does) and HVO shelling in 1993-94.

The famous tekke (Dervish monastery) has not been damaged by military activity, and the Ottoman Velagic house complex (18th-19th centuries) has only minor shelling damage. The 16th-century Imperial Mosque (Careva dzamija) was hit mainly by HVO according to local people, but has been partially repaired and the damage was not serious. The 18th-century Kolakovic house shows the worse destruction, from rockets said to have been fired by the HVO (roof completely destroyed, east wall badly damaged). The 16th-century Karadozbegova Bridge has only very slight damage to pillars.

The condition of the 19th-century Orthodox church, seen by the consultant in December 1992 has deteriorated due to lack of attention (it had lost its roof). The Catholic church (1908) has basically minor structural damage, though it was probably vandalised in the interior. The consultant believes that this damage is of a reprisal nature.

Blagaj is famous as an archaeological site, and the rest of its building stock - of variable heritage interest - has suffered to diverse degrees: the village is spread out except for the small centre, and many shells have fallen into gardens. Some houses have been damaged in reprisal.

Buna is near Blagaj, and in Republic of Herceg-Bosna territory. The 16th-century Ali Pasa Rizvanbegovic mosque was dynamited by Croatian elements in 1993 and later largely bulldozed. The northern parts of this spread out village have been badly damaged by dynamiting and burning.

(ii) Other Sites in the Lower Neretva Valley

The consultant visited Pocitelj, which has not suffered further damage, but the condition of the dynamited mosque (Hadzi Alija dzamija) is worsening. The Gavran Kapetanovic tower has acquired a cross; this reflects the ethnic cleansing in 1993 of what was basically an Ottoman-period town but involves no architectural damage to the tower.

Further south the consultant found the totally burned out and dynamited Serbian village of Prebilovci, but could not safely determine the site of the World War II ossuary, said to have been destroyed as a Croatian reprisal in 1992.

The Ottoman-period bridge over the Bregava River is intact, and although the interior of the mosque in Celjevo was vandalised, and the windows broken, the building is intact.

(iii) Jablanica and Konjic

The museum built in Jablanica in 1978 to commemorate the Battle of the Wounded on the Neretva (1943) is occupied by the Bosnians and is now a prison, which has given some cause for concern to the UN. A local archivist said that some of the museum exhibits were saved and stored, but some were damaged.

Konjic has suffered from continual bombardment by the BSA since the consultant's visit (June 1994), but there was little trace of additional war damage to major monuments. However the condition of the minaret of the Carsija mosque, in use, has worsened and this dangerous structure should be repaired.

Perhaps the most serious damage in Konjic is to the vernacular architecture (Ottoman and Austrian periods) in the old town area. Many houses have been damaged by shelling and firing and are abandoned, and there is the high risk that many will be pulled down when peace comes.

Konjic is in many ways a typical front town, with heritage of quality that has more or less been forgotten by the concentration of the international community on Mostar and Sarajevo. Easy repairs have been carried out by locals, but a little funding would go a long way to repairing major damage to monuments, and now is the moment for the municipality to try to protect the old town area for the post-war period through legislative means.

(iv) Kupres Area

On the edge of Herzegovina and Bosnia, this area was occupied by BSA from April 1992 until November 1994, when it came under the control of HVO forces through a mixture of fighting and deals. Throughout its history this high plateau was a passage for invaders, which means that there is not much old built heritage that has survived.

The town of Kupres, which is intermittently bombarded by nearby BSA forces, has suffered a mixture of shelling damage and vandalism. The recently built Catholic

church was dynamited by BSA in the fall of 1993, along with two other 19th-century churches in the area (Osmanlije, Otinovci) and the church at Rasticevo (1926). The unfinished Kupres mosque was not damaged by the Serbs, but the surrounded Moslem district was partly burned out, and this has been attributed to the Serbs. The war memorial was dynamited, apparently by the Serbs, but this attribution of responsibility is not very convincing as the consultant has seen very few such monuments damaged by Serbs or Moslems.

The villages in the area, mainly inhabited by Croats, were damaged mainly by the removal of their roofs and pillaging, with some burning (Olovo, Osmanlije, Begovo Selo, Goravci, Kute, Botun and Kukavice), while the probably 19th-century mosque at Kute was burned. The vernacular heritage is not of much interest, except for farm buildings, though recent buildings were often constructed on older stone foundations. Most of the villages are uninhabitable.

The HVO behaved very well in the Serb villages, with what can be described as a minimum of burning and pillaging in the villages of Donji Vukovsko and Gornji Vukovsko. The 19th-century Orthodox church in Donji Vukovsko has very little damage and Croatian officials removed the iconostasis for safe-keeping. The villages of Donji and Gornji Malovan suffered artillery damage, being front-line positions held by the BSA, and the Orthodox church at Donji Malovan has bad artillery damage to the tower and lower walls, caused by HVO forces. However, the villages were not burned after occupation. World War II memorials suffered variable damage, but the memorial east of Donji Malovan, in Cyrillic and to the memory of Serbs, is untouched.

This behaviour on the part of the HVO can only be commended - unless it should turn out that some of the damage to Moslem houses in Kupres was in fact carried out by them, which is not certain. The HVO in Western Herzegovina have always behaved more leniently than the forces in the Neretva Valley, though there was destruction of a few village mosques in the Livno area in 1993 and one example in Livno itself in 1994. Whatever the explanation, the case of Kupres is proof that it is possible for armed forces - even far away from the limelight of the Western media - to behave with decency towards heritage and property.

4. The Situation in Mostar

The EUAM Department of Education and Culture has financed repair/restoration works on three buildings in Mostar East, including the Roznamedzi mosque. The quality of the work carried out is variable, but the professional and labour capacities of Mostar East

are limited. Work has also begun on the consolidation of the domes and minarets of three mosques (Karadozbegova, Koski Mehmed Pasine, Vucjakovica).

No other work has been carried out for the dismantling or partial demolition of dangerous structures, which is unfortunate, given the continuing deterioration of the damaged heritage, and the danger much of it poses to the public.

The Unesco antenna was established in April 1995. Its functions are coordination of international and local initiatives, preparation of the nomination of Mostar to the World Heritage List, provision of technical assistance, and preparation of an action plan for restoration. Mostar is also used as a base for cultural heritage monitoring in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mostar was hit by three rockets in March, which did impressive if circumscribed damage, and Mostar East and Mostar West were subjected to random mortar and artillery fire on 5 and 7 June.

5. Sarajevo

Dr Wenzel, Director of BHHR, informed the consultant that she had observed increased artillery damage to the Bascarsija area, and especially to the Gazi Husrev Bey mosque, during her mission there in March and April 1995.

The Unesco office in Sarajevo was set up in mid October 1994. It has had difficulty in operating under the present circumstances.

6. Conclusions

The observed behaviour of some armed forces, notably Croatian, shows that destruction of heritage and property can be held within limits in military actions. However, there is no sign that the dynamic of destruction implemented by the BSA with its artillery, or in reprisal, is subject to any limits. The consultant stresses his fear for the fate of Sarajevo and other front towns as the war continues, and as the recourse to artillery reprisal increases to pre-ceasefire levels and possibly worse. In reporting such incidents the international media do not show much interest in the fate of cultural heritage.

From observation of the Kupres area and the pullout of Serbian forces from the Bihac area earlier this year, there is a high possibility that re-occupying forces will encounter scorched earth policy in territory formerly held by BSA and ARSK forces. In the case of any negotiated settlement that involves the evacuation of territories by these forces the United Nations should try to ensure some control to prevent this from happening.

The behaviour of the re-occupying forces - especially brigades made up of refugees - also poses a risk, and the UN and international organisations such as ECMM, the Council of Europe and Unesco, must try to ensure access to zones undergoing re-occupation and impress upon local political and military leaders the necessity of forbearance. The behaviour of civilians too must be kept in mind, because re-occupation can bring with it nasty surprises.

Appendix

Extracts from recent ECMM weekly reports

Humanitarian Activity Report

Humanitarian Activity Report 30 March - 6 April 1995

Croatia (para 81) — "YUGOSLAV" DAILY SURVEY (Tanjug) (2/4) ZAGREB: A hand grenade was thrown Friday at the Orthodox church in Dubrovnik damaging the church building and fence, the city police said. According to the incoming reports by Sunday, this terrorist act against the Orthodox Serbs in Croatia was carried out about 3 AM.

Humanitarian Activity Report 6 - 12 April 1995

Croatia (para 72) — ECMM DJAKOVO (7/4): Reference Msg of RC BELGRADE as of 13 Jan and 12 Feb 1995. Subject: request of Serbian Patriarch Pavle to investigate rumors about the destroyed church in Kucanci, where Pavle was born and where his parents were buried. ECMM Djakovo met the Zupan of Osijecsko-Baranjska Zupanija. He made the following surprising proposal: he promised a project of restoration of the above mentioned church. He will send experts to ascertain the present situation and will provide money for the restoration project. He will order the commencement of the

project at the appropriate time. When restoration is complete he expects Patriarch Pavle to attend the official reopening. He hopes that progress can be made within 60 days.

COMMENT: This is a project of the highest interest. HUM Sec and RC BELGRADE are kindly requested to follow up. But it has to be understood that this is a mutual deal. The restoration had to be rewarded by the visit of Pavle and afterwards there will be most certainly reciprocal gestures required.

Croatia (para 73) — ECMM SLAVONSKI BROD (7/4): An old man in Nova Gradiska told ECMM that they should have not run away from their town when the war started, in order to protect their Orthodox church St Jovan from being blown up. Today the foundation of that church, which is located just beside the Zagrebacka bank of N. Gradiska, has become a park. The Orthodox church of Trnjani was blown up in October of 1992. People in the village do not know the nomination of that church, which is heavily damaged. The Orthodox church of Ratkovica, that belonged to St Petka, was blown up in December 1991. It is damaged (roof, main door and windows).

Humanitarian Activity Report 13 - 19 April 1995

Bosnia-Herzegovina (para 64) — ECMM MOSTAR (12/4): The Mayor of Kupres said that all Croat villages around Kupres have been totally destroyed and burnt to the ground. Also all 4 churches have been completely destroyed. First priority for restoration is the school and the medical facility. Help from international organisations is required.

Humanitarian Activity Report 27 April - 3 May 1995

Bosnia-Herzegovina (para 67) — ECMM TRAVNIK (24/4): reported further signs of vandalism and damages to the Catholic Church of St Martin at Humac (south-west Mostar). The HDZ President of Uskopije (HVO held part of Gornji Vakuf, Sector south-west) also reported recent signs of vandalism at the graveyard in Krupa (Sector south-west).

Humanitarian Activity Report 11 - 17 May 1995

Croatia (para 78) — ECMM ZAGREB (11/5): The monastery of St Ana, near Daruvar, was assaulted at night between 5 and 6 May 1995 by four armed men in civilian clothes. They robbed the nuns and threatened to kill them. Interior of the church, which is a cultural monument, was partly destroyed.

Croatia (para 79) — ECMM TOPUSKO (16/5): Radio Petrova Gora reported that, according to data collected by the World Union of Churches in Geneva, many Serb Orthodox churches were destroyed during the latest Croatian "aggression" on W. Slavonia. Among them was a church in Masicka Sagovina, while St Dimitri's Church in Okucani sustained extensive damage, Serbian churches in other villages in W. Slavonia were either blown up or burnt down. **COMMENT:** Still unconfirmed; ECMM will follow up.

Bosnia Herzegovina (para 80) — SARAJEVO (15/5), HINA: The UN in Sarajevo confirmed that a Catholic church in Presnace near Banja Luka, north-western Bosnia, had been destroyed by an explosion last Friday and that a priest and a nun had been killed. The spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said that four Roman Catholic churches had been blown up in the Banja Luka region in the last ten days.

Humanitarian Activity Report 25 - 31 May 1995

Croatia (para 1) — ECMM OKUCANI (24/5): reporting on the burnt/blown up houses in Okucani Gredani-Okucanski, Vrbovljani and Covac (see ECMM Humanitarian Activity Report No 20/95) ECMM OKUCANI have concluded that the situation was most complex. what could be taken as fact, however, was that, between the 2-3 May 1995, seventy-six houses in three villages were either intentionally burnt or blown up. As to who was responsible and why such acts took place, it can only be suggested that the number of houses in three locations preclude the work of a single individual.

3. BULLETS AT BUTTERFLIES - BOSNIA'S HERITAGE ATTACKED

Report by Dr Marian Wenzel

Director of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Heritage Rescue Association

This paper was written for a conference organised in London on 15 June 1995 by BHHR -Bosnia Herzegovina Heritage Rescue, a non Governmental organisation of which the President is Sir Patrick Cormack, MP.

Dr Wenzel and Administrator Helen Walasek were in Sarajevo from 28 March to 14 April 1995.

This conference was convened to tell our chosen guests some basic facts about the attacked multi-cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its present condition, and to urge upon them the importance of our own highly active NGO and registered charity BHHR, which fights to see this heritage protected, and which needs your thought towards lifting us to be more properly funded right now in order to survive.

The reason for this war's attack on Bosnia's monuments can be described as follows. The war which has been waged for three years on soil of the recognized republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is towards economic ends. Bosnia-Herzegovina was not only a cultural entity since Roman times, it was also the richest part of the former Yugoslavia in respect to mineral wealth - silver, copper, lead, bauxite and iron. Under communism, munitions factories and munition stockpiles were set up there near the mines, and naturally, the Serbian-led rump Yugoslavia did not want to let this part of the country go. Curiously, this perfectly straight-forward reason for Serbia's wishing to retain Bosnia, has mainly been concealed from Serbs themselves, and from the rest of the world by a smoke-screen of falsehoods, namely, the deliberate manipulation of history and the history of Bosnia's complex culture to make Bosnia look as if it had no cultural heritage of its own, or none that should not for invented reasons be deplored and eliminated, making the land where this culture had pertained appear to really belong to someone else.

As you know, museums, holders of the documented heritage of any land, and libraries, have to this end been brutally attacked, and cultural and religious edifices have been knocked down. The historic cities of Sarajevo and Mostar, and smaller historic towns as Foca, Banja Luka and Jajce, have been attacked and stripped of their cultural monuments. Particularly they were stripped of their Ottoman Turkish buildings, made after the Turkish conquest of Bosnia in 1463.

Turkey brought to Bosnia its first well-organized government and religion, expressed in large, carefully built official structures of the sort Bosnia did not have before. Bosnia's own important historic contribution to world art had previously been luxurious, silver

gilt metalwork - hammered out near the mines - which with Bosnian metalworkers came to be imported into Turkey, and which influenced certain Ottoman design.

The domino effect of an initial 900 mosques damaged or destroyed, and a number of Catholic churches, led to a limited number of Orthodox structures being attacked, such as the monastery church of Zitomislic in Western Herzegovina and the Orthodox bishop's residence in Mostar.

BHHR was founded in autumn of 1992, in what at first seemed no more than token response to a desperate call for help from my longtime friends in the Bosnian cultural sphere. (My doctoral thesis was on Bosnian cultural monuments in the form of their large tombstones, and I worked on them on and off for thirty years.) Bosnians knew they were undergoing what the UN now recognizes as "cultural genocide". This type of genocide was then as now given low priority on the international scene, but it was always deeply worrying to Bosnians themselves. The parallel of how Britains would have felt with the destruction of St. Paul ignored, springs to mind. Bosnians felt that cruelly wounded heritage should not be allowed to decay in situ because it might get damaged again - that this was like leaving a wounded man in the middle of the road because, if removed and healed, he might get wounded again. BHHR was really formed as an instrument to listen to what Bosnians felt were their cultural needs, and to arrange to attempt to carry out some of these needs insofar as this was possible, thereby healing shattered morale, and helping reconciliation. Our projects, which we shall list shortly, are not just our projects, they are all things we have been asked to do by Bosnians and which are important to them, as well as to us.

Having founded BHHR, we received at once, personal support from members of the Bosnian government, as well as from members and friends of the Bosnian institutions with which we work, such as the National Museum, Art Gallery and Institutes for protection of monuments, and the Muslim, Catholic and Jewish organizations of Sarajevo, being Preporod, Napredak and Benevolencija, and so on. We were quickly introduced to all these organizations by our sister organization in Sarajevo, AIASN, Association for Intercultural Activity and Heritage Rescue, which had been founded at the same time as we, in 1992. This last organization maintained from the start a tight link between cultural action and that of Bosnian women's groups, believing that raping and murdering women and children and destroying heritage are inter-related forms of genocide.

Though our value was not rapidly appreciated outside Bosnia, we were quickly appreciated by those working in more orthodox channels related to the Bosnian scene, who personally believed that thought about damaged culture was a big step towards healing Bosnia, and towards peace. We were given early encouragement by the Council of Europe who published mention of us in their cultural documents, and we were always

given encouragement and crucial support by Dr. Zarko Domljan, Vice-President of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia, because of his basic personal devotion as art historian to the culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His office always provided us with documents, travel assistance and recommendations to his personal friends who could help us, at times even when Bosnia and Croatia seemed deeply at odds. Our president, Sir Patrick Cormack, MP, assisted us in receiving technical help from British governmental bodies, such as British Council, British Embassies, and the ODA. Doug Houston in the ODA offices in Bosnia and Croatia helped us in many ways, giving us access to office facilities in Zagreb and Sarajevo. His Sarajevo office spirited us out of that town on our last visit, when we found exit difficult.

We have steadily received heartfelt assistance from specific individuals in the United Nations framework, particularly from the Bosnia Desk and BH Command. They have told us again and again how important we are in their scene, and that we must tell this to one and all, even telling us how to phrase our own flattering statements about ourselves. Our UNESCO contract to obtain materials for the Zemaljski Museum, Sarajevo, has of course cemented our position as implementing agency of UNESCO.

Most important to our work, we have functioned as advisers and consultants to key members of the Bosnian government, whose concern about the war and their own economy has led them to feel genuinely ill-informed about the heritage situation in their own land. We have been able to act as liaison between Bosnian governmental representatives and outside governmental agencies.

We are proud of ourselves. In the 4th year of war we have emerged as the only international non-governmental aid organization registered with UNHCR, specifically devoted to aiding Bosnia's wrecked cultural heritage. Our work has been small in scale, but it has received enormous publicity inside Bosnia, and we know it is of big social value. Because we have stayed a small organization, we have been unencumbered by bureaucracy, and our dedication has led us to be willing to under go privation in order to be to be quick in response to requests from the community. This has been popular with Bosnians, who are becoming sickened by those who profit from war economy.

Lack of funds have kept our activities confined to Sarajevo and Mostar, but we could easily extend outside this range, and have warm relations, for instance, with Selim Beslagic, Mayor of Tuzla. While we have received only sporadic funding, and our major projects do need real financial help to get off the ground, we have in fact steadily helped activate numerous better funded projects of other people by our consultancy to them, and by our ability to smooth misunderstandings between Bosnians and others who do not speak their language, or who do not have our long-standing understanding of Bosnian mentality, or our contacts with local Bosnians of influence.

Our activity record during the BHHR mission to Sarajevo in March and April, performed by Helen Walasek and myself, illustrates these points. This mission was financed by the German composer David Wilde, who gives us proceeds of the sale of his record, "Cry Bosnia". We carried to the Zemaljski Museum part of the sum of money collected for them by the Swiss National Museum in Zurich where some of their objects had been on loan. The Sarajevo Museum had known this money was there for them, but they were not themselves capable of the negotiations to obtain it. By assuring this money was actually delivered in marks, we enabled the Museum director to have personal control over what he wanted done for the building, something that had not happened when work had to be commissioned and paid for by outside bodies, easily suspected of putting their own interests ahead of what was really needed.

We also encouraged and made actual an early gesture towards cementing Croatian and Bosnian cultural relations. We registered as UNHCR and took with us into Sarajevo Zlatko Mileusnic, here with you today, a Croatian curator now at the Ethnographical Museum, Zagreb, who had worked in the Zemaljski Muzej, Sarajevo for seven years. His journey to his former work-place brought solidarity to his former colleagues, and new ideas about what they might need, since Ethnography and Natural History are the two most endangered departments of the Museum. The video tape which you see was made on a camera provided by the Zagreb Ethnographical Museum. We set up arrangements to follow Zlatko's visit with a visit to Sarajevo by Robert Child, collections management expert from the Welsh National Museum, who will assist in designing the small training program arising out of ideas provided by Zlatko's visit.

At the same time, in respect to the Museum, we were able to solve a misunderstanding between the Museum Director and the American firm previously responsible for doing certain fabric repairs to the Museum, paid for by the George Soros Open Society fund. I particularly liked the American work on covering the windows, and was able to report on its virtues at a meeting at the office of the UN Special Co-ordinator in Sarajevo, Mr. Eagleton, when the operations of implementing agencies were discussed. My report about the Museum, requested by Unesco Sarajevo, and my publicly expressed admiration of this work, stabilized personal relations at that point.

Our planned introduction into Sarajevo of two Turkish experts on manuscript care and restoration, failed. We had planned that they should examine and assess the state of the rare painted books preserved in the Gazi Husref Beg Library, Sarajevo's one surviving library of rare books, and also to inspect the 14th century Sarajevo Haggadah, a National Museum treasure now in a bank vault, which by one account could have been damaged by damp. Travel expenses for these men had been donated by the Turkish Friends of Bosnia, under the generosity of their director, Nadir Latif Islam. The men arrived in Zagreb, but one of them, Cazim Hadzimejlic who was of Sarajevo origin, needed to return to the University where he taught in Istanbul, before we succeeded in

getting them onto a UN flight. However, staff of the Gazi Husref Beg Library were given confidence by our attempt to bring them help. They were happy to show us the state of the books in their new storage place, and discuss with us a possible manuscript training program which they had in mind. We learned, by coincidence they had made a large number of new acquisitions shortly before the war - treasured manuscripts purchased from mosques in East Bosnia which mosques are now certainly in the main destroyed.

Helen Walasek and I carried an exhibition of my drawings into Sarajevo, consisting of 12 images on the ancient Bosnian dragon motif, and these were mounted for an opening on April 5, which became a cultural event. I shared the exhibition with a Bosnian woman, Amila, who had made works on the same theme, and interviews with us appeared on Sarajevo television along with coverage of an exhibition of photographs of destroyed mosques. A guest at the opening to my exhibit was the Bosnian Foreign Minister Irfan Ljubijankic, who congratulated me on what we had done for Bosnia, and requested that I meet with him at his office, where I went on April 7th.

Irfan Ljubijankic knew all about our work, for his deputy was someone who remembered me from student days, and who had told him about those times. He wanted us to always speak of the multi-cultural nature of Bosnia, which was easy to do, since the tombstones which I had studied showed by their inscriptions how people of different religions lived together in Bosnia at all dates, such that different religions could be held by members of one family, and the same style monuments were at times shared by all. Ljubijankic pointed out, Bosnian Muslims never destroyed monuments, while their neighbours ruined over 900 mosques. He begged BHHR to try to provide some help for the damaged mosques.

Here was a case of how BHHR projects become formed. Now that Irfan Ljubijankic has been killed, BHHR looked for an affordable project involving mosques, which could be performed as his memorial, carrying out his deep-felt wish. We consulted with Dr. Colin Kaiser of Unesco, Mostar, who is sent here by Unesco, today. Mostar expects an earthquake in 1997, which comes every 35 years. All historic mosques in Mostar need to be consolidated by then; the quake can destroy them in their present state. There is no money designated by the EU (otherwise responsible for Mostar reconstruction) to this end, beyond their care for three domed mosques, under patronage of the city of Florence. Dr. Kaiser suggested four important mosques in Mostar's East side be chosen to receive consolidation in memory of Ljubijankic. These could receive the necessary consolidation for 800,000 deutschmarks, or around £340,000. One of them is the 17th century Hadzi Kurto's mosque at Tabacica near the Old Bridge, whose minaret fell recently in a strong wind.

I would like those present to remember about this project; further details about this and any other of the projects I mention below can be obtained from our office. We need donations for every one of these projects - action on any one would greatly boost local morale.

BHHR is deeply interested in consolidation of surviving Ottoman vernacular houses. The famous Hasansabanovic house in Sarajevo's Old Town, for instance, badly needs roof repairs. A unique house in Mostar which was a private museum before the war and which has miraculously survived with contents and woodwork in tact is the 17th century Biscevic House. A tank cannon missile shot at the columns supporting the upper room, missed. The extensive female living quarters in another house up from Mostar's Old Bridge, Kajtoz house, miraculously survived. Repairs for these two last houses, which we have been trying to obtain for two years, will come to around £100,000 for the two, or about £50,000 each. There has been interest towards their repair in both Sweden and Turkey, but no action has been taken yet.

We have accepted the project offered by Mostar's Franciscans, to help consolidate and ultimately rebuild traditionally designed quasi-baroque Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Mostar, completed 1866, bombed from the air, and gutted within. This will be an extremely expensive effort, of around several million pounds. We are compiling a brochure about the building as a start. Interestingly, the bells of this church never stopped ringing, and still mingle with the call to prayer of the muezzin, allowing sound to join the two sides of Mostar in a traditional way, which no geographical separation can forbid. Two BHHR projects are dear to the Bosnian women's groups, as they involve family hygiene, water, and the well-being of women and children. These are rehabilitation of town baths in both Sarajevo and Mostar. Rehabilitation of the baths could include introduction of saunas, and a program for rehabilitation of war-shock and wounds by water therapy. The Ottoman baths in Sarajevo are now a casino. Their change to be one in the 1970s caused turmoil in the Hamamovic family, whose ancestral role had always been care of the baths. A Hamamovic woman is now a member of BHHR in America.

The exotic, Austrian period Baths in Mostar played a great social function up to this war, and are an exciting project BHHR has secured in Mostar's main Musala Square, on Tito bridge. They have never changed their original function, but plans for such a change were under discussion at the present time, and were blocked when the baths were obtained as BHHR project. Restoring their beautiful interior would be a challenge, but they are not gravely damaged. These baths need architectural feasibility studies performed.

A project of enormous social importance is that which always rouses enthusiasm and emotion in Bosnian minds, namely, mine-clearing of selected graveyards and holy sites.

This project BHHR shares with AIASN, whose founding director Mevlida Serdarevic has written, "From 1992, Bosnian graveyards have been particularly threatened. Many of these graveyards were used simultaneously by people of all four religions. They have been used as locations for war machinery, as is the case with the Jewish graveyard in Sarajevo, and some graveyards have been levelled. But most serious are the implications, they have been mined, and hence are dangerous to all visitors, particularly children."

All Bosnian women's groups know, children are those who most frequently encounter mines. The most prevalent mines in Bosnia are small green plastic cylinders, surmounted by a plunger resembling a star-form on a stem, manufactured in the former Yugoslavia and with a shelf life of 50 years. When buried, the star resembles a weed; if it is stepped on, it explodes to maim or kill. It is estimated there are around six million unexploded mines in the ground of Bosnia and Croatia. There is incomplete record of where they have been all put, but they can be expected around the perimeter areas of confrontation lines, as they were cheaper than guard dogs. In East Bosnia, they are certainly attested to have been planted in graveyards, whereas in other regions, this is thought highly probable to have occurred.

Reverence for the dead goes back to pre-Slavic times in the former Yugoslavia. It is not possible to keep people out of graveyards. Everyone knows the need to mine-clear historic graveyards. In areas where fighting is not likely to recur, and where people of all religions share graveyards which also contain the outsize, 14th and 15th century tombstones, mine-clearing would be a service to culture and to humanity as well.

Mine-clearing is very expensive, because of risks involved. Graveyards would need to be cleared by professionals, in combinations with teams of locals who in any case might have some idea of where the mines were. A rudimentary method is to send in herds of sheep, but this method does not precision-check the total endangered territory.

The projects of BHHR cannot be carried out further without a serious injection of funds. I hope we have explained how we are unique - we have a functioning network of associates on the territory of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia and even Serbia, to whom cultural heritage transcends politics, and who wish to see rehabilitation and peace, to set damage to right. Our projects little overlap with those major projects of Unesco, the EU, the UN or even the Bosnian government itself. Dr. Sead Kreso, director of Bosnia's Association for reconstruction, told me he was glad we undertook this work, because their primary concern had to be revitalize industry.

Although the Bosnian government has only little considered problems of culture (for instance, the National Museum still lacks a phone), there are indications that this may change. We cite the example of Sejdalije Mustafic, a loyal supporter of BHHR at the beginning of the war, when he was director of the Federal Institute for Protection of Monuments. He lost this position as the result of power shifts. Now he has resurfaced as General Secretary of the Presidency, working constantly with Alije Izetbegovic. He at the same time has agreed to become the next president of AIASN. Through him, Alije Izetbegovic has realized we are useful, and during our last visit to Sarajevo, suggested we all meet together to discuss Mostar's heritage.

We have experienced that potential donors have often refrained to give money to us, expressing their wish to give nothing until the war ends (World Monument Service), or to only give it to a larger body than we, such as Unesco, or Mr. Eagleton's UN Special Co-ordination Office in Sarajevo, which supports various reconstruction projects. In the present climate, however, presentation of money to such larger organizations to provide aid for cultural heritage does not in fact assure that any of this money is used for this specific end, because right now heritage is regarded as of lower priority than, say, schools, and there is not enough money for schools.

We say, try us. We need to survive, and we need you to help us consolidate Bosnia's now fragile heritage, before wind, rain, earthquake and official neglect complete what Serbian nihilism began.