
Report from Dubrovnik

International PEN Club sides with Serbian genocide

by Elke Fimmen and Klaus Fimmen

It became obvious to everybody who attended the PEN Club meeting in the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia on April 21-22, that the International PEN Club, an association of writers and "intellectuals," has lost, once and for all, its already shattered moral credibility. In the words of one attendee, French writer Finkielkraut, "The least that the PEN Club could do is to dissolve itself!"

The 59th meeting had been long prepared and approved by the international board. But a couple of weeks before the meeting was scheduled to begin, the German PEN Club sent an official letter to the Croatian PEN Center, announcing that it would not participate because it feared "political misuse" of the meeting. Furthermore, the "lack of freedom of the press" in Croatia was given as another reason, and 28 other national centers refused to attend as well. The whole event, which should have taken place in the beautiful old city of Dubrovnik, which was under constant Serbian artillery barrage for six months starting in December 1991, basically took place on board a ship which sailed from Venice through the islands of Hvar and Korcula and back, with not even two full days spent in Dubrovnik. The PEN Congress was declared not to be an official congress because of the lack of a quorum, but only a "lyrical" meeting.

'I will speak to my friend Dobrica Cosic'

The international president of PEN, the Hungarian György Konrad, is the best example of the nostalgia for "old Yugoslavia" which dominates not only the PEN Club, but has penetrated into "intellectuals" and governments all over the world. He caused quite a scandal when he said on the island of Hvar that he likes Dubrovnik, but that he "doesn't like so many borders one has to cross on the way to Dubrovnik." Prof. Vlado Gotovac, president of the 150-year-old Croatian Cultural Association "Matica Hrvatska," gave the appropriate reply, saying that those who liked Yugoslavia so much, where they could travel easily, have to realize that many political dissidents were in jail in that very country, including himself.

Even more incredible was Konrad's reply to a delegation of survivors from Vukovar, a target of Serbian genocide. When approached by a Vukovar mother and asked for his

intervention on behalf of 350 missing people from the town, he replied that he would speak to "his friend Dobrica Cosic" about it. Cosic is president of rump "Yugoslavia" and the author of the infamous 1986 Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, which formulated the call for a Greater Serbia. This statement of Konrad is comparable to someone saying in 1942 that he would speak with his friend Heinrich Himmler about the victims of the concentration camps.

Truth cannot be suppressed

Despite the fact that the international board of PEN had forbidden discussions about the Serbian genocide against Bosnia, a courageous initiative was taken to convey reality to the remaining participants by Professor Separovic, a former foreign minister of Croatia, president of the Croatian Society of Victimologists, and director of the independent documentation center Documenta Croatica in Zagreb. He chaired a



Elke Fimmen addresses a rally protesting the Serbian attacks on Sarajevo, in May 1992 in Zagreb, Croatia.



The beautiful old city of Dubrovnik, Croatia, a cultural treasure for all mankind, was subjected to a six-month artillery barrage by Serbia starting in December 1991 (it is shown here before the war). To rebuild will require an international effort, breaking with the bankrupt policies shown by the PEN Club leadership.

roundtable in the PEN Congress on the subject of “victimology,” which took place in the beautiful old theater of Dubrovnik. Speakers at the roundtable included the co-chairman of the panel Prof. Winston P. Nagan from the College of Law, University of Florida; Prof. Otto Triffterer, professor of international law at the University of Salzburg; Prof. Otto Molden from the Austrian think-tank “Forum Alpbach”; professor for moral theology Dr. Pozaic, S.J., from Zagreb; director of the Croatian Information Center and historical researcher Ante Beljo; epidemiologist Dr. Petar Gotovac from Zagreb; and Elke Fimmen of the Schiller Institute.

Professor Separovic recalled the brutal Serbian aggression starting on Dec. 6, 1991, in which hundreds of people were killed and the historic old city was severely damaged. He showed the only piece of paper which remained from the library of the Inter-University Center of Dubrovnik, which had housed internationally famous archives of victimology, and where every year international summer courses of victimologists had taken place. He addressed his fellow scientists, who did not dare to come to Dubrovnik now, explaining that the war damage inflicted on Dubrovnik is very bad, but nothing compared to other places in Croatia and Bosnia. “Croatia now does not have the right to take its own territory. What would the world say, if one-third of the territory of the United States were occupied? Or if Florence were to be bombarded?” He reminded the audience of Churchill’s comment on Chamberlain’s attitude toward Hitler: “They had a choice between dishonor and war. They chose dishonor and got war.” He called on PEN to speak out forcefully against the genocide, since writers must be the conscience of the world.

Professor Triffterer gave his speech despite a 15-minute electricity blackout, during which the entire audience remained seated and maintained their concentration in total darkness. He called for an international Nuremberg Tribunal against those individuals responsible for war crimes. He stressed that it is not the anonymous “state” which is committing murders, but individuals, who have to be brought to account for it.

Professor Pozaic pointed out in his speech that, with the genocide and the mass rape of Bosnian women, individuals’ identities are being destroyed, and with them man as a social being. He attacked those “who change right into wrong and wrong into right,” and attacked the European Community as being in “open friendship with Serbia.” In closing, he referred to the injunction from the Bible that “You have to be your brothers’ keeper,” and appealed to everyone for forgiveness and reconciliation, as difficult as that would be.

‘The Balkan war is a gigantic psychological experiment’

This was the theme of the speech by Elke Fimmen of the Schiller Institute. She explained that the warfare is not only directed against Croatia and Bosnia, but is serving at the same time to destroy any morality in a western population which is tolerating these horrors. Old geopolitical aims are reached through this war, and everybody is held in check who even timidly tries to put up resistance, by pinpointing his or her “own guilt of the past.” The truly guilty parties she focused on are the Nazi psychiatrists like Radovan Karadzic and his late mentor Jovan Rascovic, and their sponsors at British intelligence-linked institutions like the Tavistock In-

The Dubrovnik Declaration

Noting that the war of aggression in the former Yugoslavia continues without the prospect of immediate settlement;

Noting that the war has resulted in hundreds of thousands of victims who have been killed, wounded, mutilated, raped, tortured, driven from their homes, towns, villages and cities;

Noting that the war has encouraged the practices of genocide, ethnic cleansing, mass rape and other depredations;

Noting further that the war challenges the fundamental precepts of civilization, moral sensibility and legal culture upon which postwar European society has been painstakingly constructed since the tragedy of World War II and the defeat of Nazi imperialism;

Noting additionally that the victims of the war have experienced transgressions of the most basic standards of law and civility upon which, however imperfectly, the contemporary public order of the world community has been founded;

Noting with concern that the war in the former Yugo-

slavia constitutes a direct challenge to the precepts, principles and fundamental values upon which the U.N. Charter was established, especially the principles of respect for international peace and security, the outlawing of aggression, the respect for humanitarian values in time of war, the respect for fundamental human rights in time of war as well as peace, the respect for the obligation to use peaceful methods for the resolution of conflict rather than resort to the scourge of war, the respect for human dignity;

We now declare and affirm the following:

1) the human right to peace is universal and binding on all members of the international community;

2) wars of aggression are illegal, immoral and are outlawed by the positive law of international society;

3) those who plan and execute wars of aggression bear direct, individual responsibility for such conduct, and under the principles established in the London Charter and applied by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg may be apprehended, tried, convicted and punished for crimes against the peace as well as conspiring and planning wars of aggression;

We further declare and affirm:

4) the *ius contra bellum* remains an important aspect of international public order and is part of a continuing global effort to eradicate the scourge of war for the settlement of conflicts. The Dubrovnik Declaration recognizes

stitute, which has provided the basis of training for many psychiatrists in former Yugoslavia (see *EIR*, Feb. 12, 1993, "The Tavistock Psychiatrists Behind the Rape of Bosnia"). Everybody was shocked upon hearing that Lord Owen is also a trained psychiatrist. At the end, she attacked the head of the German PEN Club for his cowardice and called on everyone to expose such scandals as the fact that Mihailo Markovic, the chief ideologue of the ruling Serbian party who justifies the genocide, has taught at and is still associated with the University of Pennsylvania. She called on German "intellectuals" Jürgen Habermas and Oskar Negt to immediately leave the editorial board of the Frankfurt School-linked magazine *Praxis*, whose exponents are Svetozar Stojanovic and Mihailo Markovic, leading ideologues of Serbian leaders Dobrica Cosic and Slobodan Milosevic, respectively.

The Croatian papers *Vjesnik* and *Slobodna Dalmacija* headlined their coverage of the roundtable "This War Is Run by Psychiatrists," highlighting the challenge to Frankfurt School representative Habermas and reporting on the Tavistock connections.

At the "International Workshop on Genocide," which was held under the chairmanship of Professor Separovic and Professor Nagan separately from the PEN conference, other important issues included the genocide against Croats in

and immediately after the Second World War, i.e., the British-Tito-masterminded massacre of Bleiburg. Especially noted was the resolution of the National Conference of Black Mayors in the United States, which had voted at its last conference in New York against Serbian genocide. In this spirit, the "Dubrovnik Declaration" (see box) was discussed and passed by the participants of the workshop, which will be circulated for international support.

From 1933 to 1993

The occasion of the 59th International PEN Assembly would have been particularly fitting for intellectuals to demonstrate solidarity with the victims of genocide and attack those responsible, since Dubrovnik was the site of the International PEN Conference in 1933. A brochure prepared by the Croatian PEN center reminded visitors that, at that time, the international board of PEN had called upon its members to support a resolution against the witchhunt in Germany against intellectuals critical of the regime. Then, many national centers did not follow the call.

Now, 60 years later, the whole world knows about the genocide against Croatia and Bosnia. The example of Dubrovnik, a Unesco-protected jewel of the Adriatic which was heavily damaged by Serbian shelling, could be seen on televi-

the importance of the laws that limit the sphere of military activity, and the violation of these standards may constitute war crimes as defined by not only the Nuremberg principles but all the Geneva Conventions and related international prescriptions. We also recognize that under conditions of either war or peace certain standards of humanitarian law apply as well as universally accepted standards of human rights, including the framework of rules relating to the prohibition of genocide, racial discrimination, protection of women and children and general civil and political rights.

We declare the following to be universally applicable:

1) **The Principle of Inviolability.** The individual has a right to respect of life, integrity, physical, psychological, and moral well-being and such values as are inseparable for the personality.

2) **The Principle of Equal Treatment.** All persons are to be treated without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, language, social position, wealth, religious, philosophical and political views.

3) **The Principle of Security.** Everyone has the right to personal security.

We solemnly declare that these principles of peace, humanitarianism and human rights must be universally respected and that continuing violations are an affront to humanity.

sion screens around the world in 1991 and 1992. What does it mean now to the inhabitants of this most beautiful historical and cultural center, which always has been an attraction for millions of tourists from all over the world, if the world's self-proclaimed "intellectuals" behave in such a morally bankrupt way?

Cultural warfare against Christian heritage

The behavior of PEN is having the same effect as the barbaric shelling of Serbian militias. It fits into the systematic international campaign to equate victims and aggressors. The sabotage of such an important conference as the one in Dubrovnik is a further element in the psychological warfare, which is designed to undermine the courageous spirit of the population. The people of Dubrovnik had returned to their homes after the heaviest fighting was over last year. There were renewed attacks just some weeks ago, at the same time that the German PEN Center chose to cancel its participation.

Dubrovnik is strategically very sensitively exposed and subject to air attacks at any time. Today, Dubrovnik has about 40,000 regular citizens and 15,000 refugees, many of them from nearby Bosnia. The social situation and the living standard are ruined, mainly through the collapse of tourism. Yet people hope for a better future and for an end to the war.

One crucial element of their identity, which was the main target of Serbian attacks, is the tremendously rich culture of the city. Dubrovnik was a center for the development of classical poetry in the Mediterranean. Being an independent city-state for centuries until the 19th century, its main pride as a trading center was its *Libertas*. One of the oldest pharmacies in Europe, which is still operating today, dates back to the 14th century. The old Franciscan monastery, one of the jewels of the city, was hit by more than 60 grenades during Serbian attacks and the centuries-old, invaluable collection of handwritten manuscripts and prints was barely saved. The beautiful main street of the old city, looking like a marvel, was shelled with grenades. Fifteen old-style houses were totally burnt out, and it was only the resolute action of the local population, which went into the streets despite massive shelling on Dec. 6, 1991, which saved the old city from the huge fire which would have otherwise burned down everything.

The cultural program of the PEN Congress was overwhelming. The first evening, a reading of Shakespeare sonnets in English, Croatian, Italian, and German took place in the old castle. The next evening a beautiful concert by the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, the Zagreb Soloists, and Zagreb Opera prima donna Ruza Pospis Baldani, with music by, among others, Bach, Corelli, Croatian 18th-century classical composer Sorkecevic, and arias from Handel and Gluck, was conducted in the old Franciscan church. Beethoven's Triple Concerto, which was performed at the very end, succeeded in igniting a strong spark of optimism in the audience, which was commented upon afterward by one local resident: "You have to be optimistic, otherwise we are not going to survive."

It is certainly a challenge to American readers to reflect for a moment on the fact that the 18th-century internationally known humanist and scientist from Dubrovnik, Rudger Boskovic, among other residents of the city, was a strong admirer of Benjamin Franklin and took part in the international efforts to establish the United States as a free country. Many experienced sailors from that area were on the first ships to the New World, including most probably the ships of Columbus. And it was the plan of the geometric city architecture of Dubrovnik, that New York City's first architects used. Today, there are people in the beautiful city of Dubrovnik and in all of Croatia and Bosnia waiting for someone to help them build their future once again and defend the treasure of Christian humanism which belongs to all mankind.

The proceedings of the PEN Roundtable as well as of the International Workshop on Genocide will be available from Documenta Croatica, c/o Professor Separovic, University of Zagreb, Department of Law, Trg Marsala Tita, 41000 Zagreb, Croatia. The center has already published one collection of works on genocide in Croatia.