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## Interview: Zvonimir Trusic

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# Popular pressure kept politicians from caving in

*Zvonimir Trusic is president of the Croatian Volunteers Association, which has 35,000 members. Many people spontaneously took up arms when it came to the defense of their homes. From the very beginning, Mr. Trusic was a volunteer along with his son, then 17 years old, and he fought in all the decisive theaters in Croatia. Today, after the almost total demobilization, the volunteers, many of them disabled, are treated as if their war experiences were "their private affair," and are receiving almost no support. The association is highly critical of the Croatian regime, as he described in his interview on April 19 in Zagreb with Elke Fimmen and Helmut Böttiger.*

**Trusic:** There was a spontaneous mobilization of the population against the Serbian attack at the beginning of the war. This practically forced the politicians to act. [Croatian President Franjo] Tudjman, who was constantly acting under foreign pressure, was forced not to sign the very kind of treaties that only now are being signed. They were ready, even at the early phase of the war, to surrender. I personally witnessed how the politicians were ready to apologize to Belgrade, and to stay within some kind of Yugoslavian framework.

The mobilization of the population forced the politicians to not give up, but never really totally. There were always calculations and afterthoughts in their minds. For me, there is only one dilemma: Are these political amateurs and incompetent people, or is this a matter of national betrayal and treason?

The government knows very well our position as Croatian volunteers. Of course, they try to undercut our influence. At the last meeting of the association of volunteers on Feb. 26, the government intervened by throwing in pro-government people, trying to undermine the whole idea, and to move me out, which didn't work. Another example: In 1992 I spent half a year in prison, because they tried to get me out of the war in this way. Officially, the reason was "killing for national motives."

I led the last attempt to break through [the Serbian siege] to Vukovar, and I categorically confirm that Vukovar could have been defended. The military encirclement of the city was never total. In the last days of its defense, groups of people were pulling out through certain corridors, through

which it was possible to get in. The action to actually get through was stopped in Zagreb. When it was known that our group wanted to go to Vukovar, there was a refusal to supply the necessary anti-tank and armor-piercing weapons. In the end, I was forced with my unit to take over by force a storehouse from the Croatian Army to get the necessary supplies. They sent military police with armored vehicles after me, to prevent me. From a military standpoint, it is very clear that Vukovar could have been defended, but obviously, other motives were crucial in this matter.

**EIR:** What is your perspective for Bosnia?

**Trusic:** The only option for Bosnia is that the Croatian and Bosnian forces together defeat the Chetniks, i.e., the Serbs.

Gorazde is another image of Vukovar. You can trace the hand of the same forces on an international level, who designed the fall of Vukovar and who designed the fall of Gorazde. I believe also, that the Bosnian Army, together with its Croatian counterpart, could have done much more for the defense of Gorazde. It could have been possible to regroup the troops from other parts of Bosnia, where there was not so much engagement.

A great deal of the responsibility for the fights between Croats and Muslims lies with the Croatian leadership in Zagreb, because at the beginning of the war, the Muslims displayed a great inclination to organize joint actions. Historically and out of necessity, they leaned on Croatia. Only somebody out of his mind, or somebody who commits national treason, could cause the Muslims to take the position of the enemies of Croatia. A lot of things happened, by which Muslims were turned against Croats.

Certainly one of the turning points in the relations was the murder of Croatian HOS Commander Blaz Kraljevic and his group of eight people in Hercegovina by Hercegovina special forces. He was a Croatian emigré, who had returned for the defense against Serbian aggression. He and his group were killed in an ambush on special orders, after his group had taken over the city of Trebinje in eastern Hercegovina which had been Serbian-held. He was part of a faction that was for the alliance between Muslims and Croats. He was murdered to prevent such an alliance. Up until then, common Croatian-Muslim units had functioned quite well in Bosnia.

After that, Muslims were no longer regarded as allies, but were imprisoned, taken away from the units and so on.

A lot of crazy moves from the Croatian side produced the total hostility and animosity between Croats and Muslims. The fundamentalists on the Muslims' side had a good pretext to develop total antagonism against Croatia. At that moment, the fundamentalists within the Muslim ranks saw their chance to form an Islamic state. They could only grow on the basis of this Croatian policy.

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## Interview: Marko Veselica

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# Why Croatia needs Libertas movement

*Marko Veselica is president of the Christian Democratic Party of Croatia and professor of economy at the University of Zagreb. He was a longtime political prisoner under communism. On April 19, Professor Veselica explained why he is participating in the citizens movement "Libertas" to Elke Fimmen and Helmut Böttiger.*

The basic reason is that the political engagement in political parties in Croatia has become unproductive. The ruling party from the very beginning of the war killed the will of the Croatian people to resist the enemy and to resist the Serbian attack. It did not want to mobilize the population to beat up the aggressor and to win the war. It did not believe in the capability of the Croatian people and the Croatian Army and has at the same time mystified the military potential of the enemy. It accepted the role of international factors, who were siding with Serbs, that is, the United Nations and the European Community, who were working systematically against the Croatian liberty, sovereignty, and the emancipation of Croatia, as well as other people in the ex-Yugoslavia area.

The biggest mistake was that the ruling party did decide not to take the weaponry from the Serbs, because it could have been taken very easily. When the Croatian Army was advancing, they didn't want to follow this line; instead they bowed to international pressures and brought in Unprofor. They have created a division of Croatia against the Croatian interests. From then on, we may detect a kind of cooperation between [Croatian President Franjo] Tudjman and Belgrade's regime rather independent from international factors: They have been acting together in certain points, a subtle

cooperation, conscious and sub-conscious at the same time. It is a subtle cooperation with a genocidal regime in Belgrade against real Croatian interests and against its real productive capacity.

After the detection of this cooperation with Belgrade, the destruction of Croatian national hopes came to the surface. The best productive powers of the Croatian people have been put aside; the people became demoralized, and resignation started to dominate. A totalitarian state is in the process of creation; all rational creative forces are being destroyed; a complete, one could call it, "narcotization" of Croatia is at work. The opposition to the ruling policy, is being kept out of the public in the media, especially the television. The darkest forces are coming into the light of the day, and this all has a destructive effect on the Croatian mentality.

This action for Croatia, *Libertas*, is rising up against this process, which is a kind of cancer for the Croatian future. We expose ourselves in order to galvanize people again. We want to be present wherever Croatia is most threatened, and want to create a kind of political guerrilla fight, motivate people, and out of that create a new political strategy for Croatia. So, regardless of the fact, that I am a leader of a party with a good political rating, I nevertheless want to subordinate the interests of my party to the interests of Croatia as a whole. Political parties turned out to be totally incapable of dealing with manipulations of the ruling party and the kind of political mafia game. There are people here who have earned maybe DM 10 billion by smuggling weapons, and these people may very well be connected with foreign intelligence services to undermine Croatian fighting ability. We could have developed a balance in quality weapons, having this money, that they have smuggled into their own pockets.

The people in *Libertas* are not engaged in parties, but are artists, people from public life, and so on. We want to speed up the formation of a national salvation program. It doesn't have anything to do with a political career, because our career is Croatia and its liberty and sovereignty. We want to rise above all the particular tiny interests and calculations. We think that that is a much faster way to gather people into the new stream, to get them out of passivity, out of a sense of helplessness, and make them aware that something really can be done. In this group, we unite knowledge, honesty, memory, intellectual capabilities and so on.

This is a group of, in a way, chosen people, who feel the destiny of a nation, who are not officials, but who want to transform this sense into political reality. I think I personally can give a significant contribution to this idea.

