
Interview: Argentine Officer

Croatia fights for western civilization

The following interview was granted to EIR in December 1991 by an Argentine Army officer, speaking from the city of Split in Croatia. This officer, a member of the Army's parachute commando group, is well known in Argentina for his professional capabilities, and fought in the four military actions carried out between 1987 and 1990 in defense of the dignity of the Armed Forces. He is accompanied in Croatia by a larger group of Argentines.

EIR: What is a group of Argentines doing in Croatia?

Officer: Well, this goes back a ways. After the Malvinas War in 1982, many of us realized that the enemy of western civilization was not merely communism as such, but that crude capitalist liberalism that has been adopted worldwide in the form of international usury was what was manipulating international politics behind the scenes.

Thus we realized that we were being subjected to a policy of domination in which there was neither respect for a nation's cultural sovereignty nor any possibility of development from the Christian standpoint. That is, man has to have hope, has to have some expectation that he can develop. If one is limited to a subordinate role and is told that there will be no possibility of developing, this is a cause for tremendous frustration.

So we realized that there was a supranational government, dedicated solely to the pillaging of nations. In the case of Latin America, it is trying to strip it of its Catholic heritage and its Hispanic tradition. There are many things for which people will fight—for their cultural roots, for their own identities, not just for food or a piece of land. In Latin America, the plan is to try to change the peoples' cultural identity, not to take the culture and develop it to the benefit of the nation, but to radically change it, stripping it of all good. We could say that this is dictatorial, since no one can impose a culture on another people. So, how is this related to the European question, and what does all this have to do with Croatia?

Croatia is a nation with a 1,700-year tradition of Catholic culture. It has served as a dike against Islam; they are a people who have suffered a great deal and who therefore have deep cultural and historical roots. Croatia has the same religion as Hispano-America, and for the 45 years following World War II—under the pretext that it had allied with the Germans—it has been subjected to a policy of forced denial of its culture.

That policy of cultural destruction can be seen everywhere. It can be seen in the destruction of the medieval castles, of the churches, of the Roman cultural heritage.

Dalmatia, for example, has many vestiges of Roman culture. Concretely, there is the Palace of Diocletian in Split; there are many signs of what western Christian civilization is all about, but in the best sense, not deformed.

Yugoslavia is a nation created on the basis of an imperial policy of *status quo* which was developed by Great Britain in Europe. People with different backgrounds, different cultural roots, and who wanted to live as separate nations, were united by force. Don't forget that in the Yalta accord between Stalin and Churchill, the Balkans were split 50/50. Where the Soviet Union was, there is now a vacuum, and Great Britain moved into that vacuum—obviously backed by the Bush administration. So, this nation wants to assume its 1,700-year-old historic identity. . . .

By virtue of being Catholic, and of having certain principles, [Croatia] is not allowed its independence, and efforts

An Orthodox warning to the Serbian Church

This appeal was issued by six Orthodox intellectuals living in France. It was published in November 1991 in Le Monde, and in the January 1992 Catholic World Report, English-language edition. Shortened, the appeal reads:

The Serbian state, using what is left of the Yugoslavian Army, is waging war against Croatia. It would like, it says, to "defend" the Serbian minority living in that country. It is possible, in fact, that after many Croatian cities and villages have been destroyed, this minority will really be in need of protection. However, we must recognize that before the battle was joined, and before the psychological campaign which preceded it, the Croatian government had no intention whatsoever of committing "genocide": The Serbs and Croats were neighbors living in peace. . . .

Today, everything has changed. In the conditions created by the war, maniacs who in the past had limited themselves to verbal insults or the writing of slogans, have begun to kill. The longer the conflict lasts, the more they will be joined by ordinary people, driven by the massive destruction to believing that the fatherland must be cleansed of its "eternal enemy."

The Serb leaders began by provoking "spontaneous disorders" in Vojvodina and Montenegro. This enabled them to install their supporters in power. They then tried the same tactic in Croatia. As the Croats did not want to demonstrate against their government, the Serbs of Knin, again "spontaneously," surrounded the local police headquarters. At the same time, and just as "spontaneously," Serb journalists, writers and historians, who until then

are being made to destroy it by brute force. This, despite the fact that there is a democratically elected government; despite the fact that there has been a referendum in which the people have voted for independence, and despite the fact that there have been indications of an agreement, including even trying to form part of a confederation.

I think the battle on the international level is the same, because it is the fight of nations which seek to preserve their cultural identities, to develop their cultural identities, to live in peace with development, and the supranational government seeks only to maintain its policy of usury, of population control, when what must be done is to invest in technological development to try to—as God said to Adam and Eve—be fruitful and multiply. It may seem fantastic, but it is perhaps the destiny of man to conquer the universe, to extend himself, colonize the galaxy. Culture that seeks to encourage develop-

ment is traditional Christian culture, so obviously they must try to cut it down, kill its roots, somehow destroy it, as is occurring here in Croatia; as is occurring in Hispano-America in a different way.

EIR: The Western press has written a lot about the bombing of churches, schools, religious centers, etc. Can you give us some details on this?

Officer: I'll tell you what I've seen. The battle plan of the Serbs—who are largely atheists, dominated by a communist culture and education—their plan is to eliminate every vestige of Croatian culture so that afterwards, when there is a plebiscite held by the United Nations, they can say, "This territory is Serbian." The project is that of Greater Serbia, and it is backed by Great Britain, which is also Argentina's enemy, regardless of whatever treaties have been signed. It

had hardly cared about the matter, flooded the press with articles denouncing the genocide committed by the Ustashtis during the Second World War. They thus reawakened passions more than half a century old. . . .

In the spring, in Belgrade, the people demonstrated against the communist regime, conveniently renamed "socialist." The government replied by sending in tanks. . . . Military incidents multiplied in the Serbian regions of Croatia. The Serbs forgot why they had demonstrated. They gathered to "defend the interests of the nation," the war started, and the "socialist" regime remained in power despite the upheaval which was sweeping across eastern Europe.

But what were the real Serbian interests in Croatia? During the last years before this war, the Croats felt frustrated because they were living in a unified state, centralized under the Serbian crown. . . .

Why are we writing all this, holy and venerable Fathers? Because the Church you are guiding seems to be contributing, undoubtedly unconsciously, to incitements to hate. . . . Certain Church leaders have more and more often written and preached about the past sufferings of the Serbs, about the crimes of the Ustashtis, about the ditches and caves where the bodies of innocent victims were thrown. These subjects have become the constant focus of the religious press.

Among the victims of the Ustashtis, there were real martyrs, since their captors often singled out the Orthodox, asking them derisively, before they were shot, if they wished to be rebaptized, and requiring them to wear an armband bearing, not the letter "S" for Serb, but "P" for Pravoslav, that is, Orthodox. It is thus understandable and praiseworthy that the Church honor those who confessed their faith to the point of death. Such a glorification ought not to coincide with an appeal, implicit or explicit, to

hatred against the distant descendants of the men who put them to death. If honoring these martyrs inflames passions, it would be better without a doubt to wait for a more opportune moment.

Today . . . the army attacks the Croats, who are much less well equipped. The victims are above all the Croatian towns and villages. It is not a question of forgetting the Serbs of Croatia, but we must change what appears fated, we must break the circle of violence, of hate, of death. . . .

The Serb people are at an impasse. Despite the official propaganda, everyone knows well who is the aggressor, who the defender, who shot first. The Serbian Orthodox Church must not make herself the accomplice, even unconsciously, of a "national communist" war machine. To save the future, this senseless war must be stopped as quickly as possible.

It is at this moment that your word as pastors is indispensable. You must ask for the combat to stop, for the essential thing is that the guns be silenced.

In the past, when the people were attacked, when their very existence was threatened, the Church blessed the defenders of the fatherland and considered war a "lesser evil." Today the people have been caught up in an aggression whose likely result even contradicts its stated aims (we are thinking of the fate of the Serbs of Croatia). The Church must confront the people and demand that they no longer do evil.

We ask your pardon if we have written with what may appear a certain rudeness. Love demands, not complacency, but truth. And it is love for the Serbian Church and people which has moved us to write to you. With our respect and our hope.

Signed, Olivier Clement, Nicolas Lossky, Tatiana Goritcheva, Elisabetta Behr-Sigel, Pavle Rak, Milovan Danojlic.