

## MPs in Sarajevo told: There isn't much time left

A 16-member international fact-finding delegation, consisting of 10 members of parliament, their staff, and reporters, was reportedly told in Sarajevo on Oct. 11 by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and Vice President Ejup Ganic that their efforts on Bosnia's behalf were extremely needed and welcomed; they were cautioned, however, that there wasn't very much time left. "They are killing us every day; this is a very sophisticated terrorism by the Belgrade regime," Ganic said, according to a wire service report by Cox News Service reporter Bob Deans, who accompanied the delegation.

The parliamentarians held a press conference in Sarajevo with Vice President Ganic that was attended by most press in the city. It was the first international linkup of parliamentarians making such a visit.

"Sarajevo has become one big concentration camp," said U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey (D-Ind.), one of the co-chairmen of International Parliamentarians Against Genocide in Bosnia and Hercegovina, as he stood near the bomb-damaged office of President Izetbegovic. The average diet of the people of this cultured, modern city, is now inferior to that allowed in many of the concentration camps in Nazi Germany. "There is simply no way this can be justified, tolerated, or allowed. The Serbian heavy artillery must be taken out," McCloskey said, according to Cox News Service.

Though it was no mean feat for the parliamentarians to get into Sarajevo at all (see *Documentation*), the delegation from the United States, Italy, Malaysia, Jordan, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada was of like mind that the visit was just step one; the real question is what they could do in their respective countries to save this city and the thin but courageous people they saw there. Members of the delegation promised the Bosnian leaders that they would be back with 300 more parliamentarians in the near future.

Two members of the delegation went to Rome before returning to their homes, where they joined forces for a press

conference and meetings with Christian Democratic Party leader and parliamentarian Roberto Formigoni, who was unable to get away for the fact-finding trip. (Italy was represented in Sarajevo by MP Laroni Nereo, who suggested to Bosnian leaders that Italy help to negotiate a settlement, because of the Italian government's strong stand against the partition plan of European Community "mediator" Lord David Owen.)

At a well-attended press conference at the parliament building in Rome on Oct. 13, Formigoni and Malaysian MP Dominic Puthuchery suggested that a special session of the U.N. General Assembly be held to solve this crisis and that Owen and U.N. envoy Thorvald Stoltenberg be fired. Formigoni was quoted by the Italian dailies *Il Giorno* and *Avvenire* and the Italian news service ANSA, about his perception that what is happening in the Balkans "is part of a design of destabilization of Central Europe fed by those who have interests in preventing peace in this part of the world." Formigoni particularly criticized the Balkan policies of Britain and the United States.

Members of the parliamentary group are apparently in agreement that Owen and Stoltenberg must be replaced and another solution found.

### U.S. must change policy

Shortly after his return to Washington, Representative McCloskey held a Capitol Hill press conference to call for Secretary of State Warren Christopher's resignation. Bosnian press gave prominent play to the congressman's call. He explained that as a "loyal Democrat" and a "strong backer of President Clinton," he felt the "best way to help him now is to encourage him to find a more effective and forceful secretary of state." In particular, McCloskey pointed out the failure of the administration's Balkan policy: "Secretary Christopher has vacillated, confused, and deliberately obfuscated on the straightforward issue of Serb ultra-nationalist aggression."

McCloskey insisted that by failing to take action against Serbian aggression, "we are encouraging extremist elements in general and are fueling Russian imperialist campaigns."

Press conferences were also held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Amman, Jordan; Canberra, Australia; and Ottawa, Canada, in which the group's conclusions were circulated. Two Jordanian newspapers gave prominent coverage to the fact-finding trip, the daily *Al-Sha'b* and the weekly *Al-Add-Diar*.

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## Documentation

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### Parliamentarians say Owen plan violates all norms

*The following statement was distributed in press conferences held by individual parliamentarians upon returning to their respective countries Oct. 15-18.*

After laborious efforts and many obstacles, a group of 16 international parliamentarians and organizing staff adamant on succeeding in the mission they set out to achieve, arrived in Sarajevo on Oct. 11 on a fact-finding mission and for the purpose of announcing officially the formation of International Parliamentarians Against Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mission was subject to numerous pressures to frustrate its members' efforts by Unprofor [U.N. Protection Forces] which refrained firstly for more than two weeks from giving their approval to the mission, and, after giving their approval, refusing to transport the delegation on U.N. transport. The challenge moved the members of the group to insist on travelling from distant corners of the planet to meet in Zagreb, Croatia, putting Unprofor in front of their responsibilities and moral commitments. From the United States, Malaysia, Australia, the U.K., Jordan, Canada, and Italy, they arrived in Zagreb to receive the rude, uncourteous response from the French General Cot, who protested against being called at 10 p.m. Saturday night for his assistance and cooperation. The mood of the treatment changed to a more courteous one on Sunday evening, with General Eyde, assistant to U.N. mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg, dining with the two co-chairmen of the group, U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey (D-Ind.) and Malaysian Member of Parliament Dominic Puthuchearu. But cooperation remained minimal, as the U.N. agreed to transport only two to four of the party of 16.

The members insisted on group action and all showed up together the next morning at the airport, where Unprofor finally agreed to remove the unacceptable, frustrating obstacles from the path of such an official delegation, which had been invited and welcomed by the authorities of a sovereign

nation-state, a member of the United Nations.

Thus, the delegation finally was able to meet with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Deputy President Ejup Ganic, Speaker of the Parliament Mirko Lasovic, and other duly elected members of parliament, representing different political parties and ethnic groups in Bosnia, except for the SDS, which had joined with the aggressor JVA Serb army and militia under the fascist leadership of Radovan Karadjic.

### Unprofor aids genocide

Witnessing the miserable, inhuman, and grave suffering of the Bosnian people and the citizens of Sarajevo, the delegation held a press conference in the besieged city, declaring their full solidarity with the cause and plight of the Bosnian people, subjected to genocide before the eyes of the international community and the protection of Unprofor. They left Sarajevo more convinced of the validity of the accusations of Unprofor bias against Bosnians, and the sovereignty of their internationally recognized nation. Such bias has been conducted under the policy directives set by the two mediators, Stoltenberg and Owen.

The delegation was made up of two U.S. congressmen, Frank McCloskey and Charles Wilson (D-Tex.); former U.S. State Department official Marshall Harris, who resigned in protest against U.S. Bosnia policy; three Labour Party members of the House of Commons in Great Britain, Collum McDonald, Malcolm Wicks, and Kate Hoey; two Malaysian MPs, Dominic Puthuchearu and Wee Choo Keong; Australian MP Paul Filling; European Parliamentarian Nereo Laroni from Italy; Jordanian Parliamentarian Laith Shubeilat, and two members of the organizing staff, Umberto Pascali from Italy and Djenana Campara, who is from Bosnia but now resides in Canada. The delegation's observations and findings are recorded in the following:

### Firm commitment to the nation

1) The Bosnians, supported by all civilized persons and institutions, refuse any solution to the conflict based on ethnic or religious criteria, and all—Muslims, Catholics, and Orthodox—cling to the unity of their nation's territory and its sovereignty as a duly recognized, independent state in the United Nations. This was best represented and exemplified in the statements made to the delegation by President Izetbegovic, a Muslim; Speaker of the House, the Orthodox Mirko Lasovic; and other officials of Muslim, Croat, and Serbian origin.

2) Crimes against humanity are being perpetrated against the Bosnian people by subjecting them to physical, cultural, and psychological genocide before the eyes of the international community, the United Nations, and the U.N. Security Council, which is directly responsible, according to international treaties and conventions, for the protection of the sovereignty of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people from genocide inside its borders and beyond.

3) The delegation was surprised by the bias exhibited by Unprofor against the Bosnian side. This bears witness that

Unprofor does not seriously protect the people as much as it very seriously protects the status quo being imposed by force by the aggressor Serbs. The delegation was convinced beyond doubt that Unprofor is not executing its mandate, weak as that mandate is, which is suspicious. Although mandated to provide and protect humanitarian aid, even with the use of force if necessary, Unprofor has constantly acted impotently in the face of the parties blocking humanitarian aid, through endless, futile negotiations that leave caravans at a standstill for months, such as the hundreds of vehicles delayed in Strogan near Split for the last six months.

4) On this same subject, the delegation noted the ongoing objection of Unprofor to operate the excellent airport of Tuzla, which has been completely liberated by the Bosnians, and which airport, considered to be in better shape than Sarajevo Airport, is capable of receiving over 500 tons of supplies per day.

5) The delegation was worried about the reiterated reports of the withdrawal of some Unprofor units from around Srebrenice, allowing Serbian forces to occupy these positions. Such alarming reports call for investigations, particularly since eastern Bosnia is being subjected to a total blackout by Unprofor.

### **Mediators violating U.N. covenants**

6) The delegation is convinced that the two mediators who control the political decisionmaking of Unprofor are constantly suggesting, and ordering the execution of, proposals which are categorically contradictory to the United Nations covenants, under the pretext of accepting the status quo. This pretext violates categorically the sole founding principle of the United Nations, that no power is allowed to change the borders of a sovereign country by force. The conditions that have been created by the policies of the two mediators are designed specifically to destroy the morals and the resistance of the Bosnians, to force them to sign documents which would eliminate their sovereignty, their culture, and eventually their physical existence. In this respect, the delegation found confirmation of this finding in the draft agreement proposed by the two mediators for the partition of Bosnian and Hercegovina, which most certainly results in withdrawing the sovereignty of the republic and diminishing the status of the Bosnian people to that of a tribe.

7) The delegation was deeply disturbed by the ongoing tightening of restrictions on press activity, unduly frustrating the international media, which are no longer allowed to travel from Zagreb and Split, but only from Ancona, to Sarajevo. The Bosnians are subjected to psychological duress by Unprofor which has begun to restrict the flow of outgoing mail carried by the small number of travellers (including media staff), by limiting the number of letters a person may carry to six! It has been confirmed that certain reporters and photographers had their materials confiscated, their films destroyed, and their equipment returned empty, without any record being made of the materials taken or the action. This raises

grave questions regarding Unprofor's mission: Is it an unbiased, humanitarian mission to protect people and soothe their suffering, or is it a force of occupation with a secret agenda? The secretary general of the United Nations bears the responsibility to investigate, clarify, and correct the situation by making sure that the integrity of the people entrusted with these tremendous powers be above question.

The members of the delegation see it as their duty to bring these findings to the attention of their parliamentary colleagues throughout the world, as well as to influential members of the executive bodies of the governments of the world, and to the peoples of the world, and to inform them beyond any doubt that the delegation bears witness in front of God and humanity that genocide has been and is still being committed against this extremely cultured, European people in Bosnia. Each and every person, whether in a position of public responsibility or a simple citizen in this supposedly civilized world, who receives this information becomes charged with the moral responsibility of acting to stop the genocide, regardless of how modest the action may be; otherwise, we shall all be complicit in the ever mounting atrocities being committed and developing into a trend in world politics, which can lead only to the upsurge of fascism anew and to the horrors of world war.

The delegation calls upon parliamentarians around the world who share love and respect for humanity above all narrow personal or national interests, to join International Parliamentarians Against Genocide in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

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## **Interview: Dominic Puthucheary**

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### **Owen, U.N. bureaucrats are not accountable**

*Dominic Puthucheary, a constitutional lawyer and member of parliament in Malaysia, is one of three co-chairmen of a recently constituted international parliamentary grouping entitled International Parliamentarians Against Genocide in Bosnia and Hercegovina (IPGB). He was interviewed on Oct. 1.*

**EIR:** You are one of the co-chairmen of an international group of parliamentarians calling for a change in policy with respect to the Balkan crisis. What are you trying to do?

**Puthucheary:** The Balkan crisis reflects certain fundamental questions involving the United Nations—basically, the respect for the sovereignty of a member country and the obligation to protect that country. Secondly, the very important issue of protecting the inhabitants of the member country from genocide being committed against it. And these two