

**Trip report Peter Fankhauser 29.9.95 - 13.10.95
(partly joint trip with Gerd Krauth: 1.10.95 - 9.10.95)**

Contact persons without official status are given with first names only

28./29.10.95

Travel by train to Mohacs via Budapest-Pecs with Zorica Paliz.

30.10./1.10.95

Meeting of potential coordinators of the TOCP. Discussion of the organisation and its goals and ways of operation.

s. separate short minutes.

1.10.95

Travel by car to Sombor.

Meeting with Manda and Ivan at their house. There are many refugees in the area; most of them live in private families. There are no larger camps in the area. The small children do generally not go to Kindergartens, since the parents would have to pay and have no money.

In a neighbouring village Backi Monostor, a pure Croatian settlement, a large number of Serbian refugees have been accepted. The Croate population helped them even financially and by providing household goods for them. Although this example should in principle be made widely known through the media, this is not done in order to avoid unfriendly "cruisades" by hardliner nationalists and to avoid attraction of an excessive number of additional refugees.

2.10.95**UNICEF activities in the Sombor area.**

Tried to take up contact with UNICEF personnel which according to Bert Bom's information is working in the Sombor area to care psychologically for refugee children. Intention was to find contacts to Kindergarten-like institutions in Vojvodina who care for refugee children. Calls to Belgrade (UNHCR) revealed that no UNICEF staff is in the area any longer. They had provided training to the local psychiatric services (Sombor, Tel. 226 22) and left the program under supervision of psychologists in Belgrade).

Travel with Gordana to Baranja**Meeting with regional council** (Baransko oblast)

prearranged at our request by Stevan . Presented our organisation and the TOCP incl. organisational structure and asked for support. This was promised as far as politically feasible (Serbian members of the community are very sensitive towards suspect contacts with the ennemy !)

Our foreseen meetings of leaders of the refugee organisation were very wellcomed and participation was promised. Even the utopic questionnaire idea met with interest and support of a pilot trial was signaled.

Also wellcomed would be meetings with representatives of commercial organisations and economy politicians to talk about pragmatic solutions to circumvent the embargo by special arrangements for which apparently prejudice cases exist (joint venture with Netherlands private company to export fresh fish from hatcheries).

Lunch in elderly home at Beli Monastir, since all restaurants in Baranja are closed by special decision of the local government in order to avoid drinking by soldiers leading to fights and incidents.

The elderly home also houses a group of refugees from eastern Slavonia.

We learned about the present situation of local administration: the Baransko-Srijemski oblast) is lead by an ad hoc committee.

This committee is presently holding discussion on potential solution of the situation with Croatian representatives; it is however not authorised to take any decisions.

After lunch, Daniela joined the meting to prepare a visit to Kopacki Rit. Unfortunately we could not get a permit to visit the swamp areas near Bilje, since they are not considered safe by the police (1 person killed a couple of days ago and 2 people wounded by snipers).

Meeting in hospital in Beli Manastir

with the director. The hospital is fully shielded with wooden planks and sand sacks to protect from grenades. They had in the last month 60 wounded soldiers from sniper activities. She is interested to obtain overstocked medications from Ciba. She will work through the list provided and send wishes by fax to Ciba. She is very familiar with PTDS (posttraumatic distress syndrome) although mostly on acute clinical level (a few cases of attempted suicides). She also believes that education of community health care people for subclinical phenomena is useful. She would participate or send a young doctor specialized in the topic to Mohacs for a planning meeting. (She gave me several requests to contact friends of hers in Osijek).

3.10.95**Kopacki Rit National Park**

We visit the northern part, the hunting area ("scientific" hunting to keep the population of deer and hogs under control). The hunting ward, shows Daniela, Stevan and us around. The area is a typical, very beautiful "Auenwald". We see and feel the mosquito problem, although it is almost over by now and was rather moderate this year in this area.

Trip by car (Gordana) to Sombor and by bus to Belgrade. Pick-up by Mirko.

Pancevo Peace group.

A meeting was called in Mirko's house. The group seems to be rather active and has around 20 active members and a few dozen supporters. Information on their activities were given, incl. written activity calendar, list of members and some project descriptions (available at request). The group keeps a collection of literature and are very grateful for any books on peace and related matters. They have edited a book "Prijateljska ucionica za malu planetu" for use in schools. They gave me some copies for Vukovar. Sad comments about the inefficiency of Red Cross and other bureaucratic help organisations were made; the responsibility for this mainly attributed to local political impact.

Program for children in refugee camp

Mirko's wife, Jesenka, is organizing help for refugees in the Pancevo surroundings. Ljuba and Vlada, two young students, who also had participated in the summercamp give us a report on the terribly sad condition of these refugees. As a spontaneous help, I pushed them to organize some Kindergarten-like care for the children in two camps. As a starting help I left 500 DM to pay the salary of a part time teacher and some material I had taken along for Kindergartens. I suggested that this activity should be organized by young people independently and suggested direct responsibility to be given to Ljubodrag and Anna.

4.10.95

Short stop at sites of refugee camps for photos.

Meeting with refugee organisations in Belgrad.

Long list of participants is available upon request. The meeting was prearranged with the president of the organisation by Zdravko who keeps contacts with this organisation and had arranged the meeting early September with them. They pretend to represent all refugees and displaced people in Serbia in one organisation which is strictly neutral in politics, religion and ethnics. We informed them about planned communication meetings TOCP in Mohacs, incl. the refugee leader's meetings. Zdravko obtained principle agreement on his draft proposal. They do not know Mr. Vukelic and his organisation in Beli Monastir nor any organisation in Vukovar. Later it became apparent that nobody knows them in Vukovar and in Beli Monastir either although two of the executive members there claimed to have been the key people for refugees in former RSK.

Questions posed were: What can PB help to come around the embargo for special refugee help ? How can PB help with coordination of humanitarian help ?
For both questions I referred them back to meetings of their own organisations; if they came up with ideas and requests based on those, we will be glad to help them. It was however made clear, that we are not an organisation for financial humanitarian or other support.

Visit with editor of refugee journal ODGOVOR.

The Humanitarno Informativni Centar "ODGOVOR" is a private company, editing all sorts of publications directed to refugees (editor, lawyer: Nikola Radas, chief-editor: Zvonko Tarle). It is financed through humanitarian organisations like ZOROS and Red Cross. Besides journals and books, they produce a vademecum for refugees: it contains all relevant informations for refugees, about their rights, their organisations, special institutions with addresses for all Yugoslavia. **Copies must be obtained by PB Danube as soon as available**; it will be printed on Oct. 7. Samples of books and journals obtained (available upon request).

Coincidentally a young lawyer without job, was there to translate for us. He is interested in participation with our work. He will contact Mirko.

Trip to Novi-Sad and Backa Palanka with Zdravko and Ismet. Picked up translator for Vukovar. Since it was already too late for a meeting with the peace-group, we were only told, that the group is rather strong (about 50 members with many activists).

5.10.95

Trip to Vukovar

in Zdravko's company car.

Kindergartens

Meeting with director of Kindergarten, Slavka Lonzar, and pedagogical teacher, Jarmilla Karlas. We informed them about workshops on non-violent communication planned in Vukovar or Backa Palanka. Both are interested in participation if allowed by authorities. We also talked to them about planned Orff-instruments and a corresponding course. They are very interested to participate in the organisation, which they feel could be done in Vukovar, possibly even with private accomodation..

All contacts can be maintained through Zdravko, administrative or financial matters should be addressed to Lonzar, pedagogical to Karlas. Radenko Vranesevic should be kept informed. Top ranking politician for education is Milan Milic.

Background information: there are about 12000 children in Vukovar. In 5 Kindergarten, they have about 300 children (1-6 years) enrolled. 1 new Kindergarten has been started in May in Vuteks company.

Visit of Kindergarten in Brsadin.

Heating still not o.k., because no suitable type (5 kW, 380 V, 3 Phase) is available. Zdravko will order one as soon as possible and get it installed through Ratko. Bill will be sent. (1000 DM available and it was made clear, that if somewhat more should be required, that Zdravko should not let it fail for that reason).

Visit in Kindergarten Trpinje.

The headmaster of the school is in military service (at his age probably as a volunteer). Since the former Kindergarten teacher (excellent impression at last visit) has left the school (pregnancy), nobody knew what had been arranged last time. The children however remembered very well and told the teacher "that this was the man (me !) who had brought us everything". The new teacher is Sanja.

Meeting with Teofilovic and Vranesevic

Upon our question, we were explained, that participation of teachers in our workshop as promised in April could not be realized after the political changes and the alarm of the military in May. Again, they feel that the security and particularly the dignified treatment of their teachers in Mohacs by the Croatian participants and by the population (incl. refugees in Mohacs) was not guaranteed and welcomed the idea of making a workshop in Vukovar or in Backa Palanka. They will participate in Backa Palanka, even if we should be able to organize Croatian teachers to participate (they feel safe in B.-P.) and they are willing to come later on to Mohacs if everything goes well in B.-P. The same arrangement was accepted for the Kindergarten courses. Zdravko was introduced and accepted as our official contact for the area.

By the community they had organized a summer vacation for 1500 pupils at the sea. Now they have started the school year again, but their pupils feel very insecure because the Croatian minister had publicly said, they would not finish this school year. For the waste deposition, a scotish organisation helps them and right now scotish geologists are looking at the situation at the envisaged site. They do not think that discussions with Osijek are useful; "They can solve their own problem if they really wanted to". But they are still interested in contacts with a Swiss specialist (Annemarie Spinnler), to help them setting up an educational programme for the public.

They are very interested in our ecology programme with the mosquito plan; their situation is particularly difficult, since they have no chemicals due to the embargo. The contact person would be Ilija Galovic.

According to T., the refugees in Vukovar are not yet organized ; he does not know anything about our contact people in Belgrade, but confirms that locally Ankica Mihic was trying to get refugees organized. He has however no information about the status of her activities nor about her address or phone number.

Meeting with a neurologist and owner of local pharmacy in Vukovar

He thinks that our ideas about PTSD workshops are good. He is willing to participate in an initiating meeting in Mohacs when preparation is more advanced.

He is also willing to allow use of his fax for occasional contacts by Zdravko to some of our contacts.

He will try to find address and phone nr. of Ankica Mihic and send it to Zdravko.

He will organize a request from Vukovar hospital to Ciba for free medicaments from overstock supplies.

He might become a good contact, possibly even a member of the proposal group.

6.10.95

Visit at the ecological Kindergarten in Backa Palanka.

This is the first and up to now only Kindergarten of its kind in Jugoslavia. It partly relies on Waldorf ideas, partly has its own philosophy of educating children in an ecologically reasonable spirit (biol.-dyn. food, self-esteem, democracy, workgroup/teamwork). It works on private basis, cost is 80 DEM per month; thus only suited for wealthy parents. At present 18 children are enrolled and 3 people are fulltime employed. Their major problem is lack of mental support within the families at home. Different from German Waldorf-schools, parents bring the children to the Kindergarten and "pay for good care", they feel to have contributed their fair share by doing so and feel no obligation for matching educational efforts at home. For us it seems advisable to involve the teachers of this Kindergarten in workshops in Vukovar or Backa Palanka as example of good local care. They should however not be included into our support programme; due to their "extravagant" status, they do have enough money and our standard type materials are anyway not in line with what they use.

Trip to Novi Sad

in Zdravko's car, then to Sombor and to the border by bus, then to Mohacs by taxi.

Wellcome of participants to Ecology workshop:

Osijek: Jasna assistant in agrochemistry), Spasinja
Baranja: Daniela (Kopacki Rit), Stevan
Novi Sad: Marija (mosquito specialist, university)
Hungary: Sandor (nature conservation society)

7.10.95**Workshop Ecology: s. special report****8.10.95****Continuation and conclusion of the ecology workshop.****Travel to Osijek**

with Peter and the Osijek participants.

Walk through the city:

it is incredible, how directed and engaged the people have been prepared for war. All houses have been covered with wood shelters, sand bags and piles of bricks. Nobody seems to be bothered by these preparations. The subtle psychology behind these measures works: people seem very little afraid by the coming war.

9.10.95**Bishop in Dakovo**

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with Ivan and 2 other members of the refugees. Information was given about our contact plans. Support was requested and also promised for attempts to organize contacts with church community personnel from catholic and orthodox sides about common problems of care for people in their communities. "The catholic church always wellcomes all such contacts and our priests can engage in them without asking for permission. This is however fully different with the orthodox church."

Asking for an active appeal of the church against a war solution in East Slavonia was refused: "Of course the church will never preach war, but standing before his family to defend it cannot be refused by the church." In-depth discussion did not help; the church is waiting for war as everybody else.

We are told that in Serbian villages in western Slavonia there are still orthodox communities with their priests and that in Srijem there are 22 catholic priests who stayed there throughout the war.

Centar za rehabilitation

Psycho-, physiotherapy and work therapy for psychologically damaged people (mainly soldiers) is being organized in an old building of a former school for handicapped people by the peace center (the former school is no longer needed, all the formerly protected inhabitants are now placed in some normal workplaces !?).

Start is foreseen with groups of 8-10 people once weekly for next month. The group seeks support. I did not encourage them to seek support from the public in western countries; nobody in the West will support an activity to save mentally disturbed people at a rate of 100 per year whilst they are produced with government money at a rate of 100 000 per year on a continuous base.

Participation in the weekly meeting at the Peace Center

They would like to engage in organisation of the all Croatian yearly peace group meeting, but have no money. They might propose it to be held in Mohacs (which does not seem to be a good idea to me as long as it shall stay a purely Croatian event).

10.10.95

Paedagogical faculty:

We visit the biology teacher who was supposed to come to Mohacs for the ecology workshop and ask for an explanation why he did not come. He tells us that he was forbidden to go by the dean . He would be very glad to work with the project and sees no problems, if Mr. Santo or Glavas would support the project.

Kindergarten

We visit the Kindergarten DV "Krijesnica" in Osijek. This is a big Kindergarten with excellent infrastructure and an excellent crew of teachers as could be easily seen from work of the pupils. They have a total of about 200 children in classes at 20-30. One of the classes is bilingual hungarian and croatian. They have 2 music teachers in their staff, they are interested in Orff music which they do not know. We should let them know if we organize a course in Backa-Palanka; somebody might be interested to take

part. Definitely they are interested in Mohacs. This Kindergarten definitely needs no support although they also have sometimes problems in getting enough materials. Another Kindergarten in Ivan's village just behind the front line on the eastern side of the Drava is less well equipped and conducted. Participation in our program at some time might be advisable. We can always take up contacts via Ivan.

Zupanije

The Zupan, Mr. Glavas, was not feeling well. We were therefore accepted by his deputy Boro Knesovic. We were given some political/historical introduction. Our ideas about bridge building were wellcome but " a bridge needs foundations on two sides and unfortunately they do not see them on the other side", the only sentence that was worth being broadcasted over the TV. Newspaper and radio were somewhat more factual. We were however officially given the support for activities as e.g. the ecology project.

Reception at the city

Instead of the mayor Mr. Kramariđ and Mr. Santo, we were only meeting with Mr. Santo apparently because of scheduling problems.

We informed about the TOCP organisation and some of our ideas, on which we were again assured support wherever politically feasible.

He is still very interested in all aspects of waste disposal even after hearing from us that Vukovar is not willing to talk about the site problem.

If helicopter flights might be needed for the mosquito control, he is pessimistic about getting approval. Zagreb's blessing is needed. It might be a good idea to have Dr. Becker in Osijek for a first visit.

peace center

Since the first meeting was used for political discussions (s.above) a follow up date was used to inform them about the TOCP. The subject passed with interest and without objections.

Prof. Ante Lauc

He is professor at the economical faculty, brother of the dean of the law faculty, and is an Internet freak. With his views about the need of ethically, economically and ecologically sound basis for proper development he is a very interesting man, very rare in this region. If we can help him to set up an Internet node with information for university students, he will be able to involve many students in activities that will make them open for aspects of a civic society. I promised to help him in setting up a node in Switzerland.

11.11.95**Feliks, Marco**

the reamaining package of materials for Kindergartens I brought to this primary school, since in my judgement the needed it more than the Kindergarten.

I also announced the computers for their computer education room to come through Mohacs.

We had a long political discussion on the advantage of peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia. I believe that some ideas will still have a chance to work later on, but it is clear that also they are prepared to see a reconquerring campaign.

LDE

The working conditions with the city and particularly with the Zupanije are still not as they should be for good cooperation. The money for next year is still not yet assured, Francois has to apply with foundations for support. It is particularly difficult to get small amounts of money that could be used for direct help, e.g. in Western Slavonia to support the Pakraz office. (He would hope for some small funds by e.g. Peacebridge). For the ecology program, a grant of 40000 FF has been requested, a decision should come early November. For future applications, we should apply for an ecology programme under Phare and Tacis in Brussels, (70, Avenue Michel Ange, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium, Tel/FAX (+322 736 8405 (Phare) or 732 6653 (Tacis)). We will order application forms there.

Law faculty

Since the dean of the faculty was called away on short notice, we had a discussion with the deputy.

We had an interesting discussion on codified law, law enforcement and perception of the law in the public. My pronounced doubts were confirmed. V. is concerned about the foreseen changes of the constitution and has actually written an article (specialist's) about. Upon my question, he said that the faculty is not actively involved in any contingency plan for minority legislation for Eastern Slavonia. He thinks however, that the climate in the faculty would still allow an open discussion of these aspects and the development of reasonable proposals if somebody would give them the charter for such a work.

Center for Bosnian refugees.

We got information on organisation and work of this group. The showed us their workshop. Aijsa complained strongly about Mohacs and its lack of active support and questioned its right of existence.

Interview Boomerang

In the peace center I met a freelance journalist from Zagreb writing occasionally for Boomerang. He made an interview with me (with Spasenja as the translator) about Peacebridge's organisation and goals. We had an interesting discussion about the "Herd animal" behaviour of almost all people in former Yugoslavia.

Saponia

By coincidence I found out that the general manager of Saponia (chemical company with 2500 employees before the war who is a good client for Ciba) is a friend of the Zupan, Mr. Glavas. Since this company was involved in mosquito control with bacterium thuringensis before the war, we felt, that a visit might help our programme. We were wellcomed by the head of research Dr. Madunic and the advisor for development Mrs. Lucaric-Vic and had interesting discussions about the economic aspects and a splendid dinner.

We will send the project proposal on the ecology program to Mrs. Lucaric for review.

Refugee group

My report about Baranja and Vukovar and Belgrade met interest. They already knew the refugee journal ODGOVOR. They are willing to obtain more copies and spread them within their organisation.

Antun is interested to participate in a possible workshop on non-violent communication in Backa Palanka. He thinks however that security would have to be warranted by somebody in Belgrade!

Prof. Slavica Singer

She plans to found a society for the promotion of entrepreneurship. It should start by year end with courses for people who want to start new businesses or improve their existing. She would like to get in contact with similar institutions in Western Europe. Main interest is less with theory but with practical, applied instruction by practitioners. Some of the courses organized by Handelskammern in Switzerland could be appropriate. I will have to find out.

12.10.95**UNHCR, Sharon O'Day.**

Questionnaire utopia met with interest. She told me about their experiences with questionnaire for statistical purposes that were not too problematic to obtain. She would feel a pilot experiment could be useful and might be willing to help with it. She thinks that it might work, but the most sincere obstacle is that no politician would want to know what the needs of the people might be.

The question of psychological care is difficult. She thinks that professional organisations have not been very successful (e.g. CPS Croatian Psychoatric Society), because they are partly very traditional and very hesitant. They are the organisation with excessive drug therapy. S. thinks that lay community oriented workers like IRC or MSI who have volunteer groups of trained women for daily stress counseling have better success which is however not recognized by the official societies.

She agrees that bringing these organisations together under the aim of scientific assessment of efficiency could work and would be willing to help us if ever we would plan something like this.

She is very much concerned about increasing harassment activities against Serbs in the Osijek area since August 95.

For the transport of our materials to Vukovar Kindergartens, she thinks that the Lutheran World Federation LWF (Hermina Nikolajason) might be able and willing to help us.

Ambulatorium Dom Zdravlja "DRAVA", Osijek

Visited to get own impression about the institution who had requested help for the provision of various instruments. The ambulatorium is the smaller of two in Osijek who care for government provided health care. They do have the specialists for the requested instruments: gynecologist and ophthalmologist. The institution is incredibly poorly equipped: "not because of the war, it was always like that", said a young

doctor. She also felt, that the requested instruments indeed would be needed, but even much more so, simple instruments like stethoscopes (only one for two treatment rooms available) and blood pressure meters as well as the requested sanitary materials.

13.10.95

Travel to Zagreb with early train (5.55).

Meeting at American embassy with Mr. Finn (counselor, deputy of the ambassador). A short presentation of our organisation and our activities met with friendly and active interest. Particularly the regional ecology project and particularly the mosquito project could expect a benevolent comment from Mr. Finn, when presented to USAID for funding.

Unfortunately also US embassy is expecting a war solution soon after the elections and does not think that anybody (incl. the American president) will actively stop it. After this war Mr. Finn believes that there will be lots of money for development programs incl. education and ecology. An NGO with experience in the area and good founded proposals on the table should find open ears. Mrs. Slavica Radosevic from local branch of USAID seems to be less eager to receive our proposals. She kept proposing other institutions like REC or the Hungarian Ministry for Ecology with its programs to be more appropriate. She also initiated further contact.

My attempts to compare the requirements for the present political situation with those in the economical world as they are at present constantly reiterated under the keyword of "management of change" were again received with some interest; the bureaucracy however seems to be too inflexible to consider such ideas as something that could be realized. Nobody even here seems to pay sufficient attention to the fact that in Eastern Slavonia we have a situation which is fully different from the Krajina situation in July and that a peaceful approach might finally trigger a turn in the balkanic war. Unfortunately this enormous chance will probably again be missed.

Regional environmental Center

Lidija has good contacts to many local activist groups on environmental protection. In Osijek proper, 3 activist groups exist, which I was not aware of: "Green Osijek", a student group at the economical faculty and "Jedini planet" and "Fessa".

I obtained the addresses for contacts.

The center publishes a monthly bulletin which was offered for us to be used for publicity for our mosquito project if needed.

Swiss Embassy meeting with ambassador Troendle.

Results similar to those in US embassy: nothing can be done in the active situation; we have to wait and hope (for a tiredness of Mr. Tudjman after certainly very favorable elections).

Since next year Switzerland will chair the OSZE, there will be a fund opened for a long-term program for which we also might apply. He invited me to stop by everytime I come through Zagreb.

Travel to Basel via Zagreb - Schwarzach - Innsbrugg - Feldkirch - Zürich.