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## CROATIA

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island. In winter, refugees cannot stay in tents. Therefore, more houses should be built, but there is not enough money in the government and local humanitarian organizations. Another way is that foreign countries are expected to accept those refugees. For example, Czechoslovakia accepted 50 refugees just before last winter. However, this organized immigration is not common because refugees usually need to have relatives in foreign countries if they want to get out of Croatia.



In the camp, I talked with some families from Mostar who were recently expelled by HVO, and those from Foca in eastern BiH. The families from Mostar told me their horrible stories about the Croatian version of ethnic cleansing. Since June, the situation of Mostar was deteriorating rapidly. Men were in jails and forced to work in front lines like making bankers for HVO. They were only given a cup of tea and bread in mornings and soup in the afternoons. They were subjected to torture, and many of them died. In the meantime, the rest of the families at home were harassed by HVO soldiers. They made excuses like searching for weapons inside of houses and assaulted women and children. On July 18, HVO allowed men to go back home, but their purpose was to let them pack up everything with rest of their families and forced them to leave Mostar. Then, among those who were expelled by Bosnian Croats, about 500 Muslims from Mostar came to Obonjan.

As of now, still 55,000 Muslims and others are trapped on the east bank of the Neretva River. International humanitarian organizations were forced out of Mostar, and even the U.N. convoys cannot get through to the east bank. In the west bank, occupied by Bosnian Croats, Muslims have no way but to get out of that area, and those in the east bank have become hopeless, sandwiched between the HVO and the BSA.

The families from Foca had been living in the camp for more than a year since they fled from their town, which was destroyed by Bosnian Serbs. They said it was the first time talking with foreigners while many journalists and humanitarian workers were coming to Obonjan. They want to get off of the island, but they can't because they don't have any relatives or can't make contact with them in foreign countries. It's extremely hard for refugees who don't have personal connections abroad to immigrate to another country. They can't even get support from outside, so they have to beg other refugee families to give them some supply stuff. They have no place to go home and are trapped in this isolated island without any prospect about the future.

### Zagreb (July 25 - Aug. 1)

Zagreb was busy creating its own image as a historical city that was going to celebrate its 900th birthday next year. Many road constructions were going on, and people were gathering in the open markets to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. There were many cafes and bars, and people were chatting and cheerfully singing in groups. As elsewhere in Croatia, there were national flags on windows of shops and houses. It's all right to have the flags, but it seems to me there were too many. Croatia is trying to make more attractions and invite more tourists from all over the world. Their effort seems to me that it's just for superficial decoration. It's necessary to clean up the image, but in order to do so, it's crucial to change the authorities' attitudes.

A few months ago, the last independent, national daily newspaper, called *Slobodna Dalmacija*, was put under state control. There are increasing elements of totalitarianism in Croatian political and public life, and the Tudjman government is making a someone-to-blame strategy. Since the fighting between the HVO and BiH armies intensified, the anti-Muslim campaign in Croatian state media has been increased. Influenced by Herzegovinan lobby, the Tudjman government is trying to contribute to politicians in western Herzegovina. It seems that influence makes Tudjman turn to right-wing HDZ politicians from western Herzegovina who were dreaming of annexation of the region of 150,000 people to Croatia. In the meantime, the fate of 450,000 Bosnian Croats who live elsewhere in BiH (31,000 in Sarajevo) is neglected. I should say they are even abused because their misery is used for an attack against Muslims after many of them fled to Herzegovina.

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