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**CROATIA**  
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because the house was not a refugee camp. We didn't really know if they would be able to immigrate to Germany, and even if they could, it would take time until they would actually get there. Harky began persuading them to accept the Makarska plan with tears in his eyes. Going back to Makarska might be dangerous, but that intention would show that they were "not" running and hiding like a mouse. If they stood up together against violence, surely other people with a conscience would join them one after another. They would be able to find friends in Makarska community, and it would be a good example for people's attempts to pursue a reconciliation, not hate at this moment and even after the war. Guns and knives should not be the only weapons for people, but they could have useful weapons of conscience, of tolerance, of morality and of non-violence. It would be just a small story of one refugee group in Croatia, but it could show a victory of non-violence over violence.

Suddenly, Saya said, "I'm going back to Makarska!" and began directly talking to the mothers. It was unusual scenery that a kid was persuading parents. In the circus families, the mothers had a say for everything and kids had to obey. It was the first time for kids to say something about decision making, and Saya, just a 15-year-old girl, courageously made a decision. There was no way for the mothers but to accept her decision. About 3 in the morning of Aug. 6, almost half of the families with Harky, Wolfgang, Gert and I got on a van and headed for Makarska. When we reached Hotel Osejava, it was close to 5. Except Wolfgang, who went back to Mennonite's house, we checked in the hotel. The condition of the hotel was worse than that of Hotel Riviera. Rooms were very dirty and some bathrooms had constant running water. In some toilets, people had to wear boots because of water on the floor. Harky, Gert and I slept in one room until 9.

When we got up, we talked about Aug. 6 and what it meant to people. That day was the 48th anniversary for an atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima (another one in Nagasaki Aug. 9). Japanese people also celebrate an anniversary for the end of the war, in which they were defeated (Aug. 15). Every summer, Japanese people remind themselves and others not to make the same mistake again. The purpose of these celebrations is this: to prevent war and maintain peace. Although Japanese authority had formerly resisted to admit Japan's own guilt about atrocities, but people are making their own peace movements. In Serbia, Serb nationalists celebrate an anniversary for the battle of Kosovo, but with an opposite purpose: to create war and gain their selfish demand at a cost of others. What's lacking in Japan and Serbia (and Croatia) is a self-acceptance of their own faults. Japanese authority is finally making a change in that attitude, but Serbian and Croatian ones are not. If one could be able to listen to others, respect their perspectives, accept their own guilts and establish genuine relations, wars in ex-Yugoslavia could have been prevented. Needless to say, the war in Bosnia is neither ethnic nor religious. Ancient hatred among different nationalities is a stupid excuse. This is purely political, and politicians and intellectuals are making it into a religious war. Besides cosmopolitan cities like Sarajevo, there are towns and villages where people are uneducated and more conservative. So, they are educated by intellectuals so that they can be killing-machines. They have been making a success thanks to "help" of western governments, and the pureness as political war is eroding. We are

now watching a process of destruction of once democratically committed state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, illegally and locally at first and then legally and internationally.

Later on that day, we were kicked out of the hotel by the manager because we were not refugees. We soon reserved one room in a boarding house, a three-minutes-walk from the hotel. Wolfgang came with the rest of the circus families, and he went back to Germany since his mission here ended. For that night, Harky stayed in the house, and Gert and I slept in different rooms in the hotel. On the next day, Harky had to leave for Split. Then, we found out that we could no longer stay in the hotel because people in the hotel became suspicious about us. We decided to stay out of the hotel because we didn't want to let the circus families have any kind of troubles. From that night on, we started a night watch around the hotel. There was nothing we could do to prevent soldiers from coming because they were not rationally thinking. If they came, there was nothing we could do rather than observing the situation. At least, we could make a contact with Mennonite's house and UNHCR.

Hotel Osejava turned out to be a safe place for Muslim refugees including the circus families. It was located in the center of Makarska, and cars kept moving on the road. Refugee kids were making friends with local ones, and they began playing together on the beach. Both mothers and children tried to live normal life in Makarska. Gert and I played with them, chatting with them, shopping with them, having parties with them and seeing movies with them. The children put trust in us, and even those who hesitated at first began approaching us. They liked singing their favorite song "Sarajevo Ljubavi Moja." As for the night watch, we started from midnight and ended at 5:30. We continued until Aug. 15 - with exception of Aug. 13 and 14 - when two more volunteers helped us. After we left, another volunteer took over our place.

With various considerations, I think that Hotel Osejava is a safe place for Muslim refugees including the circus families although I can't be sure about their safety. Because I got to know them personally, I'm deeply concerned about them. It was too early for me to leave the circus families and Croatia as well. I know that I couldn't do much practical help for them because I was not training for non-violence volunteer work. But as Ghandi said once before, no one teaches me non-violence, but I do non-violence. I met many remarkable people who didn't formerly have any training but were doing a really great job. In refugee camps, people from inside and outside are working for education and recreation. In the case of the families in Hotel Osejava, they have a circus. They are the children's circus and far from being professional, but it's something that they can keep their solidarity and that they can really enjoy. It all depends upon how the German group will respond to them - their new life and their circus.

**Brac Island and TCCS (Aug. 12-14)**

Gert and I had been associating with refugees in Hotel Osejava and doing a night watch. On Aug. 11, two volunteers from Mir Sada (most of them returned from Prozor or G. Vakuf) came to Makarska with Harky. Harky left for south soon, but two remained and did the night watch by taking turns. In the next morning, Gert and I took a break and left for Brac, the second-largest island in Croatia, by ferry with Sasha as an interpreter.

Our excursion in Brac was not well-planned. We were supposed to go to some refugee camps, but we didn't even know where they were and how to get there. After getting some information from Harky on telephone, we got on a bus and went to a small port town called Povolja. That town had an

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