

Life in the shadows

After more than three years of war, the Dayton Accord means little to the Bosnians who must live under its terms.

By MORT ROSENBLUM
AP Special Correspondent

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — On the bombed-out fringe of Sarajevo, Edin and his pal glanced at a reassuring French patrol before venturing over to buy heroin on the Serb side of the street.

In Mostar, Europeans charged with unifying two police forces took heart when Croats named a tough new chief.

But they aren't allowed to talk to him; the Muslims denounced him as a war criminal.

As Saturday's nationwide elections approach, workaday Bosnian vignettes like these suggest that the Dayton peace accord, promising as it might be in theory, is paper-thin on the ground.

By now, Muslims, Serbs and Croats are supposed to move freely within Bosnia. Whatever may be in their hearts, they should be preparing institutions and systems on which to base a future.

Much has been done, especially where peace is overseen by NATO gun barrels bristling from armored vehicles. Yet almost anywhere one looks, something seems to be going wrong.

A symbolic site of the 3 1/2-year war is the blackened patch of former buildings in Dobrinja, a Sarajevo suburb split by the border between Serbs and Muslims. During the war, besieged Sarajevans sprinted for their lives across the airport runway located in Dobrinja for a few dozen eggs.

Today, the old front lines are open to anyone who cares to cross. From both sides, that number is small.

"Are you crazy?" said Edin, an unemployed former soldier, when asked

"Don't talk to me about Dayton, or elections. I can't even visit my old house..."

FAHIRA STOSIC
head of Bosnian Muslim-search agency

if he would penetrate Serb territory. "I've already been wounded three times by those guys."

He is glad of the French patrol's protection when he ducks across the street to the edge of Serb territory to buy heroin, which he takes to ease pain.

Last week, two Bosnian Muslims went over the line for a drink. Serbs pushed them into a basement, beat them bloody and shot them in the kneecaps. Then they dumped them on the old airport standoff line.

A Muslim police officer drove up to investigate, and they also shot him in the kneecaps before driving back to the safety of their own side.

On Thursday, a day like any other, small knots of people gathered at either side of the mined center strip and coils of barbed wire, waiting to do business or visit with friends on the other side.

Edin, who preferred that his last name not be used, bought his drugs, paying \$65 a gram for heroin worth twice that in Sarajevo. Others traded food-aid sugar for cigarettes and cognac.

From the Sarajevo side, a flashy blonde clicked across the pocked pavement in high heels to chat with two Serbs in a battered red Porsche. She walked back and the Serbs burned rub-

ber in the other direction.

The divided city of Mostar is a grander symbol of the lingering fear and unbridled loathing that threatens dreams of peace.

After Croat toughs forced scores of Muslims from their homes in West Mostar, authorities under international pressure replaced the police chief. The new man, Marko Radic, slowed expulsions.

The West European Union police contingent can have no contact with Radic because the Muslim government in East Mostar sent a file to the U.N. tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, accusing him of war crimes.

Radic has not been indicted, but officials are under orders not to talk to such people until the cases against them have been cleared up.

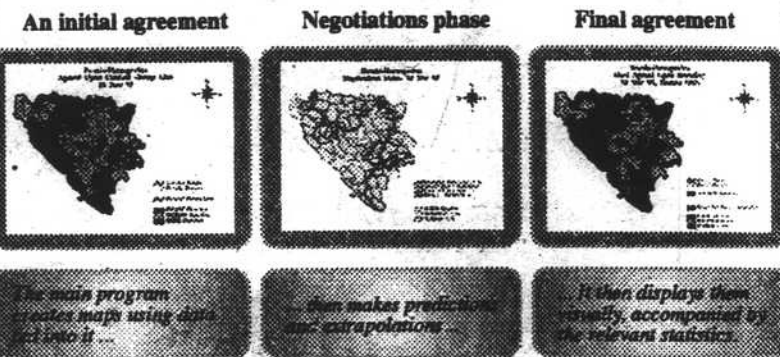
Two weeks ago, European officials named six Croats who they claimed were involved in organized crime. But local authorities have taken no action.

The European police, with no power to investigate, were to have built a single, effective unit from disparate Muslim and Croat forces. They are scheduled to leave in mid-October, and most officers admit privately they are leaving a mess behind.

"We have not managed to unify the police," said Berthold Hubegger, an

ALL PART OF THE PEACE PROCESS

Last November, sophisticated computer programs enabled mediators for the Bosnia war to redraw boundaries within hours.



Using a combination of computer simulation and satellite imagery, negotiators could see the land's contours. Also available were population, ethnic and religious demographics, and information about schools, hospitals and other public institutions.

Source: ESRI

AP

EU police official in Mostar. He said he was not surprised since Croat and Muslim police had only recently been shooting at each other in war.

As in Dobrinja, the grand scale of ten translates in microcosm to bitterness or amused contempt.

In East Mostar, Mohamed Taslidza joked with a friend he hadn't seen in a while. Near Sarajevo, the friend had gone out for cheese, taken a wrong turn, and spent two months in a Serb cell.

Taslidza grew serious when he introduced Fahira Stosic. She is head of a local agency still looking for 1,160 missing Muslims, including her only

brother.

"Don't talk to me about Dayton, or elections," she said. "I can't even visit my old house at Capljina (in Western Herzegovina). My mother went, and they wouldn't even let her off the bus."

On the Dobrinja line, Edin thought even less of Dayton. Still, he acknowledged, there was at least some progress.

"Yesterday, we were shooting at the Serbs," he said. "Today, we are talking to them. Maybe tomorrow, I'll go over there. Maybe."

"In Bosnia, everything is always maybe."

Hurricane strikes Puerto Rico, rescue efforts still under way

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Hurricane Hortense lashed Puerto Rico with punishing winds and torrents of rain Tuesday, killing seven people as it snapped trees and power lines, swelled rivers and collapsed hillsides, sweeping away homes.

Eleven people were spotted floating in their home down the raging Guamaní Canal. Maritime police pursued the house in a boat, trying to rescue the occupants.

Police said the death toll could rise once they reach areas cut off by the storm, which passed directly over southwest Puerto Rico before dawn Tuesday.

Later Tuesday, Hortense skirted along the northeastern coast of the Dominican Republic, which hasn't been hit by a hurricane in nearly 20 years.

The entire north coast of the Do-

minican Republic was under a hurricane warning, as were the Turks and Caicos islands and the southeastern Bahamas.

Tourists were ordered off beaches and evacuated from oceanside resorts. Authorities at eastern Punta Cana airport canceled 14 flights after clocking 90 mph wind gusts around noon.

There was a 10 percent chance of the hurricane striking West Palm Beach, Fla., the National Hurricane Center in Miami said.

In Puerto Rico, victims included a 2-year-old boy killed in a mudslide in the southwest and two 8- and 13-year-old sisters swept away by flood waters in the southeast. The girls' bodies were found under a bridge. Four family members were still missing.

A 75-year-old man was carried away by floods in the east-central part of the island and a woman was found dead — presumably of a heart attack

— inside her car in the west-central farming town of Lares. Two unidentified adults drowned in eastern Humacao.

Hortense cut water and electricity to most of Puerto Rico's 3.6 million people. The water supply could be contaminated by rivers overflowing into reservoirs, Scott Stripling of the U.S. National Weather Service in San Juan said.

Residents of Guayama, 30 miles south of San Juan, spoke of watching the father of two drowned sisters trying to save the younger girl, only to have the surging waters drag her from his hands, volunteer rescue worker Jose Melendez said.

"There are a number of people still missing, but we don't know how many. They could be in the sea," Melendez said.

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