

SUMMER CAMP ZIVOGOŠČE '98

Dear Benefactors,

You have, as readers of Katha Pollitt's column from the "Nation", helped this past summer that refugee and orphan children from **Bosnia** could recover on the sea. In these last weeks you received a "thank you letter" and a drawing from "Zivogosce".

A lady attendant from Bosnia writes thereto: "It is very important for the children that this solidarity has a name. The fundamental message of this undertaking, to fight against war, is that benefactors from all sides dunked the weakest victims into a sea of happiness. This action deeply touched and imprinted itself into the attendants".

The 250 children from Tuzla were almost all refugees who had lived through hell: 30% were totally without parents and 45% had lost one parent. Most of them lived with family or foster parents, almost all in houses belonging to owners who fled abroad.

A shadow was thrown over the happiness in the vacation through the German and European policy of forcing the Bosnian refugees to return to former home areas. About 25% of the children on vacation feared to be driven out for the second or even the third time from where they are living. The foreign refugees are **made to return** and have no other choice than to drive away again those "internal" refugees who have taken their empty houses. Why? Because the Dayton "Right of Return" guarantee is not, in reality, for all. So, the "ethnic cleansings" are now made factually legalised and cemented. The worst affected through this policy are the women and children from Srebrenica who are newly made victims at this time by international politics.

Ten year old **Azra** wrote an upsetting call of help to her Benefactors: "Until yesterday it was wonderful here, but my mother called and said that we must leave our room because the owners are returning already before winter. I don't even want to think about it but I must always think about it. It is like a heavy stone in my heart". How despairing it must be for a war widow, with two children, who must destroy the vacation happiness of her child!

In the following summaries we want to describe some of the stories of the children and reports of the attendants. The complete report can be asked for, but it will be in the German language, since a translation of the complete text goes beyond our capabilities.

We hope that next year further children will be able to work out their traumas through the help of a happy time at the sea. In the meantime a part of the refugee children will be psychologically cared for through the project house in Tuzla-Simin-Han which is financially supported out of our contributions resources. Further, we are supporting a school, an ambulance and the administration in Tuzla-Simin-Han, where 90% of the inhabitants are refugees.

Thank you very much, although in the name of the children and attendants from Tuzla.

When the checks were cashed there are no costs since a member of our group works in an American bank. 100% of the money arrives in Tuzla.

When you wish to continue to support the project, please send your checks to Katha Pollitt, c/o "Nation" or to our address (see below).

Contribution Account: Cyriakusgemeinde 4109767 at the Kreditgenossenschaft, BLZ 50060500

Important: Put the complete address under "use for contribution (Verwendungszweck)".

Raiz is 12 years old and a refugee from Zvornik. He lives in an "occupied" house near Tuzla. The father is without work. There is absolutely no support of any kind. Until the beginning of the year the parents and four children existed through humanitarian food distribution. This has been stopped so that they can feed themselves only through their garden. Raiz said that he always had hunger until he came here. He now fears life and especially fears that they will again be without a roof over their heads when the owners return, which has been announced for this fall.

Edina (14 years old) lives with her sister, grandmother, aunt and uncle in two rooms. Her parents and younger brother were ripped apart by a grenade as they were fleeing. Edina still has, after numerous operations, many grenade splinters in her body. The Serbian occupiers of the house in which Edina lives, fled to Bijeljina and are living in the house of a Muslim family who fled to Germany and who will now be "returned". Through official, international authorities an exchange was bargained for, so that the refugees from Bijeljina (those in Germany) will now receive the house of the Serbian family in Tuzla. As soon as the papers have been issued Edina's family must leave. Where they are to go they do not know. The uncle had a heart attack just a short time ago.

Almasa comes from Srebrenica. Her husband and her oldest son belong to the thousands of men who are "missing" since the UN protection zone Srebrenica was given up. She lives with her sister and the youngest son in one room. The owners of the apartment want to return already this year. Almasa wants to then kill herself.