

Bosnian Initiative

c/o Cyriakusgemeinde

Alexanderstr. 37

D 60489 Frankfurt

Dear benefactors and friends,

Misery in Bosnia, long time an important subject in public discussion, is pushed out of our heads and hearts by ongoing wars and catastrophes, but, you might wonder, we understand your reaction: whose head and heart has room for all that misery and hatred in our world? That's why we think: each dollar or German mark, may it come from some-body with a good or bad conscience, was a good investment having reached its destination that is having saved lives and lessened grievances or contributed to end the war.

Then why you might think continue to help Bosnia and a small initiative? First,

for us, there is no "or", we vote for "both" that is for humanitarian help and reconciliation. Our activities in Tuzla Simin-Han predominantly relate to the only public place in this quarter with 12000 inhabitants, 10000 of whom being refugees from eastern Bosnia:



The House "Priateljice" (friends)

In many families the husband or father is "missing" in Srebrenica. The majority of families have lived in places with only one room for more than four years. The only place where the women can meet and talk to each other und children can play and learn since 1995 is this club. In the building there also is the only kindergarten of Simin-Han. In this house again small reconciliation groups of "muslim" and serbian women are organized, that is between those women who have been deported from Srebrenica and now live in Tuzla and those who are living in Srebrenica now as serbian refugees fom Sarajevo and Krajina. Up to now no rent had to be paid for this house being reconstructed with public money three years ago. But the contract will end march 2000. We plan to buy the house so that the refugees have a safe place of warmth, partnership and reconciliation for a longer time. It certainly will be a success with your broadminded help. One sponsor already promised to make a larger investment; you see our common undertaking is no unwarranted phantasy. Anyhow the whole thing will get a juridicial frame-work garanteeing for a longer period that the usage of the house will respect the purpose of the charity.

We ask 50 sponsors to give DM 1000 = \$ 530 each or 5 000 sponsors to give DM 10 = \$ 5.30 each or anybody who wants to support a long lasting humanitarian und peace making work to give any amount of money for maintaining "Priateljice".

In case the plan to buy a house remains a "castle in the air" we will with your help continue our work.

Please help us to help also in behalfe of the women and children

Parson Elke Klee
Cyriakusgemeinde

Helga Dieter
Courage gegen Rassismus

Dr. Peter Gärtner
Friedensinitiative

Please make out checks to the Bosnian Initiative Frankfurt and mail them to Katha Pollitt c/o The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003-2332 or directly to our adress.

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Dear Katha,

Frankfurt, 10.4.2000

there are two good news.

1. Today "Priateljice" bought a house in Tuzla Simin Han. It is bigger and built more solid than the one we had rent ... and it is cheaper. It seems we are very lucky. The owner was a Bosnian Serb, who works in Germany since 20 years. He built it to retire there. It has a large garden, central heating and a susterne, which is very important because the water-supply is very unregually and most of the women have no opportunity to take a shower in their "houses". Because of the war the owner, who is German citizen since last year, decided not to go back. His "fault" was, that he told me, that he started to build a house in Germany and therefore needs money.

I dealed very hard and convinced him, that it is better to take 115 000 DM from us now than to wait (perhaps to eternity) for someone else, who gives him the 200 000 DM, what he spent for the house (what might be true). There are about 20 000 DM tax . Alltogether about 140 000 DM and some renovations.

When we worked out the idea to buy instead to rent a house half a year ago, we really didn't give this project a real chance because we are stressing our donors with one demand after the other.

We got 50 000 from a foundation, 20 000 from a private family, 42 000 from our German donators and 23 000 From our American friends

We'll thank all your donors next weeks. I don't have a photo from the house yet.

2. I'll come to N.Y. from 2.-15. May to visit our friend Jerry and to meet you. Is there anything special you want from Germany? "Sauerkraut" for example?

What about a trip to Italy and Zivogosce this summer?

It seems it'll be the last summer-camp because there are conflicts in the "Comitee for Basic Rights and Democracy", whether this "only" humanitarian activity absorbs too much energy from "real" politics. In fact, we are a group with a lot of important activities and just a few people, who work on it. Last year, when the Nato bombed a nationalistic-secessionistic crisis into an international war, the Comitee called up German soldiers to leave (desert?) army. Therefore all, who signed the public summons (?) now have a trial(lawsuit?). Hard to explain . I'll try in May again with a good glass of wine.

However, today 6000 letters were posted to people, who donated "Godfatherhoods" for children-vacations last years, another 4000 copies are waiting for requests in my appartement and in the Comitee-office. Last year we had 1400 children in four camps (most of them in Zivogosce). One "Godfatherhood" is 250 DM (\$125), but this does'nt cover the real costs (in average this year about 390 DM=\$195). Of course not everybody, who gave money in the past will do this again. This means a lot of work next weeks: newspapers, peace-groups, schools.

To say it frankly: I hope you can once more publish an announcement,if this is no problem.

We'll write another letter to your donators and "fan-club".

See you soon
thanks a lot

love Helga