



Members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Monaca, PA, Nancy McDonald, fourth and fifth from left, who donated clothing, and Steve Thomas, CFU Home Office volunteers.

# IS Milan Panic A Ray Of Hope?

(The following story appeared in the July 27 *Newsweek* magazine, written by Charles Lane with Margaret Garrard Warner in Washington, Tim Judah in Belgrade, Donna Foote in Los Angeles, Anne Underwood at the United Nations and Joel Brand in Zagreb.)

It's been nearly four decades since Milan Panic left Belgrade on a refugee's odyssey that would ultimately bring him to a new life in America. Last week Panic returned to his hometown, the self-made millionaire chairman of a multinational pharmaceutical company—and the would-be savior of his war-shattered native land. Speaking in American-accented Serbo-Croatian, he took the oath of office as prime minister of the rump Yugoslav federation dominated by Serbia, adding "So help me, God" in English.

Then he unveiled a dramatic-sounding new peace proposal: a cease-fire in the battered republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the withdrawal of Serbian heavy weapons in Bosnia and an end to the brutal practice of "ethnic cleansing," which he called "the disgrace of our nation." As Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic looked on in silence, Panic even said the time might come to recognize the independence of Bosnia. If carried out, the policies would not only ease the war but could also earn Belgrade an end to international economic sanctions and threats of foreign military action. "I'm going to take a pirate ship and turn it into a peace ship," Panic has said.

Panic's characteristically picturesque words were matched by a tentative moment of hope. Leaders of Bosnia's Serb, Muslim and Croat communities signed a European Community-brokered cease-fire accord that, if respected, would provide for two weeks without fighting, the return of refugees to their homes and United Nations supervision of all artillery, rocket launchers and aircraft. Bosnian officials were as skeptical about this cease-fire as they've been about a dozen others that have been broken in the course of the four-month war with the Serbs. Even as the document was being signed, a mortar shell fell near the Presidency Building in Sarajevo, where British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd was meeting with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic; 15 people were injured. But, the Bosnians said, the deal at least gives them additional legal basis to appeal for strong U.N. action to remove the Serbs' heavy weaponry. Panic said he was eager to meet Izetbegovic as soon as possible.

The question is, is Milan Panic for real? Or is he just a well-intentioned amateur being manipulated by Milosevic, whom the international community has denounced as the aggressor in the Balkans, and who up to now has wielded the real power in Belgrade? Panic appears to have no independent political clout, and many Europeans consider him a laughing-stock. But associates in the United States insist he is nobody's useful idiot. Says former Indiana senator Birch Bayh, an old friend: "Milosevic will soon discover he can't manipulate Milan Panic. He's highly motivated, dedicated, candid and frank."

It was largely through shrewd negotiating that Panic built ICN Pharmaceuticals into a multinational corporation with 6,300 employees and 1991 sales of almost half a billion dollars. One of his most profitable ventures (before sanctions) was the ICN-Galenika drug plant in Belgrade, of which he bought 75 percent from Milosevic's government last year. In the United States, Panic played hardball with the Securities and Exchange

Commission and the Food and Drug Administration (whose commissioner he labeled a "jerk"). After the FDA claimed that ICN had falsely hyped a treatment for AIDS, the SEC sued ICN. That dispute was settled; the company did not admit guilt but paid \$600,000 in costs and penalties. Nor is Panic a stranger to politics, at least to politics as it is played in America. A personal friend of Jerry Brown's and a fund raiser for him and other California Democrats, he also threw a campaign bash for Michael Dukakis in 1988.

Diplomats in Belgrade and officials in Washington say Panic's experience in American politics, however high-powered, is no preparation for the twisted world of the Balkans. Panic says, for example, that he will respect Milosevic's power "and he will respect mine." But no one is really sure what Panic's powers are, since the Yugoslav federal government of which he has been made prime minister is partly a shell devised by Milosevic to hold onto the former Yugoslavia's U.N. seat and embassies around the world. Meanwhile, Milosevic controls the ruling Socialist Party (formerly the Communist Party) and has widespread popular backing thanks largely to nonstop pro-government propaganda on state TV. In any case, it's unclear that Panic wants to precipitate a showdown with Milosevic, since their past business dealings have all been friendly.

Since the imposition of economic sanctions, which have crippled the Serbian economy and reduced Milosevic's ability to support Serb fighters in Bosnia, the Serbian president has pursued a two-pronged political strategy: to counter growing domestic opposition by blaming foreign pressure for his people's hardships, and to convince the international community that the fighting in Bosnia is not really Serbia's fault. Serbians think Panic will help achieve both goals. They also hope his business expertise will help Serbia work an economic miracle despite the sanctions. And they hope his talk of peace and democracy will reduce rumblings about military intervention abroad, especially in the United States. Though they have yet to take Sarajevo, Serbian forces have already seized as much as 70 percent of Bosnia's territory—and they may be content to consolidate their gains under the aegis of a U.N.-sponsored cease-fire. "Milosevic wants someone who can tart up Serbia's image abroad, while Milosevic runs rings around him at home," says a top White House official.

**Rallying Point:** Still, with no solutions of its own to offer, the administration isn't going to write off Panic completely. Washington decided to grant Panic an exemption from U.S. laws that revoke the citizenship of Americans who serve in foreign governments, allowing him to go to Belgrade. Said a State Department official at the time: "We don't want it said later that the American government stood in the way of any hopeful prospect." The administration made it clear that Panic does not represent Washington. But Secretary of State James Baker did meet with him in Helsinki two weeks ago. Baker was impressed by Panic's sincerity, U.S. officials said, but also by his political naivete. Washington thinks Panic could conceivably become a rallying point if forces within the regime ever decide to turn against Milosevic. It's a long shot. But after all, only in America could a man like Panic come from nowhere to make millions. And perhaps only in the Balkans could a man like Panic come from nowhere to play a central role in a deadly political drama.

## ng Effects

ark. An off-duty soldier at Zagreb cafe recently argument by tossing a mother demobilized soldier his wife.

ately, there are few health als to counsel the legions not just soldiers—in need he country is a bit like a atological intensive-care t doctors or nurses.

the country's population weeks and even months asements to avoid long-lings or aerial bombings.

freeze in fear when —perhaps just a car back-motorcycle accelerating— em of a rifle shot or air raid

the fighting is waning in remains hard for anyone to war atmosphere. It is on -front posters showing t homes or shot-up It is in the continuing news death and mutilation. And lips of children who dress at fatigues, throw toy at each other and hum war ballads.

the most popular ballads, hildren and adults across y, urges the crossing of the r, which separates Croatia . It includes the following "he Drina must be crossed a burned."

authorities are especially J about the long-term children.

s in greatest danger are lived through bombings or hand, the carnage of war. reach the safety of refugee e children use donated e draw pictures of planes bombs or Serbians attack-ans.

process is repeating itself, ethnic hatred between t Serbs handed down from ation to another. Today's ers were raised on the tales and Croatian massacres rld War II.

ung children in Croatia are p the 1990s tales of Serb and, sometimes at the f their father or mother, etly vow revenge. On a ical level, the next war with y be beginning.

## Valovi Tams Going North and South

**ALIQUIPPA, PA**—The Valovi Tamburitza Ensemble from the Beaver Valley area will be traveling north to Hamilton, Ont. The Ensemble, under the direction of Nick Chavlovich, will play for this year's Fraternal/Humanitarian Day in Canada on Sunday, Aug. 2.

The entire Valovi Ensemble will also be heading south to participate in the TAMFest in Nashville, TN on Nov. 7 and 8. •Earnest Babich/Lodge 1

## Quips Center News

**ALIQUIPPA, PA**—The Ladies Auxiliary and the Executive Board of the Croatian Center in Aliquippa are continuing with their busy schedule of events.

On Saturday, Aug. 8, we will feature a fantastic D.J. His name is "Big Jack" and he plays fantastic music for dancing. So, consider coming to this event. Helen Stoken and Rosemarie Belas are the chairladies.

On Sunday, Aug. 23, Dick Tady and his Group will be back at our Club after quite a few years of absence.

On Saturday, Aug. 29, we will have for the first time the very pleasant, young and happy and handsome men called the "Plava Ponoć" from Cleveland, OH. They are great and you must remember to come enjoy their reditions of our beautiful songs and dances. These guys are great.

On Sunday, Oct. 11, we will again hold our Croatian night with ethnic dinners from 5 to 7 p.m. The popular Plavi Mjesec Tamburitza Orchestra will entertain you.

Oh yes, we will have a humanitarian aid fundraiser on April 23, 1993. Plan to join us.

•Agnes Pavletic/Lodge 720

## Sacred Heart Holds Picnic

**MILWAUKEE, WI**—Sunday, Aug. 2, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Sacred Heart Croatian Parish will hold its annual Summer Parish Festival.

The picnic will be held on the Parish Grounds at 917 N. 49th St., one and a half blocks north of Wisconsin Avenue.

At 11 a.m. to ?? there will be barbecued lamb and spanferkel, chicken dinners, brats, hot dogs etc.

From 11:30 to 2 p.m., the Blue