Response by the Editor

Paul Mojzes
Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA, pmojzes@rosemont.edu
RESPONSE BY THE EDITOR

Dear Rev. Merick:

Your letter to the editor was a welcome sharing of a view not frequently espoused in such measured language as is yours. Much of the writing as well as the speeches of spokespersons of the various religious faith is often so shrill that it obscures rather than reveals the profound concerns which all sides in the tragic war in the former Yugoslavia are attempting to communicate. The views expressed by you and the quotations of Mr. Peter Brock shed additional light on this tangled tragedy.

I will not comment on the accuracy of the data presented here although they strike me as reasonable. Your interpretations are helpful to those who will want to make up their own minds after encountering a variety of interpretations. I suppose what I most profoundly miss in your letter is that although you did not engage, as many do, in angry accusations of the other participants in this tragedy that you did not include any self-criticism and repentance in regard to deplorable actions by some of the leaders or members of your church. Had you done so, you might have been one of the first to initiate a process of contrition and self-criticism without which, I believe, no genuine healing will be able to take place. The German Christians began this process just after World War II and are continuing it even today in the wake of the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. It is high time that some one starts that process in regard to the massacres by the Croat and Muslim ustashes and the Serb and Montenegrin chetniks in World War II. Had that taken place, the present war may have been avoided. There was, however, no civic courage by religious leaders then, nor does there seem to be any now. Without such civic courage the war inevitably continues, increasing its fatalities by the day.

Sincerely,
Paul Mojzes, Editor

May 1995

Dear Editor:

As a journalist for various Franciscan peace and justice newsletters, I visited the front lines of the war zones in Osijek and Karlovack, Croatia, in early 1992. Then on a similar assignment, I went inside enemy lines, this time via an UNPROFOR tank, to Central Bosnia (25 miles NW of Sarajevo) in June of 1993.

For the last four years I have read a great deal about the Balkans in an attempt not only to understand the present horror, a part of which I had personally endured, but also to come