

WAR AND PEACE; INVESTIGATIONS INTO WAR CRIMES AND THOSE WHO PERPETUATE THEM

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RICHARD SCHLESINGER reporting:

(Voiceover) Stopping the fighting in Bosnia will not stop the questioning about what happened behind the lines, in places like Vukovar.

(Footage of mass grave; of remains being exhumed)

Mr. CHERIF BASSIOUNI (Investigating War Crimes): (Voiceover) We discovered the mass grave.

This is one of the skeletons exposed.

We have pictures of not only the mass shooting and killing but of people who were shot with bullets in the back of the heads.

This is a terrible war crime.

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) Cherif Bassiouni is an American law professor who has been investigating Vukovar.

Mr. BASSIOUNI: About 3,500 pages of reports which are backed by 65,000 pages of documents...

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) ...and hundreds of other suspected war crimes.^[L]_[SEP]

Mr. BASSIOUNI: Between 200,000 and 250,000 people killed.^[L]_[SEP]

(Footage of grave; of prisoners; soldiers)

Mr. BASSIOUNI: (Voiceover) Over half a million people imprisoned; 50,000 people tortured; some 20,000 women raped.

(War footage; footage of Raznjatovic)

Mr. ZELJKO RAZNJATOVIC (Known as Arkan; Military Leader): We defend our territories, we defend our children and our churches and our traditions.

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) But Bassiouni believes this man was fighting a different kind of war. His name is Zeljko Raznjatovic, known more simply as Arkan. He's a paramilitary leader.

(Footage of Vukovar)

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) And Bassiouni believes he was partly responsible for Vukovar and committed many other war crimes.

Can you tie Arkan to murders, to rapes, to blowing up houses?

Mr. BASSIOUNI: Undoubtedly. He is not only tied directly with it, he is tied with pictures, videotapes, documents, eyewitness reports.

(Footage of peacekeepers; of Arkan)

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) Bassiouni believes not even 60,000 peacekeeping troops can keep the peace for long if men like Arkan are left on the loose.

Can there be peace in that region without justice for these cases?

Mr. BASSIOUNI: I don't believe so. I believe very fervently that people will remember past scores.

(Footage of war crimes trial)

Unidentified Man: The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is now in session.

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) The UN has set up a special court in The Netherlands to

try suspected war criminals. So far Arkan has not been indicted.

After years of war, there are thousands of suspected war criminals, but counting them is a lot easier than catching them. Only 52 have been indicted so far and, of that number, just one has been brought here to The Hague to face trial.

(Footage of trial)^[L]_[SEP]

Unidentified Woman #1: And the accused is present.

Mr. RICHARD GOLDSTONE (Chief Prosecutor): And that's where the accused is, behind that bulletproof screen.

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) Richard Goldstone is the chief prosecutor for the tribunal. Does the peace agreement make your job easier or more difficult?

Mr. GOLDSTONE: Well, on the assumption that the parties are going to carry out the terms of the peace agreement, it makes my job a great deal easier.

(Footage of alleged war criminals)

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) But Goldstone admits expecting governments to turn over their own fighters may be expecting too much.

Mr. GOLDSTONE: Usually I'm an optimistic person. From a realistic point of view, I must say I have doubts.

Mr. BASSIOUNI: The Dayton agreement contains a number of clauses that requires cooperation with the tribunal. That's as far as the words go. I don't know what the words cooperate...

SCHLESINGER: Is that enough for you?^[L]_[SEP]

Mr. BASSIOUNI: No, it's not enough for me. Had I been negotiating it, I would have said much more.

(Footage of Arkan)

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) These days investigators don't need much cooperation to find Arkan, the man Bassiouni calls a war criminal. He was married in February in what was one of Belgrade's social events of the year. And in Belgrade, he's considered by many not a criminal but a hero.

Unidentified Woman #2: Yeah, he's a good patriot. If somebody is volunteering for his own country and his own people, he's a patriot, I believe.

(War footage)

SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) In all wars, the difference between a patriot and a criminal is defined by what side of a border a person is on. Prosecuting war crimes is usually left up to the winners. But here there are no clear winners. And it may turn out that stopping the shooting was the easy part.

(Footage of grave markers; refugees)

Mr. BASSIOUNI: I think history teaches us that victims want perpetrators to be tried.

SCHLESINGER: And what if they're not?

Mr. BASSIOUNI: What if they're not? They'll keep a grudge. They'll remember tomorrow. There will be revenge.

DAN RATHER (Host): We'll be back with some final thoughts from here in Bosnia in a moment.