

Meggie Szczesny, Charity Co-ordinator for Child Advocacy International, with baby Amar.

Building Bridges for Children



Lion Philip Nathan, Chairman of the Lions Council of Governors for the British Isles and Ireland.

The Lions organisation of the British Isles and Ireland – 24,000 men, women and young people belonging to the world's largest service club organisation – has thrown its weight behind a small but highly effective charity, Child Advocacy International, to bring sick children out of the conflict-torn former Yugoslavia for hospital treatment and care not currently available in their troubled homeland.

Between June 1995 and June 1996 some 30 seriously ill children were evacuated from their shattered homeland for treatment here, and in the current year the project is entering a new and ambitious phase. In addition to bringing further children out, the Lions and Child Advocacy International are delivering sophisticated medical care directly into the heart of the war zone, taking desperately-needed special hospital beds

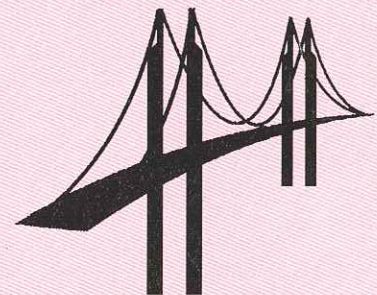
and the sophisticated equipment to service intensive care treatment to be installed in hospitals in Mostar and Sarajevo.

Two doctors from the former Yugoslavia are being trained over here in the use of the equipment (their work at home is being covered by two doctors from England), all at the expense of Lions/CAI.

Such help does not come cheaply, which is why again the Lions of Multiple District 105 (The British Isles and Ireland) are appealing to the public.

(The treatment of these children is totally funded by Child Advocacy and the Lions, and makes no demands either financial or of time, on the public health service resources of the British Isles and Ireland).

Child Advocacy International has worked in partnership with the Lions Clubs of Great Britain and Ireland since shortly after it was set up 15 months ago and the Lions have obtained three grants, of \$25,000, \$75,000, and \$250,000, from the Association's International Charitable Foundation, LCIF, to assist in the evacuation and treatment of youngsters, and, in the coming year, the provision of intensive care and special care beds for hospitals in Mostar and Sarajevo.

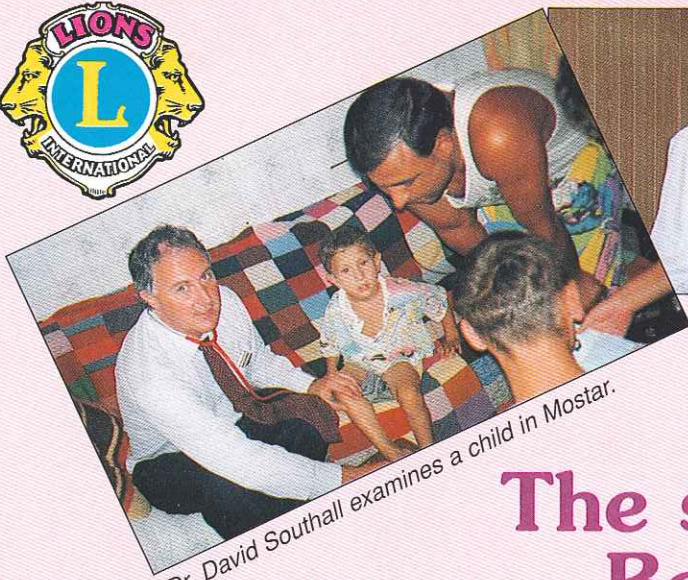


"Building Bridges" this year's theme for Lions – the motto of International President Augustin Soliva of Brazil.



Thanks! (Picture by courtesy of the Eastern Daily Press, Norwich).

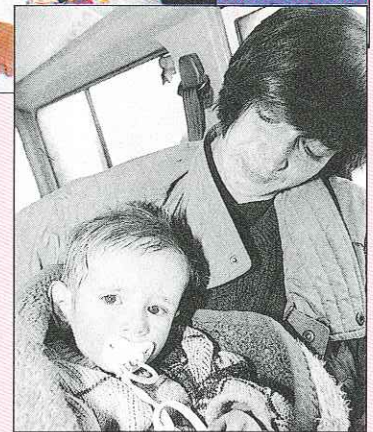
"By healing the suffering children of a nation, we may take one small step towards healing the hurts of the nation itself..." – **Lion Chairman Phil Nathan.**



Dr. David Southall examines a child in Mostar.



David Southall with Dr. Hafid Konjhodic, Consultant Neurosurgeon in Mostar, and Child Advocacy International's Field Officer Armin Alajic.



Comfort in flight from his mother for little Adnan

The story of Belmin

Belmin was just a few days old – and he was dying. Born with a serious heart condition, he was a very sick baby, in desperate need of sophisticated surgical attention.

He was born recently, in an advanced European city, where such treatment should have been routinely available. but his chances of survival were radically reduced, for Belmin came into the world in Sarajevo, where the hospitals, like so much else, have been seriously damaged by conflict.

Charity

But Belmin was lucky. His plight came to the attention of Child Advocacy international, a small but highly effective British-based charity set up by Consultant Paediatrician Professor David Southall in 1995.

His assistant in Sarajevo reported back to 'the Prof.' in Stoke on Trent, and David Southall swung into action. He has a direct line to the former Yugoslavia, bypassing the inefficient and overloaded system, and began the process of string-pulling, pleading and cajoling necessary to bring out the child.

Visas

Visas were obtained within a few hours – normally a project involving days if not weeks of frustrating bureaucracy – a Dutch military plane took off from Rimini in Italy, picked up baby Belmin and his mother Envira in Sarajevo and flew

through the night to Birmingham's International Airport where David Southall was waiting to collect him at 3 a.m. and make a dash for the Priory Hospital where Paediatric Cardiologist Dr. Joe de Giovanni was scrubbed up and ready to perform an emergency life-saving operation on this critically ill baby.

Belmin's condition stabilised at once, within a very short time he was breathing normally and breast-feeding, and he and his mother were discharged into the care of a local 'foster family' who speak their language to await further surgery planned

for a week later to set him up for a healthy life.

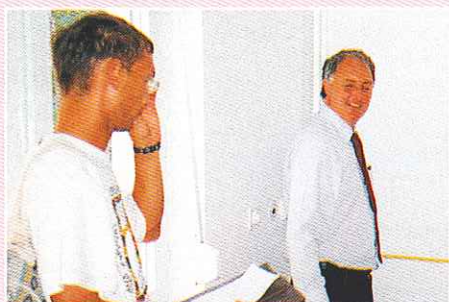
Initiative

Belmin was the latest of 35 children brought to the UK and Ireland in the last year in a joint initiative between Professor Southall's charity and Lions Clubs International.

And the Prof? He returned to his desk at North Staffs Hospital to learn that another baby (a girl this time with an identical heart problem) had just been born. And he started all over again...

Child Advocacy International MISSION STATEMENT

An organisation of individuals from the health, education, and legal professions whose aims are to provide integrated care to children and their families affected by severe socio-economic deprivation, armed conflict or other disaster. The promotion of health and protection and the management and prevention of illness and accidents will be led by local professionals with international support. These activities will include programmes of health education, particularly for adolescents. Hospital treatment orientated to the needs of children will be promoted through a "Child Friendly Hospital Initiative". When specialist health care is not possible, medical evacuation to countries with appropriate facilities will be undertaken. Finally the organisation will campaign for the rights of children as outlined in International Conventions.



Measuring up for the beds in Mostar.



Containers from South Africa are makeshift wards.



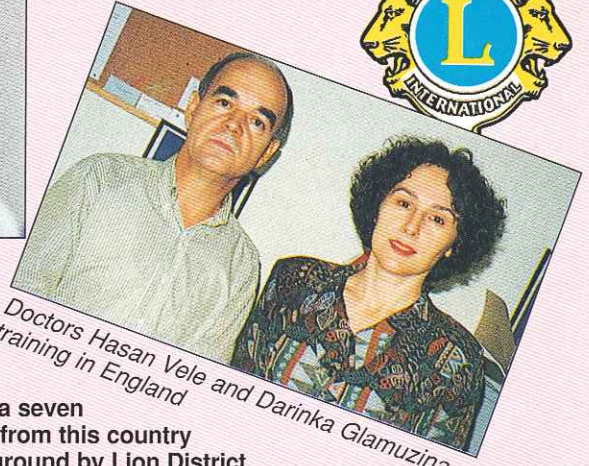
The face of destruction.



The Lions of Mostar – striving for peace



Lion Phil Nathan



Doctors Hasan Vele and Darinka Glamuzina, training in England

Your help is needed!

A message from – and to – the Lions of Great Britain and Ireland

I need your help and I need it fast. We have bridges to build. I undertook a seven day visit to Mostar in the former Yugoslavia recently. I was accompanied from this country by Professor David Southall of Child Advocacy International and on the ground by Lion District Governor Ivica Jakic, local doctors, nurses, Lions and other welfare personnel. The purpose of the visit was three fold:-

– a fact finding mission to establish the most effective way of bringing help to the most vulnerable people in this stricken land, the children.

– to move on Phase 1 of our "Gift for Living" Appeal, which has so far evacuated and treated some 30 critically ill children in hospital in Great Britain and Ireland, into its second year.

– to set in train Phase 2, which will supply intensive care and high dependency beds for children in hospitals in East and West Mostar.

Such treatment does not come cheap. Much has been achieved with the aid of the initial US\$75,000 grant from our Lions Clubs International Foundation and funds generously provided by the Lions of Great Britain and Ireland during the last fiscal year. Now we are in receipt of a fantastic US\$250,000 Catastrophe Grant from our own Foundation.

Much remains to be done and that is why I am now appealing to you to get the show on the road – start the cash rolling in once again. Wonders have been achieved, but the pot is now empty. We can fill it again and create another list of small children with strange names whose lives have been shattered by war, neglect and the breakdown of their society but who, thanks to the Lions and the generous public, are getting well again and returning home to build, hopefully, a better society.

This year's International President of

Lions, Augustin Soliva, has made the theme of his year "Building Bridges" and it is in our power to build very solid bridges. The ancient and very beautiful bridge of Mostar, the jewel in the crown of this city, was among the first casualties of the war. It has been replaced, albeit only with a temporary pedestrian structure, but a wonderful new bridge has been built by the European Union on another part of the river – an act of faith in the future – and British soldiers have constructed a sturdy wooden bridge which carries traffic and people back and forth.

The bridges we Lions can build will be no less strong and useful. By healing the suffering children of a nation we may take one small step in healing the hurts of the nation itself.

The problems of the former Yugoslavia are legion; the political, social, ethnic and religious barriers too complex to imagine. To the Lions they are irrelevant. We are going there to help, regardless of the rights and wrongs. Our work is with the innocent.

I offer a few impressions:-

- a little girl in great need of medical help, living in a rubbish dump with her family.

- the Mostar Lions Club, whose members include a senior doctor working on our project; they are working on fostering a spirit of understanding throughout this divided city.

- the total devastation of buildings and evidence all round of shell damage, bullet holes and homes/offices razed to the ground.

- how life is going on, in spite of lack of basic services in many areas. Doctors and other public servants have worked for four years without payment, surviving on aid hand-outs – and this in the sophisticated centre of Europe.

- the respect and affection in which Professor David Southall is held in the area. He has worked there over the many years of the conflict and established an incredible reputation. Truly an outstanding Lionistic partner.

For this City of Bridges, let's go for it. The motto for our project this year, taking up our International President's theme, is:- **"Building Bridges with a Gift For Living"**.

Donations should be sent to "A Gift For Living", (Lions Clubs International MD105 Appeal Fund Registered Charity No. 283799) Lions Clubs International Headquarters, PO Box 4976, Birmingham, B14 6DW.

Donations for Phase 2, Mostar hospitals, may be sent to:- Lion Tom Berry the Multiple District LCIF Officer, through the Lions.

"Show You Care, Get Involved, Let's Enjoy Ourselves."

Phil Nathan, Chairman, Lions Council of Governors 1996-97



Professor David Southall on a new Mostar bridge, the gift of the British people.



Lion Governors Chairman Phil Nathan (centre) and local District Governor Ivica Jakic presented banners to the Mayor of Mostar.



An act of hope – the beautiful new bridge of Mostar, built by the European Union.



Hurmija flies out

Protecting the world's children

A summary of the work of Child Advocacy International

Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child entreats states to recognise that every child has an inherent right to life. Despite this more than 100 million children will have died between 1990 and 2000 AD from malnutrition and preventable/readily treatable illness (equivalent on a global scale to 1 million UK children).

In the last 10 years, through the abusive armed conflict of adults, 1.5 million children have died in war zones, 4 million have been permanently disabled, 12 million have lost their homes, 5 million have lived in refugee camps, 1 million have been orphaned and more than 10 million psychologically traumatised in other ways.

At this time there are over 30 wars, most in poor countries. In 1995 there were 18

million refugees and 25 million displaced persons in the world.

Despite considerable progress by international agencies, the deprived and powerless state of so many of the world's children and families remains impossible to justify or accept. The rights of families to remain outside zones of armed conflict have been ignored. There is increasing victimisation of the civilian population,

including the use of children as combatants. Globally around 15,000 children under five years of age die every day, most not as a result of untreatable disease but through neglect and sometimes exploitation by rich countries. These 5 million early childhood deaths per year which constitute a "silent emergency", their loss going mostly unrecorded by the international media and unaddressed by the world's advantaged countries.

Aims of the charity

To address aspects of the above problems, particularly those related to war. It includes the following strategies:

1) A training programme for UK paediatricians and family

doctors who wish to work internationally on emergency and development projects. This represents a collaboration between the International Child Health Group of the College of Paediatrics and Child Health (formerly the British Paediatric Association) and Child Advocacy International.

2) The implementation of new programmes to help families and young persons living in deprived circumstances, such as refugee camps, to care more for their own health, prevent illnesses and accidents and manage common but potentially serious illness effectively.

3) The provision of emergency task forces of appropriately trained paediatricians and family doctors to help children and their families affected by war.

4) The development of new standards for hospital care worldwide which are effective, affordable and "child-friendly".

This project represents an already established collaboration between Child Advocacy International and UNICEF.

5) The development and publication of strategies which will pressurise the international community to implement ways of protecting children and their families from armed conflict.

6) The development, advocacy for and implementation of strategies to support and uphold the rights of children and their families as outlined in international conventions. This will include the promotion of the highest standards of ethics amongst health professionals caring for children internationally.



Mostar a beautiful city...



...and its river.



The trees are destroyed by war... ..but grow again.



Child Advocacy International was set up just over a year ago by Professor David Southall, Foundation Professor of Paediatrics at Keele University, and Consultant Paediatrician at the North Staffordshire Hospital, Stoke on Trent.

A paediatrician for 17 years, 48-year-old Professor Southall has four children of his own, and worked for 18 months with UNICEF in the war zones of the former Yugoslavia before establishing Child Advocacy International. He now travels regularly to Mostar, Sarajevo and Bihac among other centres of conflict, and is in constant liaison with military and political leaders, and hospitals and his fellow paediatricians throughout Europe, organising the evacuation and treatment of sick children.



The International Association of Lions Clubs is the largest service club organisation in the world. There are approaching 1.5 million Lions in over 42,000 Lions Clubs, in some 182 countries and geographical locations.

Since Lions Clubs were introduced to Britain in 1949, they have grown to over 1000 Lion, Lioness and Leo Clubs in Britain and Ireland, with a membership of around 24,000. Lions Clubs members are dedicated to improving the quality of life for many people less fortunate than themselves, whether it be in their own communities or in other parts of the world.