

the Bejlovar military prison, with the assistance of the RCMP Liaison Officer, to interview 43 prisoners of war. On a second visit, guards were persuaded to allow photographs to be taken of prisoners who had been beaten and tortured, and to allow

several of the older prisoners to be released on their own recognizance and returned to their families (pending their trials for crimes against the republic). The resulting comprehensive report was sent through the chain of command to

Commendation

by Cst. B. Flanagan, Public Information Officer
RCMP Contingent (UNPROFOR)

During the summer of 1992, Sarajevo and the airport were opened for humanitarian reasons after another period of fierce fighting plaguing former Yugoslavia since 1991. Sarajevo was by then a war zone where three warring factions positioned in and around the city and the airport constantly bombarded the inhabitants with sniper activity, mortar shelling, and heavy artillery fire from surrounding hills and roaming tanks.

CIVPOL's function is to provide security in and around the airport and thus to ensure safe passage of humanitarian goods to the people trapped within the city. The warring parties do not want the civilians to leave because they offer the only tool they have for bargaining when it comes time to negotiate either the exchange of prisoners or those killed in the fighting. On more than one occasion, opponents have threatened to terrorize the city if they do not get what they want — this usually means that the regular shelling would be intensified, inevitably raising the death and injury toll of the civilian population.

In June 1992, six RCMP members equipped with flak jackets and helmets volunteered for rotating tours of duty to Sarajevo Airport to perform a variety of tasks. Their work consisted of negotiating and controlling prisoner and displaced persons exchanges, securing inner perimeters, examining cargo for contraband and processing people in

need of medical treatment. One of them, Reg. No. 26720, Sgt. J.F. Hull was appointed Chief Monitor. He was instrumental in forming close liaisons between all the parties to ensure negotiations ran smoothly under the most adverse conditions (many of which civilian police had never seen or heard about before).



For his efforts and outstanding duties, Sgt. Hull was presented with the Force Commander's Commendation by CIVPOL Commissioner K. Johansen.

Not in a lifetime of police work in Canada would anyone find conditions such as the ones endured in the former Yugoslavia during that summer of 1992, and in Sarajevo which suffered the fiercest fighting of any place in this former republic. ■