



*Don Kilpatrick sitting on a wrecked tank outside Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, February 1997.*

result in a new organizational structure, careful vetting of personnel permitted to become members of the new police, training of personnel in modern policing practices and provision of technical assistance in becoming an effective law enforcement agency.

As IPTF monitors, we were always running the risk of a sudden redeployment — the UN's accepted term for "transfer." But as luck would have it, we were not moved until our ninth month: Jules Lalancette left Banja Luka and he was appointed Human Rights Coordinator at mission headquarters in Sarajevo. As the IPTF station located in Ljubuski was soon closing and moving to Siroki Brijeg, the West Herzegovina Cantonal main seat of government, Ross Shortill kept his job as Station Commander in Siroki Brijeg. Fred Winters left Sarajevo to take a position in Banja Luka. I was appointed the UN Liaison Officer and Police Advisor to the Minister of Internal Affairs for West Herzegovina; I worked in the Ministry building in Ljubuski, in an office next to the minister's. I would be the only IPTF presence in Ljubuski after that station had fully been moved to Siroki Brijeg.

For more than five years, United Nations peacekeeping missions in the countries of the former Yugoslavia have worked tirelessly in sometimes dangerous situations, often in adverse conditions, with insufficient resources and under complex and demanding mandates. Unarmed civil police have been sent into areas of active warfare, where their courageous efforts have helped to save untold human lives and have alleviated the suffering of the civilian population.

The importance of the work of the UNIPTF

cannot be overstated. In restructuring the police, providing advice and counsel, retraining of police officers throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina and developing a modern criminal justice system, the chance for establishing a meaningful civilian peacetime environment throughout the country will be enhanced and the necessity for military oversight in support of peace will be lessened.

It is also obvious that a mission such as UNIPTF cannot achieve its objectives without the unfailing support and commitment of the international community, in terms of financial and human resources required for the implementation of its mandate, as well as the full cooperation of the parties to the conflict.

As a closing note to this article and in recognition of the efforts of the Canadian Contingent — albeit small at that time — to the UNIPTF mission, we were advised that the excellent assistance/contribution made toward the reconstruction and democratic development in Bosnia-Herzegovina had not gone unnoticed. Although, as a result of this the United Nations approached the Government of Canada to have our deployment extended for an additional three months, some of us agreed to stay on, while others left when the 12 months were up.

*Since his return from duty with the UN, Don Kilpatrick was involved in training members of the RCMP and outside police forces in preparation for deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Watch for more stories about the involvement of serving and former RCMP employees in UN Missions around the globe, coming up in future editions of the "Quarterly." — Editor. ❖*