

The Yugoslav government invited the Finnish forensic team to conduct the investigation at a time when many countries were demanding an inquiry by the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. Yugoslavia has refused to cooperate with the tribunal or recognize the legitimacy of its mandate over matters of Yugoslav territory, so the Finns were accepted as compromise.

Officials in Belgrade, aware of the potential impact the forensic report might have on foreign sentiment about the conduct of its army and paramilitary forces, have mounted sustained propaganda campaign to cast the forensic team's conclusions in a favorable, and, according to the sources, highly misleading light.

An article in today's editions of Politika, a Belgrade newspaper connected to the government, claimed for example that the team had established that all the victims all had fired weapons before their deaths and that the bodies of all of them had been moved. The chief public prosecutor for Serbia, Dragisa Krsmanovic, alleged similarly last week that forensic tests showed the victims all had been shot from a distance. As a result, he said, government troops could not be prosecuted for their actions in Racak.

The forensic team searched but found no evidence to support these claims. On the other hand, its findings cast doubt on the assertion of some Western officials, including Walker, that the bodies has been deliberately mutilated by government troops.

Although 45 people reportedly were slain at Racak, the Finnish team was given access to only 40 bodies. The investigators learned that at least five more bodies, including those of at least two women, were removed from the area and presumably were buried in a cemetery south of Racak, along with as many as seven others who apparently were wounded during the assault and died later.

AMERICA'S FARMERS FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVELIHOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I am here today because our American family farmers are suffering. While the general economy is strong, the U.S. agricultural economy continues to experience significant declines in agriculture commodity prices that began over a year ago. The price declines experienced by wheat and cattle producers over the last couple of years have expanded now to all of the feed grains, oil seed, cotton, pork and now the dairy sectors at record all-time lows. Farm income is expected to fall from \$53 billion in 1996 to \$43 billion next year, nearly a 20 percent decline.

Mr. Speaker, last week I met with a number of farmers just from Ohio. One left me with a letter that I would like to read tonight. It says:

DEAR MS. KAPTUR: The purpose of my Washington, D.C. trip is twofold. Not only am I here today representing Ottawa County, but as a wife and partner of an Ottawa County farmer. I am very concerned about the plight of America's farmers. I can remember as a youngster back in the late 1940s all the farmers, eight full-time farmers with-

in just 2 miles of here who lived on our road in northwest Ohio. They had dairy cows, hogs and chickens. At the present time within that same two miles there is only one full-time farmer. Since our numbers are dwindling and the American farmer only makes up 1.8 percent of our population, the American farmer is fast becoming an endangered species.

I want to know what is going to happen to the American farmer, and does Washington and our Nation really care? With the way our grain prices are falling and our costs are increasing, how is a present-day farmer going to continue and also encourage new generations to enter the farming profession? The prices are lower now than during the 1940s.

With the combination of low prices and the loss of productive agricultural ground to urban sprawl, most farming operations will cease to exist. Where is our Nation going to obtain its food? If the United States relies in greater and greater measure on foreign countries to supply its food needs, their food checkoff day will surpass the February 9 date.

Since U.S. consumers have never gone hungry, they have no concept if they lose the American farmer, their safe food supply could diminish or be completely cut off. How long can the average American farmer afford to spend \$168,000 for just one piece of equipment?

With the statistics that I am enclosing the American farmer will not be able to stay in business. Therefore agriculture will not be one of America's major industries. We are fighting for our livelihood and need yours and Congress' help.

Does anybody care? Does anybody even know?

Regards,

DEE.

She also left me with a breakdown of their family farming operation, which I will place in the RECORD, but basically what it shows is their total production cost last year was \$375,000, including what they had to pay for running their land, the cost of producing corn, the cost of producing soybeans and wheat, however their total income was only \$317,430, leaving them with a negative income last year of \$57,570.

The question to be addressed is how today's or tomorrow's farmer is going to continue to produce food for a Nation in the world if he or she cannot purchase needed equipment and meet the costs of doing business. How many other Americans have to purchase equipment like combines which retail at \$211,000 minus dealer discounts equaling about \$168,000 less trade-ins on equipment. So that leaves them with about \$111,000 to finance for 10 years at 8.75 percent interest for an annual payment of \$17,204.

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How will they continue to make that payment when their negative income prohibits them from showing any profit?

There is an increasing concentration throughout agriculture today. This concentration is severely distorting the market signals that farmers use to know what to produce, when to produce and how to make a profit. This

concentration is hurting the marketplace and free competition. These market conditions are deeply hurting our family farms and threatening the economic stability of real communities across our country.

Dee asks, what can we do? First I say Congress, this Congress and this executive branch, must recognize the faces of rural America and understand the crisis out there. We must increase market transparency on prices and we should revisit freedom to farm and provide these farmers who provide our food with the safety net against these kinds of international market manipulations.

THERE IS A CRISIS ON THE AMERICAN FARM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), for the comments she has just made regarding the crisis on the American farm. Representing the State of North Dakota in this body, a congressional district that has more production acres for agriculture than any other district in the House of Representatives, I can only affirm all too well the truth of what she is saying.

There is a crisis on the farm. If we do not act as a Congress and act quickly, the face of farming in this country will be changed. We will move from agriculture production primarily based with family farmers to vast corporate farms, changing forever the way our food is produced and a way of life in much of our country.

The critical element that has made the low commodity prices so particularly hard on our farmers relates directly back to a change made by this Congress in the farm bill that we are presently under.

In 1948, Congress acted to establish some measure of price protection for farmers, recognizing that there is going to be great volatility in the prices commodities will bring given any number of circumstances, but more recently it has been the ebb and flow of demand in the global marketplace.

The prior policy for farm programs has been that the United States Government has got the capacity to backstop individual farmers to protect them from the worst ravages of loss when prices fall through the floor. The last farm bill changed all that. We no longer afford our farmers any price protection. We have protected the Treasury of the Federal Government but we have left the fortunes of individual families out there on the farmsteads completely exposed to the ebb and flow of market prices.