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Fig. 1. A Kosovar refugee camp in Elbasan, Albania. The rows of tents were so numerous they merged into a solid white. The white tops reflected some of the heat plaguing the refugees. All the illustrations accompanying this article were photographed in Albania by Dean Byrd in May 1999.
Mourn with Those That Mourn . . . Comfort Those That Stand in Need of Comfort: Dean Byrd’s Diary of the Kosovar Refugee Camps

Colleen Whitley

The diary of a psychologist’s work with Kosovar refugees reveals how LDS Charities responds to the emotional aftermath of trauma and reflects on how we can share each other’s burdens.

The Prophet Joseph Smith, echoing Matthew 25, said the duty of every Latter-day Saint “is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all, wherever he finds them.” Members of the LDS Church respond to that injunction with individual acts of neighborly kindness as well as organized ward, stake, and regional projects. In times of great crisis, however, the Church is prepared to act rapidly in concert with both governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as charities or groups interested in particular causes.

While the Church has been actively involved in charitable activities around the world for years, in 1991 a Humanitarian Service Center (often called the Sort Center) was established through Deseret Industries to better service large problems. As the Church interfaced with other organizations, however, some groups did not seem to connect the charitable outreach with its parent organization. Consequently, in 1996 Latter-day Saint Charities was created to function as a private, nonprofit humanitarian association. The name enables anyone, including members of other faiths and government officials, to immediately associate the charitable outreach with the Church.

2. The term “Humanitarian Services” is still commonly used within the Church, and contributions are made in that name; however, having the LDS name prominently attached to a charitable organization has proven to be valuable. Since the Church has a reputation for quick and effective action, representatives of NGOs and government agencies from several countries recognized it immediately and aided LDS Charities involvement in relief work.

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Operating under the umbrella of Welfare Services and the direction of the Presiding Bishopric, LDS Charities is a recognized NGO around the world, maintaining offices in fifteen countries from Cambodia to Zimbabwe. The proximity of those offices, of welfare storehouses, and of local branch, ward, and stake buildings, along with the willing service of members and missionaries, allows food and materials to be rushed to crisis locations in days or even hours.

Moreover, various Church-owned facilities, both charitable and commercial, and legions of capable volunteers provide a strategic reserve to deal with large crises and even to deal with more than one crisis at a time. One crisis that tested the Church's capacity to respond erupted in the Balkans in 1999.

The Balkan Crisis

The Balkan Peninsula on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea has been overrun and conquered through the centuries by many nations—from Philip of Macedonia's Greece to the Third Reich. Espousing a wide range of religious and traditional beliefs, the population of the Balkans today includes Albanians, Vlachs, Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars, Turks, Jews, and Armenians. The relationships among those varied groups have understandably never been cordial; they are, in fact, often hostile, sometimes beyond the capacity of outsiders to comprehend.

The region was initially populated by Serbs, Slavs, and Greeks, with a Serbian kingdom emerging in the twelfth century. That kingdom declined and was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1389, beginning a period of

3. “Humanitarian Service,” information sheet from LDS Welfare Services, n.d. The United Nations has granted consultative status to 1,706 groups.

4. For example, in Florida the Church owns the world's largest cattle-producing ranch, from which meat can be routed immediately through LDS Charities to crisis areas. (The King Ranch in Texas contains more acres but produces fewer cattle.) Alexander B. Morrison, “Church Response to Crisis,” forum address, October 26, 1999, Brigham Young University, audiocassette, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

dominance by Turkish culture and Muslim faith for the next five hundred years. In the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by forces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, who ruled the area until the close of World War I.6

Following World War I, the provinces of Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Voyvodnia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia, and Kosovo7 combined to form Yugoslavia. However, during World War II, loyalties in the area were again divided, some groups supporting the Nazis and others the Allies. A Communist partisan named Josip Broz Tito led the fight against the Nazis. Following the war, Tito became the Communist dictator of Yugoslavia, forcibly holding in check the ethnic and religious rivalries that had marked the region’s history. Almost immediately after Tito’s death in 1980 and the downfall of the Soviet bloc governments, peace in the region ended, with wars, rebellions, and “ethnic cleansing” occurring in virtually every province.8 One particularly hideous example of the latter occurred in Kosovo.

As Yugoslavia broke into squabbling factions, Serbia and Montenegro maintained a Yugoslav federation, with Kosovo as an autonomous region. Kosovo was populated primarily by ethnic Albanians, roughly 1.8 million of a total population of two million. Differences between the Serbs and the Albanian Kosovars exist on both ethnic and religious grounds—the Serbs being Christian and Kosovars being Muslim by religion and Ottoman-Albanian by descent. In July 1997, Slobodan Milosevic was elected to lead the Yugoslav federation. Constitutionally barred from a second term, Milosevic backed an ally, Milan Milutinovic, for president but in fact retained executive power himself, effectively becoming a dictator.

Early in 1998, Milosevic repealed the semiautonomous status of Kosovo, where members of the Kosovo Liberation Army had been fighting for complete independence—at first through political channels and, when those attempts failed, by acts of violence and guerilla warfare. Capitalizing on the existing ethnic and religious animosities, Milosevic launched a campaign to force the Kosovars out of Kosovo.9 In a matter of months,
harassment escalated to atrocities. Serbian soldiers methodically entered Kosovar homes, killed the men and older boys, forced the survivors out, frequently raped the women, and then burned the homes. The number killed may never be accurately determined.  

After months of negotiation, threats, and sanctions against the Serbs, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) began bombing the Serbian homeland on March 24, 1999. The Serbs’ forcible evacuation of the Kosovars only increased, and more than half a million Kosovars were displaced into neighboring Albania and Montenegro.

Relief Efforts

Various agencies, led by the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the Red Cross, and the Red Crescent, rushed food, clothes, tents, and medical supplies to the area. The LDS Church quickly joined in the relief effort. In April general conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “At this moment our hearts reach out to the brutalized people of Kosovo. . . . I am grateful that we are rushing humanitarian aid to the victims of these atrocities.”

In a matter of weeks, the Church rushed in $6.8 million dollars worth of aid, including 39,000 quilts (many made rapidly by Church members from various nations), 28,000 blankets (specially ordered from a company in New England), 2,000,000 pounds of clothing and shoes, 25 tractors, 166,000 pounds of soap, 29,600 pounds of school kits and educational

other minerals. Kosovo “contains the greatest concentration of mineral wealth in the whole of south-eastern Europe. . . . Kosovo’s mineral riches have made the territory a special target for conquest by many armies, from the Romans to the Nazis.” Malcolm, Kosovo, 4–5. See also “Rein in Milosevic on Kosovo,” Deseret News, March 10, 1998, A12.

10. Investigations after the Kosovars were allowed to return to their homes verified the extent of the damage. Mass graves that had been reported by the Kosovars and tracked by NATO and U.S. satellites were uncovered, revealing many bodies. Still other mass graves had already been dug up and the bodies moved as the Serbs retreated. Charles M. Sennott, “Forensic Experts Face Enormous Crime Scene,” Boston Globe, reprinted in Deseret News, June 22, 1999, A4; “U.N. Says 2,108 Bodies Found in Kosovo Graves,” Deseret News, November 11, 1999, A4.


supplies, 100,000 hygiene kits, 420,263 pounds of food, and $400,000 drafted to purchase food locally. An additional $110,000 was given to the Red Cross and the Mother Teresa Society. With these contributions coupled with aid from other governments and NGOs, relief workers were able to assuage the immediate physical crisis, but serious problems still remained.

In all crises, once the physical needs of victims are stabilized, the emotional problems created by the disruption surface. Survivors of trauma experience psychological crises as great as the lack of food and shelter—disorientation, extreme grief, a sense of loss, confusion. Providing long-term assistance for survivors—helping them regain their homes or start new ones, retraining them for employment, rehabilitating them from wounds or injuries—requires aid workers trained to deal with the effects of trauma.

Cognizant of those needs, the LDS Church also maintains a reserve of expertise as remarkable and as readily tapped as its food supplies. Professionals in various kinds of social, emotional, and crisis intervention are regularly employed in Church social services and schools. In addition, many members who are outstanding professionals in the private sector can and will serve as needed.

One such individual called to Albania to assess the emotional problems of the Kosovar refugees and outline a strategy for dealing with them was Dr. Dean Byrd, a clinical psychologist and family therapist with LDS Family Services. Pulled from his normal routine of counseling and teaching, Byrd traveled to Albania to witness relief efforts being made by the Church in concert with many other agencies and to determine methods to help victims re-adjust. His specific assignments included interviewing refugees, families housing refugees in their homes (host families), and other aid workers; interfacing with other agencies; and preparing protocols for missionaries, especially missionary couples, who would follow him into the country.

Dealing with traumatic situations can be enervating, and Byrd has developed methods of dealing with his own emotions. He finds writing by hand, sometimes for as much as an hour and a half each evening, to be especially therapeutic. Byrd’s commentary on the Kosovars, their Albanian

15. At about the time Byrd went to Kosovo, LDS Social Services was renamed LDS Family Services. Both names are used in this article depending on the source and the name commonly in use at the time. The agency offers services in adoption, parenting, counseling, substance abuse and recovery, and aid to specific populations such as families, Native Americans, and prisoners. “Church Agency Is Ready, Willing and Able to Help,” Church News, February 26, 2000, Z5.
hosts, and his own professional and emotional responses offers an enlight-
enment into the problems of crisis situations. His diary is presented here in
standard English, transcribed from his personal shorthand. A few sections
are deleted to avoid repetition and to protect the privacy of some of the
individuals he encountered. His remarkable honesty about his own feel-
ings reveals his emotional journey that “started with a sense of purpose
that ended with a sense of meaning.”

Dean Byrd's May 1999 Diary:
The Kosovar Refugees Assignment

May 9, 1999. Delta Flight 149 en route to NY-JFK, then on to Rome.
The itinerary noted, “Cannot confirm flights into Tirana, Albania: may
have to consider alternative transportation.” The last few days were a whirl-
wind of activity, most of it associated with trying to get out of the assign-
ment. Two days ago—“We would like to have you go.” I suppose that there
are certain people you can’t say no to. My class barely ended at the U, and
I turned in the grades on Thursday. I have listened a little to the media
about the war in the Balkans but never considered that it would have per-
sonal relevance to me. My assignments were covered. I arranged for supervi-
sion of the psychiatric resident, and arranged for others to take my
responsibilities for an “indefinite period of time.” I arranged for Dennis
Ashton, a social worker from Dallas, to join me. He seemed anxious to go
(unlike me). I managed to spend most of the evening on Thursday on the
NET, finding as much information as I could. The situation seemed really
bad—not quite sure I should be going. Albania is referred to as the only
Third World country in Europe—no credit cards, the stolen car capital of
the world, contaminated water, American Embassy closed, Swiss Air has
canceled all flights. The Kosovars were crossing the borders daily, hungry,
tired, traumatized, families separated—especially women and children
from the men. Many of the adolescent boys were either jailed or executed.
There were mass graves. Sounded pretty bad, but the media was prone to
exaggeration. I printed much of the information, thinking that it might
be good reading en route. We had a briefing on Friday. It wasn’t very

16. Dean Byrd, interviews by author, November 1999–February 2000; unless
otherwise indicated, all information in notes comes from those interviews.

17. The request came from Harold Brown, managing director of Latter-day Saint
Welfare Services, who reports directly to the Presiding Bishopric and First Presidency.

18. David Smith, a psychiatric resident, was one of the people Byrd was supervising
at the time.

19. Unfortunately, the reports were not exaggerated, as Byrd soon learned.
helpful. I guess part of this is my attitude. I have attended the important events in the lives of all my children. My daughter Kristen is graduating from Lone Peak High School as salutatorian, my daughter Nicole is graduating from BYU, my wife is graduating with her doctorate, and I am scheduled to graduate with my MBA. I asked Kristen what I should do, and without hesitation, she said, “Dad they need you in the Balkans.” It’s Sunday morning, kind of gray and rainy. Elaine [his wife] and I talked for a minute about my will and other things. We actually do this on occasion when I travel, so it’s not unusual. I stopped by in the wee hours of the morning, and my stake president, Stephen Studdert, gave me a blessing. All I could remember is that he said something to the effect that the assignment was unusual and I should focus on the children, the precious ones whose lives would be scarred without help, and that I should realize the spiritual nature of the assignment. . . . I arrived at the airport and was joined by Dennis. He did not seem as hyper as he was on Friday. The check-in was a little longer than usual and the clerk asked for the next of kin. I thought that was weird but gave him the needed information. I’m writing all of this somewhere between Salt Lake and New York City. The sky is clear and blue, cirrus clouds everywhere. Someone gave me this journal, and I thought it might be a good idea to begin using it. I always write when I travel. It keeps me from getting bored. For some reason this trip seems different than the rest. Perhaps, it’s because I really don’t know where I am going or what I am doing. We have developed a typical disaster training protocol that we can adapt, but I am not sure how we will use it. . . .

20. The protocols provide a basic structure with which to work, but they are also open-ended, allowing workers on the site to alter them to fit the specific needs of the situation. Typical protocols for each day begin with a background sheet listing agencies and individuals visited and interviewed. From those visits and interviews, needs and resources can be identified. The most immediate needs usually fall into the medical-physical category (food, water, sanitation), but other areas also need attention: social-emotional problems (reaction to trauma, disorientation, grief); family needs (displaced family members, especially children without adults); and community-spiritual issues (faith, tradition, customs). Although the needs almost invariably outnumber the resources, establishing a matrix from the background sheets often reveals untapped solutions. Byrd and others quickly recognized that one of the underutilized resources in Albania was the refugees themselves. All were in shock, but they could be trained to help themselves and other refugees, which gave them a sense of meaning in their disrupted lives and a kind of control over their situation.

Refugees became involved in setting up tents, running kitchens, and governing their own camps. Byrd took the effort of involving refugees one step farther. In addition to enlisting the aid of camp inhabitants, he transported refugees housed with host families back to the camps to help set up services, giving the host families a brief respite as well as helping the Kosovars themselves.
May 9 is Mother’s Day. My own mother died 28 years ago in May, about 10 days from now. As I begin to reflect on what I am doing, I feel a little remorseful for my attitude. Maybe I should be glad that I can assist and trust in some sort of spiritual guidance in this whole thing. Studdert’s thing about the children bothers me a bit. I recalled the Vietnam airlift coordination that I did. It wasn’t fun either, but it was the children that I remember. I wonder what the children will look like and whether or not they will be afraid of us. The media talked about a separation from their families. I remember giving out Life Saver candies to the Vietnamese children. But I didn’t bring anything with me. My itinerary indicated that I would have about an hour at JFK. Maybe I’ll check it out.

May 9, 1999 Second Entry. I went to one of the airport shops and quickly “cased the joint.” My eyes caught this rack of Jelly Bellies. I dragged the whole rack to the cashier. I knew she thought I was crazy. I told her I wanted all the Jelly Bellies or as many as I could fit in my bag. The bill was nearly $80.00, which means I really purchased about $40.00 worth of Jelly Bellies. I felt a need to tell her that I was not crazy and the candy was for some special children. She said, “You might have some trouble with customs. I smiled and said, “And maybe I won’t.”

May 10, 1999. What a horrific experience getting out of Rome. We must have walked 5 miles, trying to find a flight. Someone suggested a train to Bari, Italy, and then a Ferry to Durrës, Albania, and then a bus to Tirana. By sheer accident, we saw a flashing Albania Airlines sign which read, “leaving at 11:30 A.M. arriving in Tirana at 1 P.M.” We found the gate after what seemed forever. We made contact with President Lenker to let him

21. In the mid-1970s, Byrd, working for LDS Social Services, coordinated the United States East Coast emigration camp for Vietnamese refugees at Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania; the camp was authorized by then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

22. Stephen Conrad Lenker, along with his wife, Nancy, has served as President of the Albania Tirana Mission since July 1998. The author appreciates the help of the LDS Church Missionary Department in identifying all of the missionaries Byrd encountered in Albania.

The Albanian mission originated under the auspices of the Austria Vienna Mission and through the charitable services of senior missionaries. In 1991, as the Iron Curtain was crumbling, an Albanian computer analyst walked into the office of Kenneth Reber, then president of the Vienna mission, seeking assistance for his country. A short while later, President Reber accompanied Elders Dallin H. Oaks of the Council of the Twelve Apostles and Hans B. Ringger, European Area President, to a meeting with officials at the Albanian Department of Agriculture. The minister initially asked for two hundred tractors, and when President Ringger explained the Church’s limitations, the official responded that many people had offered promises, but none had provided real help.

Then President Reber remembered that one of the senior missionaries in Vienna had been a soil research specialist and another was a horticulturist and farmer. The next
know that we were en route. Getting booked on the flight was a nightmare, and when we finally saw the plane, it was a greater nightmare. The plane was crowded, very hot, and smoke or mist or some combination was coming through the air vents. Passenger luggage was everywhere. The plane did not seem safe. I took some consolation in noting a number of CNN reporters on the plane. I’m not sure why, I just did. Dennis seemed a little more anxious. Instead of arriving in Tirana at 1 P.M., we arrived at 3:45 P.M. As we looked down at the Tirana airport, we had our first glimpse of what we were in for. The airport was lined with Apache helicopters; there were soldiers everywhere, and they were digging trenches. I thought to myself, “Now that I am here, how do I get out?” As I left the plane, I felt a sense of relief that it had not fallen from the sky but more fear as I entered this foreign country. It was hot and humid and crowded, and no one seemed to know what they were doing. After what seemed forever, we made it past the first customs point... President Lenker and Elder Jensen were waiting for us. We had heard that he was a former L.A. policeman and thought it would definitely be an asset. As we drove toward Tirana, the countryside reminded me of Poland—poverty was everywhere and women and children were just standing alongside the road. President Lenker drove like a New York cab driver, mostly to dodge potholes. As we entered Tirana, parts of New York City: trash everywhere, dilapidated buildings. We managed to get to the place where we were to stay, changed and headed to what came to be known as the Pyramid for a NATO briefing. It was a large auditorium filled with NGOs and governmental officials. They provided us with statistics: 400,000 plus refugees in Albania with about 97,000 in Tirana, 65 percent in host families. There was a tenseness about the meeting.

week Theron Sommerfeldt, the soil analyst, and George Niedens, the farmer, arrived in Albania and began working on local problems. They were followed shortly by other senior missionaries who could provide some of the services and training so desperately needed in Albania: Dr. Thales Smith, a retired pediatrician and his wife, Charone, a nurse; Melvin Brady, professor of economics and his wife, Randolyn, teacher of English as a second language. Despite enormous difficulties in living conditions, the senior missionaries continued and gained the trust and appreciation of the Albanian people.

The first convert baptism occurred on July 25, 1992; that convert, Blendi Kokona also became the nation’s first missionary, serving in San Diego, California. On April 23, 1993, Elder Oaks returned to Albania and dedicated the nation for the preaching of the gospel. By August of that year, there were 130 members in three branches, two in Tirana and one in Durrës. Kahlile Mehr, Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe (Provo, Utah: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2000, forthcoming), ch. 7.

23. Garold and Mary Lou Jensen are humanitarian service missionaries in Tirana. The mission includes young elders and senior couples but no sister missionaries.

24. NATO was still conducting bombing raids on Serbia and maintained jurisdiction over the refugee areas of Albania and Macedonia.
They\textsuperscript{25} advised us to begin our days at the Pyramid for early morning briefings, to register before we entered the camps, and to do what we could to help. They talked about the need for clean water, clothes for children, and some medical needs. They had the NGOs identify themselves. We were able to make some quick notes about the ones that we would be able to work with. After the meeting, which lasted about 2 hours, we made a few contacts for the next day and proceeded to walk back in the direction where we thought we were staying. We kept stumbling because of the holes in the street. Dennis kept saying that he was hungry and after wandering for an hour, we decided to stop at this outdoor restaurant. We managed to use sign language to order fish. We had salad with the fish. I suggested to Dennis that he avoid the salad. He did not, and as I am writing in my journal, he is moaning. Hopefully, the medicine will work. We reviewed the research protocol for tomorrow. The end of my first few hours in Tirana, Albania. It is interesting that in spite of my reluctance and poor attitude, there is a sense of purpose that is starting to settle in. I’m exhausted but alert, wondering what tomorrow will bring.

\textbf{May 11, 1999.} We began early, about 7 A.M. The only thing that looked safe for breakfast was hard rolls and banana juice. Dennis had some yogurt, but I don’t like yogurt so. . . .\textsuperscript{26} We found our way back to the Pyramid. In the daylight, things looked different—worse. Soldiers were everywhere, young boys with guns pointed. We passed the American Embassy. It was chained, and guards were posted. We passed a number of vehicles with foreign country notations on the sides. One was a water purification vehicle from Marseilles, France. Another from Germany, one from Italy. The streets were atrocious. You had to look up to see where you were headed and down to see that you did not fall, and shaking your head up and down in Albanian means no. This could be the beginning of a problem. We found our way to the Pyramid. . . . Children were sliding down this building that was shaped like a pyramid. We walked up ten or twelve flights of stairs to what appeared to be a command center and picked up the most recent statistics and quickly decided which NGOs we needed to contact: UNICEF, Bethany Christian Services, European Child Care, Child AID Direct, Mercy Corps International.\textsuperscript{27} We spent a few minutes with a map, which

\textsuperscript{25} “They” includes officials and coordinators from both governmental and charitable organizations overseeing relief efforts.

\textsuperscript{26} Ellipses in original.

\textsuperscript{27} Bethany Christian Services (www.bethany.org) is a Protestant organization that deals with children’s needs and with placements and adoptions for orphans; LDS Family Services has worked with them a number of times to arrange adoptions.
was useless. We met with Arben Vogli (Ben) in early afternoon. He is a
native Albanian who is 32 years old. He joined the Church about 5 years
ago. His total English was obtained from reading the Book of Mormon and
other Church publications. He served in the military under Communism.
His father was a national soccer star. He lives with his parents in a 3-room
apartment. He is actually quite fluent in Book of Mormon English. He is a
self-taught sculpturer by trade. . . . We worked out a schedule with him.
There are about 20 Kosovars living with his family. There were two adult
men, one very old, another man maybe 45, and the rest women and teenage
children. They are the Saffauka family. Some of their given names are:
Haki, Fatima, Mduffa, Xhezide, Arlihda, Teuta, Edi, Bardhyp, Dafima, and
Edena. It became too confusing to write the other names. They were very
glad to see us. One of the teenage girls served us some kind of carbonated
drink in what looked like shot glasses. A small saucer was passed around
with an apple that had been thinly cut into about 15 pieces. We briefly
introduced ourselves as a charitable organization from America here to see
how we could help. We asked them to share with us what it was like for
them. Only the adults responded. Even when we addressed the adolescents,
the adults responded for them. Ben interpreted our questions and their
answers. They began to share horror stories. They were asked to leave
their homes and meet in a high school or university area in Pristina. The
soldiers insisted that they leave immediately and walk toward Albania.
Some were allowed their cars, others nothing. Some family members were
taken away. They didn’t know where they were. Some of the adult women
began to weep. We sensed that we were retraumatizing them but that they
needed to talk. They said that things were deteriorating in Pristina [before
the actual attacks]. There was a ban on school attendance, and there were
acts of discrimination by the Serbs, but they did not expect to have their
neighbors turn on them. They talked about beatings. As they neared the
border of Albania, the soldiers would arbitrarily separate families, more
often than not taking the young boys and men and sending them in
another direction. The room was heavy with emotion. Some of the girls

European Child Care (www.trot.org.uk) is actually European Children’s Trust (Byrd
uses both terms), an NGO from England working to identify high-risk children. Chil-
dren’s AID Direct (www.cad.org.uk) is an international charity based in Reading,
England, which focuses rescue efforts on children in the aftermath of war or natural
disasters. Mercy Corps International (www.mercycorps.org) performs services, but,
even more, it coordinates the services of other charities; Mercy Corps had been work-
ing in the region for over six years by this time and had established a reputation for
their efficiency and economy in the use of both funds and personnel. Bradley Bush,
were removed for a period of time and sexually assaulted and returned to the droves of people. Some of the girls tried to make themselves unattractive and to avoid eye contact with the soldiers. The Kosovars were very sensitive about what they shared, not wanting to offend us. We had to say several times that it was okay. We told them that the American people were sorry for their struggles and wanted to help. We explained that our assignment was to determine how we best could help. We ended by asking Ben to simply tell them that we loved them. The room was very silent for a while, and it’s almost as if the spirit conveyed to them what words could not.

The little room was so crowded. There were so many people in that room that movement was hardly possible. I felt like I was on a crowded bus. But there was something about these people that I can’t quite figure out. There is a familiarity about them. Both Dennis and I made the same observation. We told them that we would like to visit with them again. They were very courteous as we left. They shook our hands several times. As I left, the oldest woman impulsively hugged me. I wasn’t sure what to do, so I hugged her back. Dennis and I both felt that somehow some of their pain had been transferred to us. I’m not sure how to explain this.

We found our way to Mercy Corps International. The Church has been working with them in Macedonia and some of the other camps. They were interested in our comments about trauma and how it would likely surface. They commented that if the host families failed, there would be chaos in Tirana. As we ended the day and walked toward our housing, there was apparent unrest in the streets. Police alarms seem almost continuous. Cars were randomly stopped, and the car and participants searched. We managed to find a place to eat on the way home. Actually, the food wasn’t bad, but everybody seems to smoke. I am beginning to have problems breathing because of the smoke. As we neared the place where we were staying, for the first time since I arrived in this country, I felt a sense of peace and some strange kind of protection. I felt that we needed to be careful but there was purpose for us being here that went beyond the refugee effort. Tomorrow, we begin in the camps.

May 12, 1999. Today was spent in the camps. The first camp was an outdoor camp near Tirana Lake. This was really tent city. The conditions were very bad. There was some kind of old swimming pool in the middle of the camp that had dirty water. Although the Kosovars were trying to keep the dust down by spraying water and each tent seemed neat on the inside, the conditions were really bad. The children, the faces of the children—their eyes were haunting. I had packed as many bags of the jelly beans as I could. To some children, I gave a package and watched them share with one another. To others who hung around us, I gave one here and there. One little boy grabbed Dennis’s leg, and another just sat near me.
When I gave him a piece of the candy, the look on his face told me it had been a while since he had any sweets. We always checked with the parents. Each time the mother or father (there were mostly mothers) gave us a smile of gratitude almost as if we had chosen their child for some unusual prize. The dress of the Kosovars reminded me of a Halloween carnival—nothing matched but everything was clean. Some of the children had shoes that were far too large; others had shoes that did not match (fig. 2). As we stopped near one of the tents, an older man came out and, having no place for us to sit, made a makeshift stool from a brick and a piece of wood. As I looked over the vast, endless tents and watched the faces of the refugees, I had two impressions: one was that these people had been horribly treated, had witnessed things that no human should have witnessed, and the other was that they did not want to subject us to their experiences because they did not want to traumatize us. This wanting to protect us was something that I had not encountered before.

As we talked to the camp director, we learned that there was a need for clean water and that there were few places for the people to bathe. There was a central place where they could go during designated times and get bread and milk and sometimes fruit and vegetables (fig. 3). Each individual, including children, had identification tags around their necks. There was a need

![Two refugee Kosovars. Their somber expressions were typical, as was their attire—clean but mismatched, too large, or incomplete.](image-url)
for sanitation kits, clothes for children. There was little to do in the camps. The men tended to walk around the camps, and the women seemed to either be washing clothes in little plastic containers (fig. 4) or swinging crying children in makeshift hammocks, which consisted of a piece of cloth with two women holding each end (fig. 5). We stopped by one woman's tent. She had her hands over her face as if she were crying. As we got a closer look, it appeared that the whole side of her face was an open wound. As we left the camp, Brother Jensen seemed preoccupied with getting stools for the camp. ... I quietly said to myself, "This is really horrible, really horrible. I can't imagine anything any worse." The next camp was worse. This was an in-city camp, a kind of reception and holding center. It looked like it was an old gymnasium. One room was the size of a basketball court. There were wall-to-wall children. The smells, the stench was very bad.

28. The camps had only minimal furniture and equipment; the tents were furnished with beds and any other items refugees had managed to bring with them, which was not much. Few had any place for people to sit or tables to write on. Eventually, cheap, stackable plastic stools were obtained and distributed.
A Diary of the Kosovar Refugee Camps

In fact we could only stay in certain places for a few minutes. The children’s faces, however, looked the same—they were all tearstained. The camp director told us that 50 children slept on the sidewalk the previous night because there was no place for them. They were in desperate need for what they referred to as mattresses (basically foam mats). They needed soap and blankets and medical care. One woman ran to us and said her son had kidney stones and was in so much pain and asked if we could please help find a doctor.

The teenage boys and men seemed to smoke constantly. One 16-year-old boy approached me and spoke good English. He indicated that his parents were university professors. He had strong political views, spoke very authoritatively about what needed to be done: Milosovich was a criminal and needed to be “taken out.” The children were asking for what we later found out was toothbrushes. The sights and smells were literally intolerable. I felt like I wanted to vomit. Other members of the team looked gray. Ben, our interpreter, however seemed fine, which seemed quite amazing to me.

We made a few notes on the data forms and moved to the next thing on our agenda, which was another host family. These refugees were living

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29. This view was shared by many, including officials in NATO and the United States government.
in the home of President Addie Toska. The father in this refugee family was more outspoken than the previous family. He was angry (appropriately so) and quite detailed. He has a sister still in Kosovo. He told of 3000–4000 young boys who were detained by the Serbs as they were headed for Albania, many of whom he knew. Family members are still searching for them. He was an elementary school teacher and lost everything. He said that there were 8 million Serbs and 2 million Kosovars. There was nothing they could do. He talked about the executions. Apparently, there were lists. The Serb soldiers would simply arrive at a home and take the men on the list either to jail or someplace or would execute them in front of the family. He described young men being shot at arm’s length and left in front of their families dying. Others were maimed and left to suffer. Some children were killed because family members could not pay money. The graphic detail gave it a surrealistic taint. My logical mind does not want to believe these accounts, but there is something about the details

30. President Toska led one of the branches of the Church in Tirana; he was also a state wrestling champion.
that make it true. Somehow the closeness to these eyewitness accounts makes it different from my visit to the Auschwitz camps—it’s like being in the middle of the Holocaust and [being able to] do nothing. The refugee woman was pregnant and seemed about to deliver. The other children in the family seemed older than their years. In the midst of these discussions, we soon learned that the Toska family had prepared lunch for us. Dennis was still sick from the previous night, and I had no appetite. The smells from the last camp were imbedded in my mind. The atrocities described by this family pushed food further away from my mind. We gracefully tried to decline but could tell that we would offend because so much effort had been placed into the meal. We both took deep breaths, and I asked if I might wash my hands. I closed the small bathroom door, turned on the faucets full force, said a small prayer, and heaved a couple of times. We had a “full course meal.” The men were seated around a small coffee table while the women served the food. The children watched on. First there was a kind of chicken soup that was laden with grease, then boiled chicken, potatoes, and fresh salads. Dennis kept complimenting the women for the fine food. Each time he would make a statement, I could feel my food surface to my throat. Finally, I gave him a swift kick under the table. I think he either got the message or had to focus on keeping his own food down. As we left, we both felt nauseated. We tried to talk about what we had experienced, but the sentences all seemed disjointed. En route back to the our place, we met Ben’s girlfriend’s father, who insisted that we visit his home. At least the apples were peeled, and the salty pretzels actually seemed to help.

Dennis and I are sitting in the room feeling very sick: how much is real and how much is psychological remains to been seen. As we complete the research protocols, we agree that there seems to be something inherently evil about what has happened to the Kosovars. It’s more than just conflict between two groups of people. There is a presence when the Kosovars talk about what they have witnessed that makes us want to detach from this whole thing, but we know that we can’t. Tomorrow, we are scheduled for the camps in Durrës. It really can’t get any worse.

May 13, 1999. Durrës was only a short distance from Tirana, but it took a couple of hours. We left at 7:30 A.M. and arrived in Durrës after 10 A.M. (about 30 miles) We hired a native driver who was a talkative man. We did not understand much of what he said, but it did not seem to deter him. Ben, our guide went with us. We had suggested the night before that we would be glad to have a couple of the Kosovars from the host families accompany us, thinking that it might give the host family a break and provide some diversion for the Kosovars. As Ben met us this morning, he had two Kosovars with him but said that there were others who wanted to go as well but that they would not go if we did not want them to. We, of course, said yes. To our
surprise, out of nowhere came all of these refugees, enough to fill up the van! Most of them were teenagers, and, contrary to our visit in the host home, they were very talkative, and we were surprised that most spoke fairly good English. They talked about the differences between Kosovars and Albanians and seemed more familiar with America than we were with Kosovo. We visited two camps in Durrës, both run by the Italians.31 The first camp was quite orderly, with a self-government program set up by the Italians. They had set up Kosovo governing councils and carefully controlled entrances and exits to the camps. Some of the Italian soldiers were playing games with the Kosovar children. We arrived at the camps at the same time a large group of refugees did. There was a mass of children and women, looking very tired, dirty, and crying (fig. 6). There was one tractor bed that housed about 30 people. The look on their faces was somewhere

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31. Each refugee camp was sponsored by a different nation or humanitarian group. The sponsor set up camp and provided beds, tents, food, sanitation, and security. All residents were required to register and wear tags to control who came into the camp.
between exhaustion and fear. One little boy ran up to me and hugged me. Jelly beans really do come in handy. The Italian camps had white tops to reflect the heat. There were trenches around the tents to prevent water from coming in. The apparent organizational structure was helpful (fig. 7).

The second camp was even better organized. Medical care was located at the front, and the refugees simply looked better cared for. Both camps were a stark contrast to the camps in Tirana. As we talked with the camp directors, they seemed more businesslike, as if they were in Albania to do a job. They insisted on order and that people help themselves. The Kosovars were responsible for responding to needs, for distribution of food, and for bringing problems to the attention of the governing councils. It appeared that special attention was being paid to keeping families together and helping family members locate other family members. Our feelings about the camp were much more positive than the other camps. We made notes on our forms and decided to head for the beach along the Adriatic. When we got close to the Adriatic, one of the Kosovar boys started to run for the water, removing his clothes as he went. It was as if they had never seen beaches and water before. We found out later that it was the case. We watched the young people romp and play in the water and on the water’s edge. You could sense that their spirits had been lifted. The parents looked on in kind of a detached way. It was almost as if they were glad that their children could have some diversion but sad because they knew it was temporary.
Fig. 7. One of the orderly, Italian-run camps in Durrës. Men wandered around to relieve the tedium.

We managed to find a restaurant along the sea and ordered lunch. The time seemed to be a respite for everyone, including us. Conversation was light and funny. There were a few times when one of the teenagers mentioned a friend in Kosovo, but for the most part it was an animated conversation. The driver joined us and seemed surprised but happy that we had invited him.

Tomorrow we present to the missionaries on responding to trauma, have scheduled meetings with European Child Care, meet with UNICEF and Bethany Christian Services.32

May 14, 1999. We had breakfast with Robert and Carolyn Wolthuis33 this morning—same thing: hard rolls and banana juice, and Dennis had

32. Part of Byrd and Ashton’s job was to explain to LDS missionaries and workers from other relief agencies how to recognize and deal with traumatized individuals. Missionaries, for example, would encounter people who needed to tell their stories over and over; while listening may not have been directly related to the missionaries’ main goal of teaching, their service was a needed act of love.

33. Robert and Carolyn Wolthuis, a missionary couple from Germany, came into the region to gather information and report to the area presidency.
yogurt. I knew Bob when we lived in Washington, D.C. President Lenker picked us up for an 8:30 A.M. meeting with the missionaries—29 of them. What a sight! We gave a short presentation on how trauma is reflected in the lives of the Kosovars and some practical ways in which they and others could help. The presentation was well received. Many took notes feverishly. Some of the elders had already been in the camps on their preparation day, and others were acquainted with the refugees in LDS host homes. Later we saw some of the missionaries on the streets of Tirana, and they expressed appreciation for the instruction. We suggested to the missionaries that they may want to write letters to their families and that we would take them when we left and call their families, letting the families know that they were okay.34

We had our first meeting with European Children Trust, an NGO from England. They are small and are beginning to identify “high-risk” Albanian families. These are families that are already receiving some kind of public assistance who have refugees in their homes. The number of refugees in these families range from 4 to 21, with an average of 14. They are having trouble just feeding them. There appears to be some breakdown in the process for getting

34. While mail service existed in Albania, it was often slow and irregular. Byrd’s and Ashton’s communications with missionaries’ families were most kindly received.
food, and some of the refugees are refusing to be registered. Nonetheless, the conditions in some of the homes are very bad. The ECT folks reiterated what we had heard from the NGO meetings—there would be chaos in the streets if the host families fail. Particular concerns were expressed about adolescents, some of whom were leaving the camps already. ECT also noted that some of the refugees were returning to the camps because the host families could no longer care for them. They are working with the Albanian government in identifying these families and invited us to join them. Feti is a Kosovar social-work student who is working with them. Feti shared a great deal about his experience in Kosovo. From an educated family, he is living with his sister in Albania. Apparently, his brother is an activist who is in hiding in Kosovo. He does not know where other family members are and seemed very worried. He shared times when he was detained by the soldiers or police and threatened with a knife to his throat. Several times during the discussion, he seemed on the verge of tears. His English was poor, but he managed to convey some strong feelings. The tears seemed very labored—he seemed angry. Sensing that he was having a hard time but wanted to tell his story, we suggested that we might meet with him later to learn the details of his experience. He was agreeable, and the rest of the ECT staff seemed relieved. We talked about other needs, such as blankets and mattresses and children’s clothes. They invited us to join them in the assessment process.

We found two places that would accept credit cards—the Europark Hotel and the Tirana International Hotel. When we walked into the Europark, we felt as if we were in a very classy European hotel. There were flowers and greenery everywhere; waiters were eager to seat us. Many of the NATO officials and the CNN folks were there. The only reminders that we were in Albania were the Apache helicopters that would occasionally fly over and the noise from the police sirens in the street. . . .

Walking in Tirana is a real nightmare. Everyone uses their horns, the few stop lights are not heeded, and you simply dart in and out between the cars. Near collisions were a frequent occurrence. We heard that drivers always had the right of way and that pedestrians were always in the wrong. Soldiers were posted on the route between the two hotels. They seemed focused and yet oblivious to the circumstances around them and in a position where they could activate the firearms at any moment. Parts of the streets around the soldiers were roped off, and you had to walk quite a distance away from them. It was reminiscent of my visit from Dublin to Northern Ireland.35

35. Byrd had taken a side trip to Belfast after a business trip to Dublin several years before and was impressed by the constant presence of soldiers, roadblocks, and other symptoms of ongoing war.
There were money changers at virtually every corner. They were offering “good deals” exchanging American dollars for Albanian leks. There were so many beggars in the street, some selling cigarettes or candies and others simply asking for food. There was a little boy about three or four who was very dirty who seemed to sleep in the middle of the street. Everyone walked around him. We had seen him for the past few days. Also today, shortly after we met the missionaries on the street, a woman with three children, an infant in her arms, followed us for a ways begging for money or food. It was hard not to give her something, but we had been asked not to do so.

It was late evening by the time we walked home. There were crowds around the Pyramid area. Vendors were everywhere, and so many children just seemed to wander. We noticed some older couples who just wandered around talking.

On the way back to our housing, we saw a familiar scene—car washing. There were so many nice cars, Mercedez and all, in Albania. My mind remembered the “stolen car capital of the world.” Apparently, cars are stolen and shipped to Albania. People, mostly young men, seem to be always washing and waxing their cars with water draining into the streets or being sprayed onto ongoing pedestrians.

The walk to our housing seemed strangely safer. Perhaps either we knew the way, or we were beginning to acclimate to a threatening situation. Dennis seemed to stumble every few minutes. If you did not know about the potholes, you could easily conclude that Dennis had too much to drink. Dennis and I had a lively discussion about the Church and Church employment. I had little contact with Dennis prior to this experience. He’s an interesting fellow.

May 15, 1999. I think today is Saturday, but I am not sure. We seem to get so little sleep, and the days kind of flow into one. Dennis seems overwhelmed by what we are doing. He seems relieved when I point out some directions from the research, such as the need to fill in the gaps, to partner with other NGOs, and to use the Kosovars as resources to help themselves. The Italian camp experiences really highlighted the differences. The Jensens and Wolthuises called early this morning and asked us to accompany them to the camps to deliver the stools. He had managed to obtain about 400 plastic stools. I asked about distribution, and, just as I had thought, there was no real plan. I expressed to Dennis my concerns about being mobbed, with particular concerns about Brother Wolthuis who was using two walking canes. We tried to deliver a stool to each tent—it did not work! The refugees literally grabbed the stools from us. We managed to make the best of the situation and think that most tents received at least one stool. My arms were badly scraped from trying to hold onto a few stools and were bleeding. I kept watching Brother Wolthuis, thinking that almost for certain that he would be knocked down. This was the first time that I witnessed a moblike trait among the refugees. I could not quite figure out why the stools seem to carry so much value. We were exhausted after the stool delivery project. We decided to explore Tirana a bit. We had indicated to Salt Lake that
family services missionaries would be needed, and we thought that we might begin looking for possible places to house them or even determine what community resources or events might be available to them. We found a museum that was in the process of setting up an exhibition and found an art academy in an old dilapidated building. It did not seem quite as hot or humid today as we wandered around Tirana. There is an interesting custom that seemed more apparent today than previous days—boys and girls walk around holding hands or with arms around each other. That is, boys with boys and girls with girls. Most are late teenagers or young adults. In the town center, there are several fountains. Children, some as old as nine or ten are wading in the fountain pools. Some had bathing suits; others, without. There seemed to be no adult supervision. As we meandered toward our housing area, the police sirens were either not as loud, or we didn’t notice them. The potholes were not as bad, or we didn’t fall as much. The food was not as bad, or we were not as sick. But the smoke seemed worse. I am still having a difficult time breathing. I wonder what the lung cancer rate is in Albania. We stopped by a little outdoor stand and asked for some “uje par gas”—water without fizz or minerals. I’ll never take water for granted again.

May 16, 1999. We went to the Tirana Branch this morning. Everything was in Albanian, but the music was very LDS—“I Am a Child of God,” “I Know that My Redeemer Lives.” The meeting began with about 50 people and ended with about 70. The building was old and not very well kept, but good by Albanian standards. The people were very friendly, and the missionaries helped in the translation. There were about 20 in the Sunday School class and about 15 in the priesthood meeting. There were about half a dozen young men, all dressed very nicely. There were about 3–4 adult men and the rest older women, adolescent women, and children. Between the meetings, many went outside to socialize. When we left Church, we headed for the Europark for lunch—expensive or not, it’s one of the few places where we felt that the food was safe. After lunch we headed to our housing area. Dennis and I reviewed our research protocols, and he began mapping out places for those who would follow us. We talked about the need for family histories and family pictures. The refugees seem to have lost a sense of time. Many had drawn little maps where people had lived or had been buried. They were interested in talking to us about their families. In one family earlier in the week, they had managed to obtain a few pictures of where they lived in Pristina and seem enamored of pictures and family histories. Almost simultaneously, Dennis and I both thought how important this was and how we should include this in any service that we provide. 36 Ben came over early this evening with his girlfriend, Violetta. . . .

36. Byrd later observed, “These people had been through such trauma they had lost a sense of who they were. We found that by taking pictures of them, we could help
Violetta speaks little English but is majoring in French at the University. We talked a bit in French, and she seemed more comfortable. 37

We planned our schedule for the week: Bethany, School of Social Work, camps in Elbasan, other host families. The pizza was disappointing.

**May 17, 1999.** We began at the Pyramid this morning. The refugees are continuing to arrive. More space is being made in the camps. There are some concerns about the heat of the summer. There is a need for hygiene kits and clean water. We listened to a few refugees tell how their identification papers were taken from them at the border along with what money they had.

The Wolthuises and Jensens wanted a preliminary meeting to have us share our observations with them. The Jensens (he is a pharmacist), arrived in Tirana a week or so before we did. The Wolthuises are located in Frankfurt, Germany, and are acting as the Region Agent, kind of interfacing with welfare and the ecclesiastical leaders. We had little to share except some observations about filling in the gaps and developing partnerships. . . .

We had a very long visit with Bethany Christian Services. We have worked with them in our adoption program in the States. We knew some of the same administrators, and there seemed to be an immediate bond. We explored what they were doing and how we might help them. Their staff members are clinical professors at the School of Social Work in Tirana. It’s a small school that is very poor. They have begun to identify Kosovars and Albanians who are professional mental health workers. The school has very few books and virtually no books or training materials on trauma. We talked about how we might assist in this area. They are working with UNICEF in setting up Child-Friendly Spaces for the children in the camps and in the host homes. They have identified Kosovar and Albanian teachers and have managed some kind of accreditation for the programs. Also they have set up temporary shelter for pregnant women and indicated that they would be glad to have pregnant women directed to them. They have actually been in Albania for more than a year and seemed accepted by the community.

We met with another refugee family and host family today. Arta is a member of the Church; her family is not. There was one man, an older

give them a sense of identity. They could talk about family history. The pictures gave them a point in time. It was almost as if we were giving a gift of life. 38 Carma Wadley, "Living with Trauma," Deseret News, November 27, 1999, E1, 2. Social service missionaries who followed brought cameras and film and took pictures of refugee families, had the film developed quickly, and returned to give the families pictures of themselves. The pictures were gratefully received and, as Byrd observed, seemed to provide a sense of stability and continuity to the families.

37. Byrd’s parents are American and Chinese, so he grew up bilingual; he has also been fluent in French, which he says returns pretty well in times of crisis, and he knows a little Spanish. During their stay in Albania, he picked up a little of that language.
woman, and several younger women. One of the women identified herself as the daughter of the older woman and sister or sister-in-law of the other women. This daughter was from Australia and had come to retrieve her family. We were not prepared for what we heard. As the older woman began to talk, there was a verbal moan that emerged from her. It sounded like a dying animal. She told how the soldiers had come to her home one evening and asked that the men, including her husband, two sons, two relatives, and a neighbor, come outside. The soldiers told the women to stay inside. These 6 men were executed in the front of the house in full view of family members. The family members were not allowed to retrieve the bodies for 24 hours in order to violate Muslim law. They were hurriedly buried in the family’s backyard to avoid the bodies being burned. The older woman produced a small piece of paper with the name Bytsi in the center with six rectangles representing 6 graves. The room was overwhelmed with emotion (fig. 8). The heaviness of the air made it hard to breathe. I tried to imagine what it might be like but couldn’t. Words of comfort were just beyond my reach. Dennis did better as he tried to empathize with their sorrow. I watched one of the younger women whose tears were different from
**Plate 1.** Black clouds mark the day Kosovar children witnessed massive destruction and death. In the children’s drawings, red stands for fire or blood, both of which are copious in this image. The artist has written “Serbia” on the bomber, although the plane was probably a NATO craft. NATO actions confused many Kosovar children. The artists’ names are Arta and Begata, both girls. The top line of text is “Wind Night [illegible word that may be a last name].”

**Plate 2.** Testifying of the events he witnessed, Leotrim, the seventh-grade artist, wrote on his image, “In Kosovo, I have seen houses burning, kin killed.” (BYU Studies thanks Earta Shytë, who translated the Albanian texts in the children’s drawings.)
PLATE 3. Slain by machine guns, unarmed citizens, including two babies, lie bleeding upon the ground while their homes are destroyed by tank fire and grenades. The artist is Fisnik, a fourth-grade boy from Gjakov, Kosovo.

PLATE 3a. In this detail, note how specifically the artist locates the wounds. He may be the boy witnessing the slaughter.
**PLATE 4.** The dead, the terrorized, the mourning versus tanks, armed soldiers, and troop carriers—eighth-grader Shpnesa has catalogued the elements of a Serb attack upon a Kosovar village.

**PLATE 4a.** Grieving over her daughter, the Kosovar woman in this detail becomes a universal symbol, her pose that of a folk pietà.
PLATE 5. Couching events in allegory is another way of expressing trauma. In this portrayal, the tree is Kosovo, and the snake ascending it represents the Serbs. Note the hapless bird perched in the tree. The picture is signed Skender(?), Bekim, Latif, and Gzim, all seventh-grade boys.

PLATE 6. While Serbs fire upon Kosovars, NATO jets bomb the Serbs. Both wreak havoc on a Kosovar structure. On the drawing are the names of three seventh-grade boys: Korab, Agim, and Faoil.
the others. She was somewhat catatonic. Every few minutes, I could see one visible tear flow down her face. I could not imagine so much pain in one place. My mind simply could not comprehend, my feelings were numb. I did not know these people, and yet their grief was somehow being transferred to me. I wonder if this is what it means to carry one another’s burden. This experience was worse than the camps, worse than anything I could imagine. How this family was holding together, I did not have a clue. In fact, I was nearly falling apart. The details of the eye being gouged out, dragging the men into the home with blood everywhere, the grief of family members, burying them in the backyard. Nothing I had seen on the news prepared me for this. Indeed, the news had underreported this. This family had not protected us from the atrocities or from their grief. Dennis and I could hardly talk as we left. I thought to myself, “I’ll never be the same.” I wanted to get the thoughts and feelings, the verbal pictures out of my head, but I wanted them to stay. For a minute, I felt like I was losing it and that it was a good thing to do. I could see how insanity could be a relief from reality. I don’t exactly remember how we ended the interview. I remember just looking at them, afraid to be any more empathic than I could take. The daughter from Australia followed us out, told us that the bodies had been videotaped and that she would like for us to see the video. Trying to be cordial and respectful, we told her of our taxed schedule and that we would try to find a time. She indicated that she had used the video at the German embassy as a way of trying to get her family to Germany. I sensed that it was important to her that we see the video, and I hoped that we would not.

Neither Dennis nor I could talk very much as we left Arta’s house. Ben tried to make conversation but could tell that we were shaken. We saw Ben’s father on a bicycle. His father was a champion soccer player in his day and had apparently been in the Olympics. In turn, the government had provided housing and a pension for him. The lighter conversation helped but not much. I couldn’t eat for the rest of the day. I am sure there will be no sleep tonight. Nothing could have prepared me for this day. We tried to plan for tomorrow. Not much luck.

May 18, 1999. We traveled to Elbasan today to visit the Turkish camp. We took a different group of Kosovars with us. It was a similar experience to the other group. The roads were very rocky, and we had the same talkative driver. We stopped by an old castle en route. The town’s folks look very rugged. The scenery was really quite nice. It was a break from Tirana. We arrived at the camp just minutes after Tony Blair.38 The camp was

38. British prime minister.
Fig. 9. Large soup vats at Elbasan. In this camp, food and clothing were not as much a problem as were inadequate bathing and sewer facilities.

about 5000. It wasn’t the best run camp nor the worse. The refugees said that they had sufficient food and clothing but there was no place to bathe. Most had been there for several weeks. Soup was being prepared in large vats (fig. 9), and women were in line with their pots. Sewer facilities were another concern. Most tents seem to have women and children. One tent had nearly 20 women and children (mostly girls, there was one boy). They tearfully told us that the men and boys had been separated at the border and had been killed. The looks on their faces were laced with pain, fear, and confusion. We asked if we might take a photograph (fig. 10). We were approached by some of the men in the camp and asked to join them in front of one of the tents. They asked if we were Americans. When we responded we were, they just hung onto us; some of them wept openly. They seated us on a blanket and tried to offer us some of their meager food and coffee. They openly talked about the horrors in Kosovo. One produced a list of those who had been executed. We photographed the paper with hopes that it might take (fig. 11). As we walked through the camp, the faces of the children would make any parent openly weep. Objectivity is not possible when it comes to children.
The Kosovars who accompanied us were actually from this camp. They were so glad to see their friends. It was a kind of reunion as they hugged each other and talked. In the center of the camp was a satellite television in one of the tents. The tent was filled with people. When they saw us coming, they quickly opened a way for us. The television provides information about the war with a script at the bottom of the screen telling where certain families were located (fig. 12).

We spent time with several of the families asking about their experiences in Kosovo and getting here. You could almost see all of the stages of grief at the same time: denial, anger, depression, wondering what to do, trying to accept the circumstances, but being so unsure about tomorrow. Even under these circumstances, there is feeling of goodness about these people. They are very likeable. The younger children would find their way to us and just sit, edging their way closer and closer, and when they were in arm’s reach, we

Fig. 10. Pain, fear, confusion—faces of one tent’s inhabitants. As was the case elsewhere, most of the refugees were women and girls.

39. The sheer chaos of the exodus led to separations of families, but the Serbs exacerbated the problem in many cases by forcing family members on different trains or trucks and by delaying the departure of young women they raped. Aid workers tried various methods to reunite families. Byrd was especially impressed with one woman, a mother of six. She had been able to hold onto two of her children, but the other four were scattered. She tenaciously checked the lists and television reports and successfully reassembled her family.
would put an arm around their shoulders, and the next thing we knew, they were hugging us. Scenes of Jesus and the children kept flashing through my head. Strangely enough, I felt like I wanted to linger a while longer in this camp. The air in this mountain camp was good, and we could certainly find enough work to do. As we began to leave, we did not need a translator to tell us that these people were asking us to stay. They wanted to talk more, to tell us one more thing. The interpreter said they feel safe when we are here. As we were leaving the camp, we were greeted by two missionaries (fig. 13). They seemed healthy and happy. They had spent time in the camp on their p-day doing sports with the children. They wrote letters to their parents that we will transport with us. They said that the missionary work was going very well. In February, there were 14 people in attendance at sacrament meeting in the local branch. Last Sunday, there were 67. The members in the little branch would go into the camps on a regular basis and invite a family to their home for food and to take baths. It is interesting how members of the Church were trying to help. We gathered the Kosovars who accompanied us. This was quite a task because they seemed to enjoy their friends. Just as we were boarding the van, a couple of the teenagers started talking about food. Elbasan reminded me of the poorest town in West Virginia. As we were leaving Elbasan, one of the teenage boys started talking about pizza. We decided to stop and feed them. The place was nearly empty but looked clean. They led us to a private room upstairs, and we could overlook the town. There was some kind of farmer’s market and huge garage sale going on. It really looked
like a giant pigpen. There were few cars and a number of mule drawn wagons. It looked like it was going [to] rain, so people were hurrying to load things up. We ordered pizzas. I remembered in one of the other restaurants that each person ordered a pizza. So each Kosovar ordered a pizza. I ordered a pepperoni pizza, which I knew was really too much to hope for. When the pizza came, they understood the pepper part but left out the roni. I got a very thin pizza with a little sauce and cheese and slices of green peppers! It was actually pretty awful. While the others were waiting on their pizzas, there was a great deal of lively discussion, some good natured teasing. One of the girls had brought a few pictures and was anxious to show us how things were in Kosovo. They really are homesick and want to go home. As we asked them about the problems in Kosovo, the mood turned sad as they began to tell how they were given little notice about leaving their homes and friends and how some of their friends disappeared. They told about their Serb neighbors who turned against them, stories about children being killed and returned to their parents because they could not pay money.40 The boys seemed able

Fig. 12. Elbasan television. Satellite communications enabled these Kosovars to obtain news about the war and of the whereabouts of refugee family members.

40. Some of the Serbs accepted bribes to help families get out of the country, but others simply resorted to kidnapping, ransom, and murder, knowing their government would not prosecute them.
to talk, the girls were quiet—one just sat and stared; another tried to stop the tears. The pizzas came. One of the Kosovar boys ate his pizza and sampled everyone else’s. Some of the girls could not finish theirs, and he collected the leftovers indicating that he was going to share them with the other Kosovars in Tirana. He ate all of the pizza on the way home. As we were leaving the restaurant, this same boy who must be about 14, leaned over to look at some ice cream in a freezer. I asked him if he would like some ice cream. His response was, “Do you?” I said, “It sounds like we both do.” We had ice cream. The trip on the way home seemed shorter. The Kosovars seemed more lively as they talked and laughed. They don’t seem to understand who we are or why we are being kind to them. As we arrived in Tirana and were saying goodbye to them, impulsively they hugged us and thanked us many times.

Dennis and I began sorting the day out. We certainly had mixed feelings about the camps and felt host families were needed, but we also felt that the host families needed a break from the Kosovars and the Kosovars from the host families. Today was a good example of how it could be done.41 . . . We talked about ways we could begin sending data and preparing couples to follow us. . . . We are becoming more optimistic. I’m not sure why. We just are.

41. Byrd and other aid workers found several useful ways to involve the Kosovars staying with host families in activities that took them out of the homes for a few hours, giving the host families respite and the refugees worthwhile outlets. One was to take them to the camps where they participated with those living in tents in learning their own native handicrafts; the older people would teach the younger, and together they produced some beautiful products.
A Diary of the Kosovar Refugee Camps

We talked to a couple of men who had just arrived in Tirana to install an early alarm system in the American Embassy just down the street. They had strict orders not to leave where they were staying except to go to the embassy. They indicated to us that the Serbs had crossed the Albanian border last evening and had attacked an Albania village. We were a little shaken by the story but decided that we should listen to CNN and talk to the mission president and plan a way to get out of the country if we needed to. The mission president indicated that the missionaries had been evacuated before, and they were able to find a way out. There are no flights in or out of the airport. We decided that we could probably find our way to Durrës and cross the Adriatic into Italy if needed. Dennis feels like going home. I think we should stay.

May 19, 1999. This date, 1971, Mother died. What memories that brings back! We had a team meeting with the Jensens and ECT (European Children’s Trust). We worked on a modest proposal for having blankets and foam mattresses available for some of the high-risk families in Albania. These folks seem very sincere in wanting to help. Actually, they seemed familiar with the LDS Church and were very positive.

We attended the UNICEF meeting and received training in creating Child-Friendly Spaces. They have equipment available for each of four tents: one for baby washing and mothers, another for school, another for recreation, and one for psychosocial problems (fig. 14). We were given a training document to determine how we could assist in implementation. These folks are really professional and have everything worked out. We decided that partnerships would be very easy to do with Bethany or others and that the elders could assist in the recreational part quite easily. We will return tomorrow for more training. We found some information about Child Aid Direct and will try to locate them tomorrow as well. The Gregersens will arrive on June 3, and we still need to find housing for them.

Attended the host-family meeting this afternoon. The Albanian officials are worried whether or not the families can last very much longer. They are asking for any assistance to support these families. Some of the sources of support are not sufficient. There are reports that the Red Cross and others are running out of supplies and that there are supplies at the airport that can’t get past customs. Needs were expressed for clean water.

42. Albanian missionaries had been removed from the country when the NATO bombings began in March but returned soon after when it became evident that, although the country would be inundated by refugees, the actual fighting would remain in Serbia.

43. Juel and Darlene Gregersen indeed followed soon. Byrd returned to Utah on a Thursday and trained them over the weekend; they were in Albania two days later.
Fig. 14. A Child-Friendly Space. Provisioned by UNICEF and in this case set up by Bethany Christian Services, these spaces feature a tent for each of four services: baby washing and mother assistance, recreation, psychosocial support, and schooling.
It's really hot today. . . . Maybe we can finish early. We have enough defined ways in which we could help: partnerships with the Albanian Government, Bethany, ECT, and maybe Child Care Direct; training of Kosovar and Albanian counselors, as well as direct services delivery.

May 20, 1999. Children’s Aid Direct was almost impossible to find. They are located behind the Pyramid near the Swedish Embassy. They are a Reading, England-based organization with a very recent history in Albania. They have an infant care project in the camps, where mothers and children can receive medical attention. A nurse heads each team, which has three additional assistants. They also have a school-based program where they provide humanitarian relief through the school system. They have identified Albanian counselors who are housing Kosovars and are distributing supplies through the school system. Their teams are serving about 300 families today. They are also developing a community services psycho-social work team. Currently they have social workers and youth case-workers. They have host family-based programs as well as camp programs. They are targeting children with special needs. They talked about implementing a program that would leave something for the Albanians. . . . I have been thinking about Child Care Direct workers who wanted to leave something for the Albanians. These people are substantially less well off than the Kosovars [were] before the war. Yet they are willing to share what little they have. With all the focus on the Kosovars, the Albanians are almost neglected. They are the real heroes in this mess. How many of us with a 3-room apartment would open our doors to 20 strangers? I feel a bit ashamed that I had not seen this before. We need to look very carefully at what we might do to assist the Albanian families as well. My mind returned to the visit to the first host-family home where we were served a piece of a thinly sliced apple. Dennis and I spent some time talking about how we missed this and how we had to begin interviewing the Albanian families.

[In a meeting, someone expressed concern with disorder, suggesting all that was needed to solve the problems was for the refugees to conform to protocols. Byrd, more experienced in crisis situations, was aware that it would take some while to register all the refugees and make protocols consistent.] This is the first time that I felt anger for a long time. . . . We tried to make [the complainers] understand that it was better to duplicate services than to neglect any family whether or not they were registered, that the children needed to be fed. . . . Some of the Kosovars we interviewed stood in lines for hours only to be told that either they needed more identification or that supplies were limited. Even the NGOs admitted they were lacking in basic supplies. My goodness, we are talking about babies who need milk and bread, not candy and cake!
Fig. 15. Drawing of a Kosovar school burning after an attack. Depicting the horrific events they have survived is one way some children deal with trauma. The artist identified herself as Behije, age 12, from Jangist Village, Malishve Area, Kosovo. The surnames of the children who drew this picture and those in plates 1–6 have been deleted.
The UNICEF meeting was well organized as usual. They led us through the set-up of Child-Friendly Spaces and suggested that we visit the one at the Lake Camp.\(^{44}\) We saw the people from the Child Care Direct at the meeting and talked a bit. We could see how easy it would be to partner with the other NGOs. The only difference is that it’s a business for them and our services are free.

We had some soup and pasta at the restaurant down the street. When we returned, the two men who were wiring the embassy wanted to talk to us. They talked about the special sensors that they were using to wire the embassy. I thought it quite strange for them to tell us about this stuff. They asked about the camps and asked if they could go with us.

Feti, one of the Kosovars who works with ECT showed up and wanted to talk to us. He had a friend with him. He wanted to tell us in more detail about the atrocities in Kosovo. . . . When he talked about children being raped, his dark eyes reflected a great deal of anger. He is one of 10 children. He is not sure of the whereabouts of his family members in Kosovo. The details were more of the same but more graphic. He recounted a personal experience of having a knife held to his throat. He is not sure how he managed to escape death. He fears the worse for his family members, particularly his parents. He told of family members hiding in basements and abandoned houses and in unsafe places, never knowing when they would be found and killed. His voice quivered with emotion as he talked about not being able to do a thing. He says, “I think it will come to an end but it will be too late. We need the Americans to come quickly and bring an end to this. Each day lives are being taken. How much longer do we have to wait? Can you tell my story? I’m sure if the Americans could see that they would help.” For a minute, I felt like I was dealing with a helpless child. But then I recognized that the Kosovars had been reduced to helpless children.

**May 21, 1999.** Worked with UNICEF at the Tirana Lake Camp. Improvements are being made in this camp. The UNICEF Child-Friendly Spaces have been set up by Bethany, school is in session, medical care is being provided. Albanian and Kosovan teachers have been identified. Some are holding classes outside in the park area near the lake. The students and teachers seem glad to have some structure in their lives. The school tents reflected the children’s drawings and paintings. Themes of houses burning, people dying, and NATO bombings were reflected (fig. 15, plates 1–4, 6).

\(^{44}\) Child-Friendly Spaces are like camps, either day or overnight camps, where children can go to play, learn crafts, and generally enjoy in safety the ordinary experiences of childhood. Several are located in the Balkan area and are often staffed by volunteers from America and Europe.
Several of the children wanted to tell us about their drawings. One boy had drawn a picture of a tree with a snake around it. The tree was Kosovo, and the snake was the Serbs (plate 5). The Relief Society President of the local branch had set up tent in the middle of the camp. She had several mats in the tent. She told us that during the night that some of the children who could not find space in their own tents would wander in to sleep. Outside this camp, some group or organization had set up a carnival with bumper cars. The children seemed to be enjoying the distraction.

Dennis watched the bumper cars, and I wandered around the tents. The smaller children were not allowed to ride on the bumper cars. There seemed to be so many children who were 2, 3, or 4 years old. It is interesting that they never asked for anything. Some just hung around us; others peered from the tent openings. The jelly bean supply had been exhausted earlier. In fact, I had emptied my small bag to see if there might be some gum. As I wandered around the camp, the tents seemed to stretch forever. The few Albanian words I had mastered seemed to come in handy, “Si Je” (How are you?) or “Bukur Familia” (beautiful family). In the doorway of one of the tents was a beautiful little girl. She was just standing. From her color, she did not seem to fit with the other children. She had been crying, and there were tearstains on one side of her face. Remembering that the jelly bean supply had been long gone, I was saddened that I had nothing to give her. I asked the surrogate mother if I could just put an arm around her, perhaps for some comfort. The woman seemed pleased and pushed the little girl toward me. As I bent down to put an arm around her, I heard a sound from my bag. The sound startled me, and I quickly straightened up. I opened the bag, took out my papers, camera, and other things. At the bottom of the bag was the last package of jelly beans! I reflected on this experience much of this evening. I am not sure where the jelly beans came from or if this experience actually occurred. I think I took a picture of the little girl with the jelly beans (fig. 16). Oh well, I have to wait until I return to the states to see the pictures. I am still bothered about how the jelly beans got there.

President Lenker asked if we would come to a meeting to provide some general recommendations about what we had assessed. We offered some general recommendations, emphasizing the need for the Kosovars to help themselves. We suggested some structure so that any project money could be evaluated for its usefulness and benefits. We tried to help them understand that we could not evaluate the project without some objectives and guidelines. . . .

We had dinner at the Europark, where Dennis and I discussed the meetings. We both felt uncomfortable with providing information about a proposal that was yet to be finished. When we returned to our
housing unit, we received a call from Elder Stanger.\textsuperscript{45} He indicated that Fabiolo wanted us to see the video that was smuggled out of Kosovo. Like the meal at the branch president’s house, we could not get out of it. We agreed to meet Fabiolo and the elders at the church at 10:30 tomorrow to watch the video. Neither of us wanted to see the video, but we decided that it could not be any worse than the experience at the host home.

We spent some time thinking about how we would leave Tirana. Dennis spends a great deal of time just watching out the window, watching the soldiers and police stop and search cars that are entering Tirana. Sirens seem to go on all night long.

\textbf{May 22, 1999.} We met Elder Stanger and [his companion] Elder Conlee\textsuperscript{46} at the church. It was raining horribly. The electricity in the church was out. Elder Stanger went next door and asked a woman if we could use her VCR and she seemed very gracious to let us use her home. The video was graphic. The silence during this homemade video was so loud that you could hardly concentrate on the video. The story was repeated to us: The Serbian soldiers arrived at the Bytysi home around 8 P.M. on March 26, 1999. They called the men from the house using a list. The remainder of the family members were instructed to remain inside. The men were killed. The Bytysi family were not allowed to

\textsuperscript{45} Elder Brandon Stanger is from Walnut, California.
\textsuperscript{46} Elder David Conlee is from Orem, Utah.
retrieve the bodies for burial preparation until the following evening. They then dragged the bodies to a nearby Holy Place (a church) to prepare them for burial. They were buried in the backyard with threats by the Serbs of having the bodies burned.

The video had the men laid out. Close-up of the wounds revealed brutalized bodies. The older man’s eye had been gouged out, or [he] had been shot both through the eye as well as through the head. The others had been shot through the temples. Pools of blood could be seen. Tremendous weeping could be heard as the mother was alternately grieving over husband and sons. It was the same woman whose grief-stricken heart we had heard earlier. A little boy perhaps 5 or 6 could be seen wandering around the bodies, not knowing exactly what to do. In one scene, he seemed to be trying to wake the men up. There were quite a number of people in the video, all who seemed to be distressed. Subsequent to the deaths, the remainder of the family fled to a cousin’s house in another part of the city where they lived in the basement for nearly a month. One member of the family became very sick. They arrived in Tirana, trying to get help for this family member. The family had some connection to the Arta Smagli family. Apparently the father in the Smagli family had worked with a brother in the Bytysi family. Also one of the daughters had been in Tirana before and had some knowledge of the Smagli family. The Bytysi family have no friends, no identification, and have had little assistance from the Red Cross or other organizations. They represent one of the gaps in humanitarian services. Preparation for the video did not seem to help much. I felt traumatized again. I could not get the image of the little boy out of my mind. This child, probably a grandchild, would be forever scarred by this trauma.

I’m not sure that this journal writing is such a good thing. A reexperiencing of trauma seems to occur as we recount it.

**Not sure of this date in May.** Much of our time has been spent in the recent days winding up the evaluation, putting pieces together, planning our “escape” from Tirana. We wanted to visit some of the host families again before we left. We found a little shop. We bought some boxes of candy and bags of cookies. They must have been on the shelf for years because of the dust. After we made the purchase, we noticed the little sign on the side, “Best used by June 1998” or “June 1997.” Oh well, it’s too late now. We called Ben to tell him that we wanted to visit with the Kosovar family in his home. Ben came after us, and we made a few stops en route to his home. He wanted to show us one of his fireplaces. It was an elegant job. The white marble fireplace had lions sculptured on each side. It was really a masterpiece.

The candy and cookies were a good choice. We indicated to the Kosovars that we would be leaving soon and wanted to say goodbye to them. We
had brought some food to share with them. We had learned that it was respectful to eat with them and not just provide food for them. Dennis and I both held our breath as we opened the bags of cookies and boxes of candy. They looked incredibly fresh and tasted even better. I breathed a sigh of relief. As we sampled the goods, I was reminded of the apple and its fifteen pieces and my first visit with this family.

Between our broken Albanian and their broken English, I felt a connection to these people that I did not think was possible. I would have no problem in opening my home to them. The language of love superseded any cultural or religious difference. It was an emotional time—as if we were leaving long lost friends. The Kosovars were very tearful. One of the teen-aged boys, the pizza eater, followed us outside and just hugged us both and said that he wanted us to visit Kosovo when everything was better.

It was a long walk back to where we had learned to call home. It seemed longer than usual. We noticed some of the faces that we had seen during our stay. But they did not look like strangers, nor did we feel unsafe. In fact, we both felt lifted, filled, not so unlike we had just attended a fast and testimony meeting. Dennis tried to start a conversation. For the first time, during this journey in Albania did I understand something about our purpose for being here. We were planting seeds in fertile soil, the seeds of the gospel. A scripture kept repeating itself in my mind, “Inasmuch as ye have done this to the least of these my brethren...”47 Just think, I would have chosen not to have this experience, but the Lord knew better. He even uses unwilling instruments for his purpose. The reminder of this experience will be forever with me, and I hope the pictures turn out.

Another Entry: No date. We pulled together several pieces and tried to determine the best route to leave. Swiss Air had no flights in or out. We made contact with our Albanian driver and made arrangements to go to Durrës. The Viking Express was supposed to leave at 9:30 A.M. There were two enormous ferries docked. There was tremendous chaos. No one knew where or what the Viking Express was. The Viking Express was supposed to take about 6 hours to get to Bari, Italy. The ferries took 13. It was terribly hot, and there were beggars everywhere with their children. Dennis kept giving the children money, and they kept following us around. Other relief workers were trying to get out of Albania as well. The Viking Express finally arrived at 1 P.M. and did not leave until 4 P.M. The boat seemed to wait until sufficient people showed up. It was a very rough ride to Bari, Italy. Everyone got seasick and began to vomit. We arrived in Bari at about 11 P.M.

47. Matthew 25:40; ellipses in Byrd’s diary.
Customs took forever. We missed the train to Rome and ended up staying in Bari tonight. Someone told us that Rome was about 5 hours from Bari by train. It's been a long day. At least we made it out of Albania. Customs in Bari took more than two hours; there were Italian soldiers everywhere.

Some reflections: Tirana airport, trenches, Apache helicopters, bomb shelters on the way from the airport, the streets of Tirana, the Albanians, the tragedies of the Kosovars, the crowded Albanian apartments, the poor helping the poor, the camps, the faces of the children, the faces of the children, the faces of the children, the beggars in the street, food everywhere but none we could eat, smoke-filled streets, soldiers everywhere, trash on every street corner, the kindness and gentleness of the Albanians and the Kosovars, the feelings of familiarity and kinship to the Kosovars...

The memories of Albania seem so close yet so far away. The memories seem glued to corners of my mind, and yet there is a peaceful feeling about what we have done. It is interesting that whatever picture comes to my mind about Albania that there are always faces of the children...

We are en route to the U.S. If I am lucky, I will just make Kristen's graduation. She’ll be surprised. The host in business class just offered a couple of magazines. The U.S. News and World Report is devoted to the war in the Balkans. There are pictures of familiar places and familiar faces. Somehow, it's not just news anymore. I have changed my opinion about exaggeration. I have just been to the Balkans, and I should have been there. I will never be the same, and somehow I sense that those Kosovars and Albanians that we worked with will never be the same either. One of the Kosovars said as we left that he would always have an American family, and I suppose that I will always have a Kosovar family.

Epilog

Dean Byrd did, indeed, make it home in time for his daughter's graduation, and she was surprised to see him there. His work for Kosovo, however, was just beginning. Within days of his arrival, he reported to LDS Charities officials, established the necessary physical and financial supports, and trained a missionary couple, who arrived in Albania little more than a week after he left. He continues to receive reports, train missionaries, and direct progress on the situation. He had identified three areas where LDS Charities could substantially contribute to easing the crisis and stabilizing families: filling gaps between services offered by other organizations, partnering with those organizations, and training Kosovar and Albanian counselors.

Gaps in services existed both for groups of refugees and for individuals. While some camps had tents specifically designated as schools, they lacked
books and similar supplies; LDS Charities furnished the supplies. Some refugees did not have identification tags, so they were denied services, at least temporarily; Byrd and the Humanitarian Services missionaries who followed him purchased food, clothing, and medical supplies as needed in these individual cases.

Some of the gaps were filled by partnerships with other organizations. Bethany Christian Services, for example, set up an area at their headquarters in Tirana to provide at least rudimentary care for pregnant women, allow for delivery of their babies, and care for the newborns; however, many women had no way to get there. LDS Charities provided transportation.48 Byrd trained several faculty members of the University of Tirana School of Social Work in working with the displaced and grief-stricken refugees. LDS Charities provided the school with textbooks, which are now housed in a library at Bethany Christian Services; a tag on the shelf says, “Thank you to LDS Social Services.”

More Humanitarian Services missionaries specifically trained to deal with trauma survivors and to help stabilize the region were sent to the area. LDS Charities continues to operate independently of crises by establishing economic development programs designed to build local economies and promote skills and abilities. Several of these programs are under way in the Balkans. For example, forty-six Croatian families were given pregnant sows, the only stipulation being that they share two female piglets from the first litter with two other families in need. Within months, 136 families owned income-producing pigs.49 For Muslims, who do not use pork, the pig project was adapted to use chickens. The Church has distributed 21,000 eighteen-week-old chickens among 3,000 families: six hens and one rooster to each family. The hens have been bred to lay up to three hundred eggs per year and are expected to produce around one hundred per year even under difficult farm conditions. Most eggs will be eaten, but recipients are required to reserve fifteen to hatch and to give six hens and a rooster to each of two other families, who will in turn make similar contributions to two more families.50

48. In refugee situations, some of the highest mortality rates are understandably among women and their children. LDS Charities continues to develop approaches to meet these needs, including providing materials and supplies for health care, including childbirth, Dr. Joyce Foster, interviews with author, February 2000.

50. Mike Rosvall, “The Road to Rebuilding,” Daily Herald (Provo), December 19, 1999, D4. The article chronicles the activities of Lynn and Merle Broadbent, service missionaries recently returned from Macedonia.
Dean Byrd’s influence also reached beyond official assignments to people like Bradley Bush, a friend of Byrd’s son David.51 Bush and a friend, Darryl Pardi, were working for one of the most prestigious financial houses in New York City, but they wanted to help the refugees. Soon after the Kosovo crisis began, Bush contacted Byrd, who arranged for Bush, Pardi, and Bush’s brother, Christopher, to work with Mercy Corps in the Senekos camp for two weeks. The three spent the first week setting up tents, working from dawn until after dusk, aided by refugees who were already settled in tents but who wanted to help those fellow countrymen who would follow. The team’s best record was five hundred tents erected in three days; a week later the camp of 3,500 doubled in population. The second week, the three young men helped conduct elections and establish self-government among the refugees. Christopher, a history major, spearheaded the collection of essays and remembrances of the people in the camp.52 Because of the partnership between Mercy Corps and the LDS Church, Senekos became the “Club Med” of refugee camps. The Church provided funds to purchase fresh food, and the kitchen, run entirely by the refugees themselves, served two hot meals per day.53

The experience intensified Bush’s and Pardi’s social awareness. When they returned to America, they again conferred with Byrd, reporting on what they had done and what they wanted to do. They felt dissatisfied in their jobs, unwilling to spend their lives making rich people richer, so they established their own company, Catalyst Development Partners, to set up economic development programs in underdeveloped countries. Bush spent an additional six weeks in fall 1999 in Kosovo working on just such programs.

Despite the intense aid offered by companies like Catalyst, by charitable agencies, and by Western governments, acute problems remain throughout the Balkans. International pressure on Serbia has allowed some Kosovars to return to their homes or to what is left of their homes. The bitterness


52. The idea was picked up by several other NGOs and backed by one of the largest Albanian publishers, but shortly thereafter the fighting eased, and some of the Kosovars began returning to their homes, so the project was never completed. However, Bush still has photocopies of several pages of poetry in Albanian. A young girl handed him her curled-up papers the day he left; he could not bring himself to take them away from her, so he copied them and returned the originals to the author.

53. The camp director was Nigel Pont, a twenty-four-year-old Englishman who had been running such camps for Mercy Corps for over five years. He was nineteen when he established his first camp in Afghanistan.
and retribution so common to the area continue, however, with some Kosovars taking vengeance on their former neighbors. Many Serbs simply evacuated as the Kosovars returned, becoming refugees in Serbia.\textsuperscript{54} The whole of the former Yugoslavia has suffered; four months after Byrd left Albania, poverty in the Balkans had nearly doubled, with two-thirds of the populace living on less than $60 per month.\textsuperscript{55} Obviously, only changes in the hearts of the people can truly remedy situations like that in the Balkans.

Meanwhile, the LDS Church, in concert with other NGOs, continues to assist in crisis situations. The millions of dollars donated for physical relief can easily be quantified, but no one can possibly estimate the value of volunteers uniting separated families, social workers listening to traumatized individuals work through their emotions, or missionaries spending their preparation days playing with displaced children. In Kosovo, as in other crises created by nature or by human beings, “the Church stands ready to evaluate and respond to future need as circumstances may require and resources allow.”\textsuperscript{56} Since those resources include the expertise of people like Dean Byrd and the willing service of many volunteers, aid can reach beyond food and shelter to restore shattered souls as well as pillaged homes.

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\textsuperscript{56} Senate, Senator Hatch of Utah speaking for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Humanitarian Assistance in Kosovo, 106th Cong., 1st sess., Congressional Record (August 5, 1999), 145, pt. 2: 10366–67.