

NEUE KRONEN ZEITUNG
POLITISCH/PERSÖNLICH
VON SWANEE HUNT
APRIL 11, 1997

HUNGER FOR HARMONY

Before the war, the Bosnian town of Brcko was a model of ethnic diversity, with 44 percent Muslims. Today it is essentially all Serb. Many of the expelled have been living for four years in the surrounding countryside, waiting for the opportunity to go home.

Unwilling to concede their home town, the Muslim refugees recently elected their own mayor. He and I had a talk recently. I tried to imagine the desperation he deals with every day.

Almost apologetically, I told him about the music collection going on this month in Vienna: instruments, sheet music, CD's, cassettes and videos to build music libraries for the schools, orphanages and members of the members of the members of the symphonics in Bosnia. "But I guess you can't really think about music when you're homeless," I added.

"Oh, no," he countered. "We need music to keep our hope alive. Maybe we need music more than anyone else."

I thought of how when I've been most discouraged I've put on a tape of Brahms Requiem or wandered over to the piano to pick out a song -- a song for my soul.

If you would like to join me sending music back to Bosnia, bring instruments and equipment to the Messepalast in Vienna, or your nearest Red Cross ambulance station. Or call 07 111 7171. Kids' bodies need bread, their spirits harmony.