

War's Iron Law: You've Got to Know the Territory

On Saturday, the Belgian city called Ypres (in French) and Ieper (in Flemish) celebrated its annual Feast of the Cats, highlighted by the tossing of cats from the high tower of Cloth Hall. Animal lovers will be happy to know that since 1817 only toy plush cats have been flung. But before that, dating back to at least 962, live cats took the fall in sacrifice to the local belief that their deaths would rid the town of evil spirits.

Evil spirits seem to have plagued Ypres or Ieper nonetheless. In World War I the entire city was reduced to rubble by German artillery. The surrounding region was the scene of some of the most senseless slaughter of that awful war.

Few armies in history have been subjected to worse generalship than was the British Expeditionary Force under dim-

Global View

By George Melloan

witted Sir Douglas Haig in the Third Battle of Ypres, also known as the Battle of Passchendaele. Early in World War I it was obvious that the machine gun had tilted the odds heavily against a successful infantry assault on entrenched positions. Field Marshal Haig chose not only to launch such an attack in August 1917 but to do it through Belgian lowlands that heavy rains had turned to a knee-deep sea of mud.

For minimal gains, the allies suffered 250,000 casualties, including some who drowned in water-filled shell craters. Field Marshal Haig had little direct knowledge of conditions on the ground. His chief of staff was quoted as saying, after finally visiting the battlefield, "Good God, did we really send men to fight in that?"

The Passchendaele calamity retaught

an ancient lesson of warfare, the crucial importance of terrain. The Duke of Wellington's defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo was heavily attributable to the duke's uncanny knack for choosing his ground. President Eisenhower refused to send American troops to help the French in Indochina because he knew the difficulties of beating a guerrilla army on its own jungle turf. When President Johnson later asked the retired general and president for advice on prosecuting the Vietnam War, he received, although to no avail, another Eisenhower maxim: Don't get involved in a war unless you plan to win it.

Which brings up the military problem facing President Clinton today, whether to use American military force against the Bosnian Serbs. The president seems inclined to employ air power in Bosnia. He should first consider two questions: How difficult is the terrain and what would constitute "winning?"

The terrain issue was analyzed on these pages last week by Journal contributing editor Mark Helprin. In mountainous, wooded Bosnia it will be difficult for even the high-tech electronics of allied strike aircraft to find and hit targets. Serb heavy weapons are easily shifted from one forested hiding place to another. If allied pilots should themselves kill civilians, would this turn public sentiment against the U.S. and risk widening the war?

What would constitute "winning?" Forcing the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen peace plan has been identified by the White House as the desired "victory." But it might only be the start of another kind of war. Vance-Owen envisions some 75,000 U.N. "peacekeeping" troops in Bosnia, with the right to shoot back if fired upon. The odds are heavy that they would in fact be fired upon. The U.S. and its allies would then be hostage to guerrilla warfare on inhospitable terrain.

Even if the Serb "parliament" had said yes to Vance-Owen last week, it would be yet another matter to persuade Bosnian Serb forces to withdraw, as the peace plan dictates, from nearly a third of the 70% of Bosnia they now control. As they see it, they have nearly accomplished their goal of making Bosnia a Serbian country.

Indeed, when Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis and their own leader, Radovan Karadzic, urged them to accept Vance-Owen, it had the look of a victory dance. They were told that they already had won 90% of what they wanted and that the rest could be won "through peace." That sounded like an invitation to accept the peace plan but continue to consolidate their grip on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Lord Owen himself, by way of persua-

Another Eisenhower maxim: Don't get involved in a war unless you plan to win it.

sion, suggested that the U.N. peacekeepers would not allow Croat and Muslim fighters to return to areas vacated by the Serbs, even though those areas would nominally revert back to Croats and Muslims under the peace plan's terms. How the peacekeepers would prevent Muslims and Croats from taking revenge on local Serbs in the dead of night was not spelled out, but seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the Serbs. No one knows better than they the hatreds they have stirred up through "ethnic cleansing."

Then there is the question of the peacekeeping force itself. Aside from 25,000 U.S. troops and armor, there would supposedly be some 50,000 troops from other nations. No one seems clear on who would supply them. Britain and France

presumably would contribute, but most likely non-NATO troops would be needed. The extent of NATO's command and control would then be subject to some doubt.

The French have insisted that the ultimate authority over these troops must rest with the U.N., whatever that means. The U.N. knows nothing about managing a field army. Then there is the small matter of who would pay for this force and how long it would have to stay in Bosnia-Herzegovina while someone tried to figure out how to achieve a lasting peace.

Much stock has been placed in Milosevic's angry threat to cut off supplies to the Bosnian Serbs for refusing Vance-Owen and much also in President Clinton's threat to arm the Bosnian Muslims. But with the Muslims so near defeat, it is not clear what effect either act would have. There are always good reasons to doubt Milosevic's word. Yesterday saw no evidence he was carrying out his threat. There was yet another ceasefire agreement in Bosnia, but then there have been a lot of those.

President Clinton's liberal supporters are demanding that he "do something" about Bosnia. As the above analysis suggests, a clear-eyed look would tell him that there are no easy answers. Direct action risks stirring up trouble throughout the volatile Balkans. Certainly it would bring U.S. casualties.

At his Saturday press conference, the president complained that foreign policy was distracting him from his main job: fixing the U.S. economy. In fact, most of the policies he has so far put forth would damage, not "fix" the U.S. economy. The most important job of any U.S. president is not meddling in the economy, but conducting a prudent foreign policy. As Passchendaele should remind us, that is where the big risks lie.

Boston Sunday Globe

SUNDAY, MAY 9, 1993

For American Serbs, anger and puzzlement

By Michael Rezendes
GLOBE STAFF

CHICAGO - Rade Rebic eased his Lincoln Town Car past the neat brick homes along Serbian Road and pulled into the immaculate parking lot of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral, a beacon for successful Serbian-Americans living in greater Chicago.

But Rebic's thoughts were far from the American dream as he talked of the nightmare of World War II and the mounting resentment he feels at President Clinton's response to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"Air strikes against the Serbs would be a total betrayal," said Rebic, who as a teen-ager joined Serbian guerrillas fighting Croatians

working with Hitler's forces. "We were America's allies. We fought for the same ideals as the American soldiers. We were ready to die for the United States."

As Clinton struggles to muster a multinational force to respond to the Bosnian Serbs' rejection of an inter-

■ **Rebel Serbs agree to a ceasefire in Bosnia. Page 16.**

national peace plan, residents of America's largest Serbian community are railing against the possibility of US military involvement in what they describe as a three-way civil war in which all parties have acted as aggressors.

"Our hands are not clean but neither are those of the Muslims or the

SERBIANS, Page 18

FOR SERBIAN-AMERICANS, anger and puzzlement at US policy

■ SERBIANS

Continued from Page 1

Croatians," said George Gavran, a Serbian-American attending Eastern Orthodox religious services here. "Why does Clinton believe it's necessary to favor one side over the others?"

The answer may lie in two words: Ethnic cleansing.

International observers have equated ethnic cleansing - the Bosnian Serbs' campaign to rid entire regions of Muslims and Croats - with the Nazis' extermination of millions of Jews. It is those reports, which have focused on systematic rape, the slaughter of children, and the leveling of Muslim and Croatian villages, that have pushed Americans to consider military involvement in the turbulent Balkans.

Yet when Serbian-Americans here are asked about the accounts of mass murder and mass rape, they respond not with revulsion but with assertions that Muslims have perpetrated equally heinous war crimes that have been underreported by news organizations duped by a Muslim propaganda campaign.

Moreover, while some Serbian-Americans are voicing hope for new talks among the warring parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina, many others express unqualified support for Bosnian Serb leaders who seem increasingly determined to wage war against anyone who would interfere in their centuries-old dispute with Muslim enemies.

"The land has been paid for with Serbian blood," declared Borka Njegovan, a 55-year-old Serbian immigrant. "How can President Clinton call the Serbs aggressors when they are fighting for their homeland, for the graves of their mothers and their fathers?"

Rekindled passions

For the estimated 50,000 Serbs living in Chicago and its suburbs and as many as 200,000 more living throughout the Great Lakes region - political protest does not come easily.

Since the years following World War I, Serbians have been coming to

'Why does Clinton believe it's necessary to favor one side over the others?'

GEORGE GAVRAN
Serbian-American

the United States to work in the factories, packing houses and steel mills of the Midwest, where they have forged middle-class lives and pledged allegiance to their new country.

Like other European immigrants long accustomed to poverty, many of them assimilated easily, often astonished at the rewards that could be reaped through hard work, education and simple thrift.

"That's what's great about America," said Rebic, who seems hardly able to believe the story of his own rise from a war refugee to a steel mill worker and production engineer for AT&T. "When I think about how helpful the people in this country were, and how much I was able to achieve, it's almost ridiculous."

But Rebic, who at 58 is comfortably retired, today is among the many Serbian-Americans who in recent months have been swept by passions they haven't felt since the outbreak of World War II, when thousands of Serbs were killed in mass executions at the hands of neighboring Croats.

"We can't forget what happened 50 years ago," said Rebic who, like his foes, invoked the memory of genocide. "It would be like asking the Jews to forget the Holocaust."

A regard for history

As they watch the American government attempt to thwart a Bosnian Serb victory, Serbians here are not only angered by the prospect of US military action against family members, but puzzled at what they say is an American failure to recognize the origins of the widening war

in the ethnic and religious battles that raged through the Balkans during World War II.

"My greatest frustration with America is that it has no regard for history," said Rev. Mirko Dobrijevic, a priest at the cathedral. "What we're seeing today are the unresolved disputes set off in the Second World War. When the Communists took over, all of the old wounds festered. Nothing healed."

But Dobrijevic is quick to add that the antagonism felt by Serbs for their Muslim neighbors runs back much farther than World War II. Indeed, many Serbian-Americans point to the 500-year reign of Islam in their homeland - and the fear of being ruled again by Muslims - as the source of today's fighting.

Some Serbs here even say that centuries of Muslim domination, which ended in the late 1800s, fostered "an acceptance of war" among Bosnian Serbs that is unlikely to be mitigated by the threat of limited US air strikes.

"We're talking about people who have spent centuries celebrating a disastrous military defeat at the hands of the Turks," said Donald Yovetich, an IRS attorney, referring to an Islamic military victory in 1389 that is commonly regarded as a spiritual victory by Christian Orthodox Serbs.

Invoking the brutality

Indeed, at recent political gatherings here, Ottoman rule of Serbia has been cited routinely to justify the overwhelming rejection of the United Nations-brokered peace plan that would force Bosnian Serbs to yield territory to their Muslim foes.

Last week, when about 150 Serbs gathered on a wind-swept plaza in downtown Chicago to discourage US military intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina, they invoked both the brutality of the current war and the ancient passions that drive it.

Several demonstrators, protesting what they say is the one-sided news coverage of wartime atrocities, carried gruesome placards bearing life-sized photographs of Bosnian Serbs allegedly mutilated in the recent fighting.

Meanwhile, a half-dozen Serbian priests took turns praying for the Bosnian Serbs and excoriating American political leaders.

"We alone know what it means to have lived under 500 years of Ottoman occupation," intoned Rev. Dobrijevic. "We will never, never, never permit that to happen to our people again."

The Daily Telegraph

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May 7, 1993

On the Serbian rack

THE BOSNIAN Serbs have given another twist to the rack on which they are tormenting the Western allies. By rejecting the Vance-Owen peace plan, their parliament has called the West's bluff. Though not convinced that President Milosevic could dictate a settlement to the Bosnian Serbs, the allies cherished hopes that his voice would be decisive, as it had proved before, over Croatia. Mr Milosevic's failure this time, stems partly from the fact that the Serbs have not yet fulfilled their territorial ambitions in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and partly also from their belief, born of months of Western hawing, that the world lacks the will to stop them.

Whatever the precise motives for their defiance, it confronts the allies with an agonising decision. Should they await the referendum which the Bosnian Serbs have called in 10 days' time? Should they intensify the pressure on Mr Milosevic, demanding even stronger measures than those he has already announced to halt military support from Serbia? Or should they begin immediately to bomb Serbian supply lines and artillery positions?

The first option can be dismissed out of hand. The Bosnian Serbs are again playing for time. Even if they were not, the West could hardly endorse a referendum in territory subject to ethnic cleansing by terror. Keeping Mr Milosevic up to the mark in applying the embargo he announced last night might seem more promising. The leadership in Belgrade has apparently concluded that further defiance of the West over Bosnia will prove counter-productive. However, placing too much reliance on the Serbian president to deliver the goods would reflect Western desperation. It is unclear whether he is genuinely at odds with the Bosnian Serbs, or whether they are secretly colluding to frustrate Western policy-makers. There remain anyway the practical difficulties of imposing an effective arms embargo in wooded

Milosevic remains under pressure from his own extremists. The Vance-Owen plan, after all, requires the Bosnian Serbs to give up about 30 per cent of the land they have conquered. It is difficult not to conclude that relying on the Milosevic option reflects wishful thinking.

Which brings us back to military intervention. We have now reached a position in which Western governments, by their rhetoric, have exposed themselves to humiliation by a ragbag of Serb politicians and their murderous henchmen. We remain opposed to the favoured American option, providing arms for the Muslims and Croats. This might salve Western consciences, but it could intensify the conflict and provoke its extension into a wholesale Balkan war. Its only merit is that it would keep Western forces out of combat. Any Western action, including lifting the arms embargo, is likely to mean a halt to humanitarian aid operations.

The open defiance by the Bosnian Serbs of warnings from Washington, London and Paris invites the brutal question: can the West any longer afford not to respond to Serb behaviour with a demonstration of force? We return to the question we have always asked: do we believe that Western military operations can be undertaken in Bosnia with definable and attainable objectives, at tolerable cost, with the likelihood of bringing lasting benefit to the suffering innocents on the ground? Our answer a week ago was "no". It remains "no" today. All that has changed in the past week is that feverish Western diplomacy has raised the profile of Western embarrassment and Western impotence.

There should be no military gestures in Bosnia, and all-out military commitment remains a daunting proposition that could create an unwelcome precedent. As Anthony Eden and the British people learnt in 1956, embarrassment

The Times May 7, 1993

British MPs wary of military option

By PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

MINIMALISM is still the prevailing mood in London. If, or now perhaps when, military action is taken against the Bosnian Serbs, any British participation will be only with serious reservations. It will be primarily in order to maintain the unity of the international community and to avoid breaches in the transatlantic alliance rather than because of any belief that the use of force will halt the Bosnian war.

Anyone listening to the public comments of ministers or exchanges in the Commons yesterday will have detected hardly any enthusiasm for the options which Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, has been discussing this week with European leaders. Even yesterday the government was still looking to President Milosevic of Serbia to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs

rather than to military action. The British hope is that the gap between the Belgrade regime and the Bosnian Serbs can be exploited, and that the Serbian president can be persuaded to use his leverage by closing the border, cutting off supplies of weapons and other equipment and apply other

COMMENTARY

pressure. The fear in London is that precipitate military action might bring Belgrade and the Bosnian Serbs back together without stopping the fighting.

Douglas Hogg, the Foreign Office minister, underlined Britain's continuing strong opposition to any relaxation of the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims and its doubts, somewhat less strongly expressed, about limited air

attacks. These are balanced by worries about the appearance of disunity between Washington and European capitals. It remains the rule that private impatience with America must never affect public policy.

The one option absolutely excluded by ministers is the commitment of ground troops to end the fighting, as opposed to policing an agreement reached by the parties over the Vance-Owen plan. There is, however, the dangerous grey area of defending any "safe havens".

What is clear is the continuing apprehension among Conservative MPs about any steps which would endanger the British troops now involved in the humanitarian effort. There are few hawks on the Tory benches and it is significant that the leading defence specialists are almost all doves. Several believe that

the British contingent should be withdrawn if air attacks are ordered. With only a few exceptions on the Labour left the opposition's line is more hawkish than the government's solely in urging that the United Nations should threaten air attacks as part of an ultimatum.

The government is near what Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, has called "a fork in the road". It has to decide how far to go along with American pressure for military action despite its own doubts (shared by key allies, such as France) and the worries of its own supporters. British policy is being shifted by American pressure and by the deteriorating situation in Bosnia, beyond what ministers were ruling out only two or three weeks ago. But there is no enthusiasm for the likely new approach.

The Guardian: COMMENT

119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
Friday May 7 1993

Bad news with a few good chances

THE SERBIAN NO from Bosnia is gloomy and thunderous, but it may yet clear the air. It comes from a group which has defied the advice of two leaders, of Serbia and Greece, as well as its own increasingly flimsy chieftain. It is isolated. The line-up of those for and against the Vance-Owen Plan may not be morally very palatable but it could be an important new political reality. Lord Owen, at the pit-head face of black realism, put things very simply yesterday. The world is now relying on President Slobodan Milosevic to bring peace to Bosnia. Last night he seemed to be delivering deeds as well as hot words.

The judgment on how the world has reached such a sorry position will be made over and again. It is a miserable story. But the irony of relying on Mr Milosevic, the prime mover and chief architect of ethnic tension in former Yugoslavia, should not be over-stressed. He is the leader of a country against which extensive sanctions have been applied over the past year, and most recently stepped up, with the aim of inducing different behaviour. If he now behaves differently as a consequence of international action, we may well throw up our hands in a brief

was the *whole purpose* of sanctions. They're working. If Mr Milosevic is to be corralled within constraints which he previously rejected, cutting supplies that previously flowed, that may also be good news for the Kosovans and others who feature in the Greater Serbian design.

The "twin track" approach now being adopted still covers a significant difference of emphasis between President Clinton and the European governments. Guided by Lord Owen, Europe is placing all its diplomatic bets on the strategy of persuading Mr Milosevic to close the borders, or at least seal off supplies from Bosnian Serbia. The picture of unarmed UN monitors being protected by Mr Milosevic's police from Bosnian Serb marauders is bizarre — but not now completely implausible. It would probably also require more permanent guarantees from Belgrade and the replacement of its most extreme military voices before sanctions could be eased.

Is this supping with the devil? Let those who have a better idea speak now. Mr Clinton's moral outrage is fine enough, but we have long been outraged. Perhaps the uncertainty of the US loose cannon has some effect on some Bosnian Serbs. But the balance is with the disreputable Radovan Karadzic, whose point has been made by almost every observer — and now Lord Owen. Armed intervention in Bosnia would probably lead to bloody martyrdom by the Bosnian Serbs bringing many more deaths to others as well.

Within Bosnia itself, the UN must not wait on others. General Morillon should be encouraged to make another strong personal intervention if access to Zepa is denied. The Belgian officer who said yesterday that the UN stop "applying for permission" to do its job was absolutely right. And even without acceptance of Vance-Owen, a crucial truth bears more repetition. The UN needs more peace-keepers on the spot. Now.

Power Play, 1878 In a deal resented ever since by Serbs, the Congress of Berlin lifted the threat of a European war over imperial rivalries in the Balkans. Germany's Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, the central figure, greets Russia's

Meddling in the Balkans

By CRAIG R. WHITNEY

FOR all the growing outrage over atrocities by Serbian forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the insistent calls for military intervention to stop them, one factor making it so difficult for the West to decide what to do is that through the centuries, outside interference in the Balkans has usually just made things worse.

The easiest decision is to do nothing, but Bosnian Muslims plaintively insist that that too is a kind of outside intervention, one that favors the Serbs.

The history of all the southern Slavs in the Balkans is a tangled tragedy of mass rape and barbaric slaughter, the product of the kind of ethnic hatred that perhaps only people who are closely related to each other could nurture so well for so long.

Outsiders enter such feuds at their peril, as the Clinton Administration has begun acknowledging lately. Though Bill Clinton during the election campaign criticized the Bush Administration for inaction as Yugoslavia disintegrated and descended into violence, last week he conceded that the Balkan war was "the most difficult and most frustrating problem in the world today."

With extreme reluctance, the NATO allies last week edged toward intervention, deciding with the approval of the United Nations Security Council to send fighter planes over Bosnia to enforce a ban on (largely nonexistent) Serb military flights there, starting tomorrow.

Germany was particularly skittish about participating in air control operations, having been burned by its past mistakes. Most recently, it has begun to admit that it made a mistake in rushing its European allies into recognition of the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Slovenia at the beginning of 1992, on the ground that this diplomatic step would help curb Serbian aggression.

Instead, the German campaign to recognize Croatia may have given Serbs an additional pretext to attack in the weeks before recognition was actually extended. The pretext was there because the last time Croatia was given its independence — by Nazi Germany in World War II — Croats set up concentration camps and butchered tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies.

Bosnian Muslims joined in some of the bloodletting then, and the clumsy German meddling half a century later may have been another reason why Serbs in Bosnia went on the rampage after Bosnian independence was recognized last year.

Perhaps, too, it was only a pretext. But those like former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain who argue that a few surgical air strikes against Serbian artillery may be all that is needed to stop the butchery tend to play down the dangers of Western intervention. The first bomb that misses its intended target and kills

Slaughter and hatred defied in before. 1 grown w

Weight Training for 1994

Clinton's Jobs Plan Rallies the R

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

THE tug of war between President Clinton and Senate Republicans over

WASHINGTON

Ambassador, Count Paul Shuvalov; on his other side is Austria-Hungary's Foreign Minister, Julius Andrassy. Benjamin Disraeli, Britain's Prime Minister, talks with Russia's seated Foreign Minister, Count Aleksandr Gorchakov.

ns: A Peril of the Ages

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an innocent child in Bosnia could quickly turn United Nations peacekeepers into everybody's enemies.

The hatred Serbs, Croats and Muslims have for each other has been fed by age-old myths and grievances. The Serbs have seen themselves as martyrs ever since their defeat by the Ottoman Turks in the legendary battle of Kosovo in 1389. They lived under the Turks for four centuries before regaining a separate existence, under the rarely effective protection of Russia.

Russia has been more willing to pressure the Serbs in recent years, but last week in the Security Council it said it would not support the stiffer sanctions against the Serbs sought by President Clinton.

Seeds of Antagonism

Serbian leaders in Belgrade say they cannot understand why the supposedly Christian West does not support a fight that they claim is aimed against Muslim nationalism in Bosnia. And they bitterly criticize Pope John Paul II for supporting Croatian independence in 1992. Had he forgotten that, under the Nazi-supported Croat regime, the Roman Catholic authorities forcibly baptized thousands of Orthodox Serbs?

It was earlier outside intervention, by the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, that sowed the seeds of

such antagonisms. Slovenes and Croats converted to Catholicism under the Austrians; Serbs and Croats converted to Islam under the Ottoman Turks. Ethnically, all of them are southern Slavs.

But by the late 19th century, all felt themselves distinct, and all had begun to chafe under foreign domination. The Serbs did not acquire full independence from the Turks until 1878, when it was ratified under Bismarck's chairmanship at the Congress of Berlin. But at the same gathering, the great European powers awarded Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary, sowing the seeds of resentful Serbian nationalism. Kosovo and Macedonia, which the Serbs regarded as theirs, remained part of the Ottoman Empire. Ten years later, after imperial Russia intervened and added the yeast of pan-Slavism to this devil's brew, Bismarck said that the Balkan problem was "not worth the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier."

But by then the European powers had made the problem worse — particularly the Austrians, who centuries earlier had resettled Serbs, reputed to be fierce fighters, into border areas of Croatia, so they could act as a bulwark against the Turks. The relocations mixed populations along the Croatian-Bosnian border that grew more hostile to each other; the butchery in these territories was particularly fierce in 1991.

European involvement also backfired in 1914 with the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by a Bosnian youth of Serb origin in Sarajevo, on

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epublicans

Tax Dollars at Work
The I.R.S. goes
outside for
collection help.

By John H. Cushman Jr.

many things... Clinton's proposed economic stimulus

... support for terrorism and for Islamic fundamen-
talist movements, its determination to rebuild its mili-
tary, including the development of weapons of mass
destruction, its poor human rights record and its opposi-
tion to the American-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

The Saddam Syndrome

But the new Administration is looking at much the same behavior as the Bush Administration did, and reaching different conclusions. When Mr. Clinton concludes his current policy review on Iran, he is likely to abandon the "good will begets good will" approach of Mr. Bush, which left open the door for dialogue. The question is why?

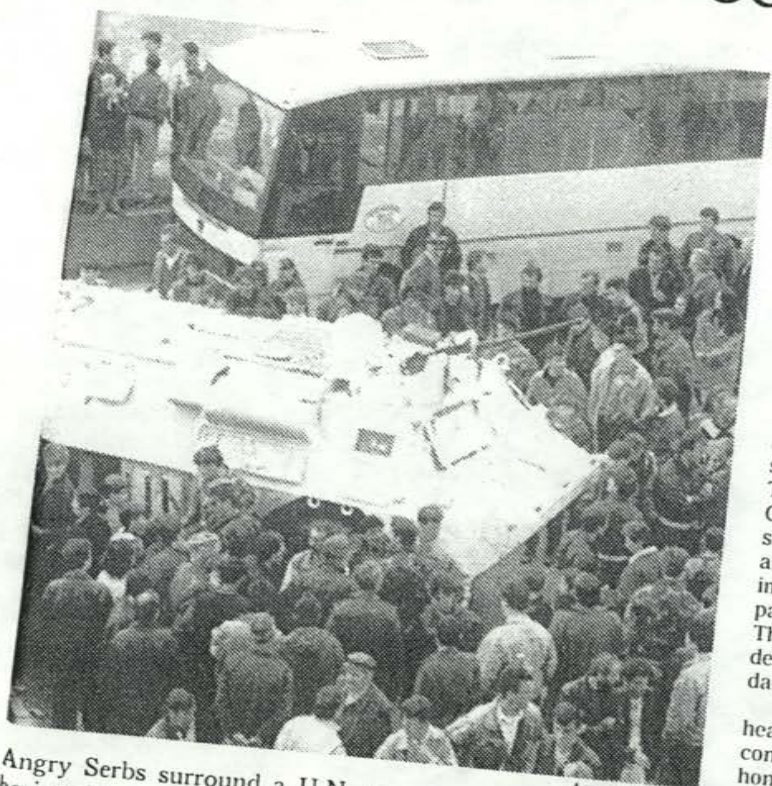
First, there is the Saddam syndrome. The Administration is determined not to make the same mistakes with Iran that Mr. Bush did with Iraq before the invasion of Kuwait, trying to moderate behavior through econom-

... of its best friend in the Persian Gulf, Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlevi. As the chief American negotiator in winning the release of Americans held hostage by Iran's revolutionary regime, Mr. Christopher has no illusions about the Administration's ability to shape Iran's policy.

But this approach ignores the fact that the United States could do worse than coexist with an Iran led by Mr. Rafsanjani, by no means a Western-style democrat, but at least a pragmatic state-builder determined to rebuild his country's economy. He has proven that he is capable of responsible action: when he remained neutral in the gulf war with Iraq and again when he pressed for the release of American hostages in Lebanon.

"I still don't think the analysis of Rafsanjani as a pragmatist who wants to improve relations with the West is wrong," said Shaul Bakhash, a historian and author. "Yes, he is ultimately responsible for what Iranians do abroad, and this is no time for constructive engagement. But we don't want to make it any worse, and it will be much harder for Iranians to resume a policy of seeking dialogue after all this name-calling."

es of Outside Meddling



Angry Serbs surround a U.N. convoy trying to get to the besieged town of Srebrenica last week, forcing it to turn back.

Associated Press

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the anniversary of the battle of Kosovo. The first independent Yugoslavia emerged from the wreckage of World War I in the Treaty of Versailles, which established it as a kingdom. But outside powers could not establish a national political consensus on how such a multi-ethnic country should be organized. There was chaos for 10 years, until King Alexander proclaimed what amounted to a dictatorship. He was assassinated in 1934, and in 1941, his successor was overthrown in a putsch of Serbian generals just before Hitler's troops marched in and partitioned the country. It is the memories of what the murderous Croatian fascist state, and at times Muslim forces in Bosnia, did to Serbs during World War II that are driving their aggression today. After a bloody civil war, Marshal Josip Broz Tito reestablished the multi-ethnic state, but to preserve Communist rule, he largely suppressed smoldering resentments. In 1974, he made concessions to Hungarian and Albanian ethnic nationalism by making the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo in Serbia "constituent parts" of Yugoslavia, on the same footing with Serbia. This added to Serbian resentment, which, after Tito's death in 1980, eventually led to the emergence of Slobodan Milosevic's virulent brand of nationalism. Now, with the Balkans again in ruins, it is not heartlessness that makes Europeans reluctant to become more deeply involved. The Yugoslav mess is homemade, and Europe's past record — not just in this war but all along — does not encourage the belief that Western military intervention would do any good. Only the alternative, the complicity of standing by and watching the slaughter go on, would be worse.

Are we plunging into our own Ulster in the Balkans?

Before embracing the idea of sending American soldiers to Bosnia as part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, the Clinton administration apparently looked at the British experience in Northern Ireland and asked the obvious question: Why should the Brits have all the fun?

Adm. James Boorda, the American commander of NATO forces in southern Europe, said recently that getting the Serbs to sign the Vance-Owen treaty was his fondest hope—and, he joked, his greatest fear. What he hoped for was an end to the civil war; what he feared was the obligation of implementing it.

Bill Clinton had promised Americans that he wouldn't send ground troops to end the war in Bosnia. Now, he's ready to deploy them to keep the

Stephen Chapman

peace, which will be much more costly and dangerous than dropping bombs on Serbian gun sites.

Ask the British. Like the army in Ulster, American troops will be placed into an alien society to enforce an authority that many of the local people reject, facing fierce enemies who can blend into the civilian population, will rarely present a visible target and need to do only two things: force the outsider to pay a small but unending toll of casualties, and persist in the cause until he gives up and goes home.

But the comparison with Northern Ireland is not entirely accurate. Bosnia could be a lot worse. It is bigger, offers far more armed partisans to harass the peacekeepers and has three groups at war, not two. The Irish Republican Army and Protestant extremist groups have never had more than 1,500 actual fighters at any given time, notes MIT military scholar Barry Posen. The Serbian irregulars in Bosnia number 35,000 or so all by themselves.

What can Americans expect? First, a bigger commitment than anyone has admitted so far. The British have generally kept about 30,000 men in Northern Ireland, which has about one-third the land and people of Bosnia, so figure the UN will need at least three times more—at least 90,000, of which at least a third will come from the United States. If resistance turns out to be widespread, says Posen, make it 200,000.

Second, a significant harvest of American corpses. The British Army has averaged 27 deaths annually, suggesting the UN peacekeepers should expect several dozen a year if they're lucky and more if they're not.

Third, a protracted stay. The British arrived in force in Ulster 24 years ago, and they aren't leaving anytime soon. If we intend to stay even a few years, we'd better discuss how much to increase the defense budget and when to revive the draft.

It won't happen, of course. The British have stayed because Northern Ireland happens to be part of Britain. Bosnia is not even in our hemisphere. Americans aren't likely to endure bloodshed in a mysterious, faraway and strategically unimportant

The British have stayed because Northern Ireland happens to be part of Britain. Bosnia is not even in our hemisphere.

country for more than a year or two, if that.

But at the moment, no one can say exactly at what time and on what terms we should make our exit. Americans are supposed to trust Clinton's good intentions and sound instincts to shepherd us out at the right moment. Chances are we will pack up and leave not when the need for our presence expires, but when our patience does—as we did in Lebanon. Chances are when we do, anything we have accomplished will promptly disintegrate.

The supposed rationale for this undertaking is humanitarian—to stop the Serbs from killing more Muslims. The real mission is political—to uphold the Vance-Owen plan, a pipe dream that can be realized only through massive outside intervention. The accord compels the three ethnic groups to live together in a multi-ethnic nation even though two of them (the Croats and the Serbs) have been fighting for the privilege of being ruled by their own brethren.

It is silly to say, as Western policy has, that the individual provinces of former Yugoslavia have a right to self-determination but the individual ethnic groups of Bosnia do not. The only plausible way to bring lasting peace to Bosnia is to partition it among the three groups—letting the Serbian part join Serbia, the Croatian part join Croatia, and the Muslims have their own truncated Bosnia.

It may be said that this rewards aggression. But so does Vance-Owen, by giving the Serbs more than they had before they began fighting. The administration used to criticize it on just those grounds. Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) said it "ratified the atrocities of ethnic cleansing." A better way to put it is that Vance-Owen makes some concessions to the realities on the ground—but not enough to be useful.

The peace accord reflects the belief that the breakup of Yugoslavia was permissible but the breakup of Bosnia is not. Now is the time for the electorate to ponder whether that principle is really worth American lives.

Chicago
Suntimes
5-6-93

Where Have I Seen This War Before?

Pardon me, but this is where I came in. Almost 30 years ago, as an eminently draftable youth, I paid close attention to the assorted explanations and rationalizations for the U.S. military buildup in Vietnam.

Now, as I listen to the given wisdom for American military involvement of some sort in Bosnia—whether or not a peace agreement is reached there—I'm getting a striking, chilling feeling that I've been here before.

Consider the similarities between Vietnam and Bosnia:

Democratic presidents lead us into battle, presidents whose party represents itself as the instrument of peace and the safeguard against a trigger-happy military. Aid and comfort are provided by compliant Democratic Congresses whose timidity has made an anachronism of its exclusive, constitutional power to declare war.

We enjoy only the lukewarm, at best, support of allies and virtually no support from non-combatants in the conflicted region. We cite the need to "stabilize" the region, to prevent a domino-like takeover by evil forces. Yet in Vietnam, our involvement itself directly led to the destabilization of Cambodia and the eventual slaughter of civilians in numbers far exceeding the toll in Bosnia.

Then and now, government is long on promises, short on ways to get out, and shorter still on candor. Then and now, we're promised that it'll only take a small number of American troops. Euphemistically, American troops in Vietnam initially were only "advisers"; now they're only "peacekeepers." Then and now, all that's needed is some aerial bombardment. (What happened to mining the harbors?)

Then and now, we are exhorted by arguments of moral obligation, without fully considering the morality of causing, by our escalation, additional pain, destruction and death. Once again, the equation doesn't include factors involving America's long-term risks and interests. The harvest of Vietnam was the spiraling of American society into a deep valley of anger, division and self-absorption. What will the harvest be for military involvement on a peninsula whose very name has come to stand for fragmentation and hostility?

To these considerations, President Clinton and numbers of former anti-military, anti-intervention theologians, seem deaf. Which seems ironic, considering their opposition to the Vietnam War for the same high-minded reasons.

Some find this baffling. I don't.

Clearly and simply, Bill Clinton and some once-and-aging doves were against war when *they* had to go. Now that they no longer do, they safely can be for it. For some, war was, and still is, something fought by someone else.

And that someone else usually doesn't include their own children or those of their culturally and economically elite friends, thanks to the abolition of the draft and the popularity of the military among lower-income groups as an instrument of economic opportunity. Like the Clintons, many don't even have children of military age, thanks to their generation's trendy postponement of marriage and/or child rearing.

I'm not for restoring the draft, especially with a 19-year-old son. But without the draft, we have depersonalized war. Few of us need worry about fighting in one; few of us even know someone who has a chance of going. Generations now regard war as a distant event. We miss the natural check against excursions of military power that the draft provides.

With the possibility growing stronger that America will become engaged in its fourth military intervention (a.k.a. war) in four years, this is an unhealthy condition. We need somehow to remind ourselves of the true costs of war. And that especially goes for a president who never, from the start, knew them.



Dennis Byrne

Dennis Byrne is a member of the Chicago Sun-Times editorial board.

Chicago Sun-Times

TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 1993



Raymond R.
Coffey

All They're Saying Is Give War a Chance

Sorry, but count me in the wimp column on this one. When it comes to going to war in Bosnia, especially going alone, President Clinton should just say "no."

Yes, the rape and murder and pillage being perpetrated by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic's "ethnic cleansers" constitute horrific offense to even minimal instincts of humanity and civilization.

And, yes, diplomacy—including all those velvet-glove sanctions and the charade of cease-fire agreements that last less time than it takes to have breakfast—has become a sick-joke failure at producing peace.

But there is also—for all the moral outrage we might feel about what is transpiring among the Serbs, Croats and Muslims in Bosnia—not a lot to be said for getting into a war you can't, or won't, win.

We got ourselves stuck in one of those not all that long ago, you may recall. And I have not seen nor heard any of our military leaders getting all gung-ho about doing a re-run in Bosnia.

There is even less to be said for getting into a war your closest and most reliable allies want no part of, despite the fact that it's their neighborhood going to hell while

we, relatively, reside about as far out in the western suburbs as you can get.

Britain and France have made it flat-out clear that they oppose military intervention, especially on the ground. Even Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Clinton's newest political pal, is hands-off on Bosnia lest he antagonize Slavic sympathizers among his own constituents.

Still, Clinton is under rising pressure to "do something" about Bosnia. The "something" fashionable choice at the moment seems to have settled on is American aerial bombing of Serb artillery emplacements, like those that rained death and destruction upon the besieged Muslim enclave of Srebrenica.

What is politically intriguing about this pressure is that much of it seems to be coming from the same elitist-intellectual-political quarter that has in situations past, most notably Vietnam, inveighed against American involvement and intervention in almost anything.

Some of these same people are now almost portraying Clinton's decision on taking military action against the Serbs as a test of his manhood and his Americanism.

This is "a test for" Clinton "in a more personal sense, too," wrote the ardently liberal Anthony Lewis in the *New York Times*. "Is he strong enough to act?" Here is a guy who still writes outraged annual columns about the Christmas bombings of Hanoi and suddenly he can't wait for us to start unloading on the Serbs?

Similarly, last week we had the report of 12 "top experts" on the Balkans in the State Department "revolting" by writing a letter to their boss, Secretary Warren Christopher, recommending military action. And Madeleine Albright, Clinton's representative at the UN, recommending that we air-strike the Serbs and "not turn our backs on our international responsibilities."

Whence all this sudden bloodthirstiness from people who, of course, will still be safely behind their desks thousands of miles away when those bombs—and maybe some of the planes sent to drop them—start falling out of the sky?

The kind of people who used to complain about our behaving too much like a superpower now are demanding that we behave more like one. What's going on?

Oh, the argument seems to go, this is a moral war, a righteous war—not an economic war, not an imperialist war. I see. I've never noticed, though, that people get any less dead in a righteous war than in an unrighteous one.

No one has yet—thanks be—proposed sending American ground troops into Bosnia. And Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said he does not believe air power alone can stop the Serbs.

His experience and opinion count for considerably more with me than does the "do something" argument, which reflects only desperation. If that makes me a wimp, I like the company I'm in.

A 'Low-Risk' Plan—Like the One for Beirut

■ In a state of anarchy, 'smart weapons tend to miss the target and fuel the spread of war.

It is devoutly to be hoped that the arguments leading to the Clinton Administration's decision to use—or threaten to use—military force in Yugoslavia were more searching than reports suggest.

Until three years ago, Yugoslavia remained an intact federal state composed of six ethnically mixed principalities. Then came the sudden, reckless secession of three principalities—Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina—yielding a frantic process of ethnic unmixing, to which someone gave the provocative term "ethnic cleansing." The term has angered the civilized world as deeply as the process that lies behind it.

The bomber boys are telling the President, as usual, that they can do low-risk wonders with smart weapons. Their main targets would be the Serbs' mobile artillery pieces concealed on the forested slopes of the rugged mountains of Bosnia, commanding places like Sarajevo. Whether those targets can be found and hit without ground-based spotters no one seems to know. Nor is it known what retaliation might be unleashed against United Nations relief-support troops now on the ground.

This is strategic and tactical guesswork of the flimsiest sort. As a military idea, it is on a par with the shelling of the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon by the U.S. battleship *New Jersey* 10 years ago, when the Reagan Administration was preparing to scuttle its half-cocked intervention in Beirut.

There are serious alternatives to be considered. One is to inject massive NATO ground forces, including U.S. troops, at strategic points throughout Yugoslavia, to safeguard ethnic enclaves and stop ethnic cleansing. Our European allies have so far steadfastly resisted any such enlargement of the NATO mission. And it would be a fascinating turn in U.S. history if the American public, and Congress, endorsed a ground-troop intervention in a distant place that not one American in 100 could find on an unmarked map and whose cloudy connection to American vital interests even fewer could define.

Elie Wiesel doubtless meant well when, in his speech at the dedication of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, he revealed his sleeplessness over Bosnia and thus intensified the pressure on President Clinton to lead the world's knight-errant rescue of the Bosnians.

But the implied analogy between the Bosnian Muslims' dilemma and the slaugh-

'The secession movement in Yugoslavia . . . is a demented nationalistic rampage, kindled and egged on by demagogues on all sides.'

ter of European Jewry by Hitler trivializes history. "Ethnic cleansing" is an ugly term for a heartless process. But it is more analogous, if we must have analogies, to Indian removal in the 19th-Century American West than to the Holocaust. That is not to say that there is anything nice or acceptable, about what the Serbs (mainly), the Croats (to an extent that goes strangely unnoticed), and the Muslims (in minor and isolated instances) have been doing to one another as they scramble to extricate themselves, after many decades of relatively peaceful cohabitation, from neighborly proximity.

The secession movement in Yugoslavia was mistaken for an aspect of the surge of self-determination that followed the collapse of communism elsewhere. In reality, it is a demented nationalistic rampage, kindled and egged on by demagogues on all sides. The Serbs, the largest and strongest (and perhaps most paranoid) of Yugoslav ethnic groups, have gotten most of the blame and have indeed behaved with singular ferocity. But responsibility for this tragedy is not theirs alone.

Michael Ignatieff of the *London Observer*, writing in the current issue of the *New York Review of Books*, notes that when Croatia in 1990 designated itself as a "Croatian nation," that action "aroused genuine fear in the 600,000-strong Serbian minority within its borders. . . . When Serbs were dismissed from the Croatian police and judiciary in the summer of 1990, the Serbian minority concluded that they were witnessing the return of an ethnic state with a genocidal path"—pertinent detail that helps balance one's perspective.

The threat to use military force in Bosnia is the second U.S. response to the fire bell in less than 12 months, perhaps a portent of things to come. Certainly our nerves are going to be constantly jangled by scenes relayed nightly by television satellite from the anarchic world that has replaced the "bipolar" Cold War—if not from Somalia and Bosnia, then from somewhere else. Most of these sad and revolting spectacles we can do little to improve—little, anyway, at a cost in blood and treasure that the American people are unlikely to pay willingly.

Edwin M. Yoder Jr. is a syndicated columnist in Washington.

Los Angeles Times,
5/4/1993

Offer the Slavs a Carrot Before Using the Stick

■ Economic integration with Europe is the only solution to ethnic-religious factionalism.

ARDMORE, Ireland—Suppose all agreements and negotiations to end bloodshed in Bosnia break down. Then the war party in the United States and Europe may well prevail. But what do these interventionists—often liberals and (in Europe) Social Democrats—want? At the gut level, it is to teach the Serbs a lesson. This could be done in three ways:

About 90,000 NATO troops could be sent in, with air cover. From the point of view of Western political leaders, the disadvantage of this plan is that some of these troops would be killed, losing their lives in the cause of a murky objective.

The Serbs might be rolled back from portions of Bosnia, with the Muslims being mustered into "safe havens." But then Serbia might strike back in the provinces of Kosovo or Macedonia. Either of these attacks might excite a response by neighbors such as Albania or Greece. Another consideration is that an attack on Serbia could provoke Pan-Slavic nationalists in Russia, and in the Russian Army, to come to the Serbs' rescue.

The prospect of substantial casualties in a war with no clear objective or terminus inclines the Western governments to the notion of a more limited intervention, in the form of air strikes.

Such a strategy would undoubtedly kill people but would not necessarily loosen Serbian military control over 70% of Bosnia. The Serbs would probably deploy their guns in well-populated areas. The bombing would expose the U.N. forces now in Bosnia to reprisals. It could lead to their enforced evacuation, precipitating further massacres.

The Western powers will therefore be urged to the war party's third option, the arming of the Bosnian Muslims. Such arming would require Croatian help, for the Croats control much land access to Bosnia (Serbian access being beside the point in this matter).

The governments of both Bosnia and Croatia have large financial resources, the former from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern states, the latter from Catholic treasuries to the north, in Germany and Austria. A Balkan arms race would ensue, with Russia speeding commensurate military assistance to the Serbs. Thus, as with the introduction of ground troops, the arming of Bosnia's Muslims would boost both the Croat and Serbian access to fresh armaments and fuel a wider conflagration.

'There is still a chance of reconstructing an independent and pacific Bosnia.'

Those who advocate the arming of the Muslims often argue that the Bosnian government genuinely represents all confessional communities, whether Muslim or Croatian Catholics or Serbian Orthodox.

Sadly, this is no longer true. The deadly logic of ethno-religious military competition renders obsolete such claims for the multiconfessional nature of the Bosnian forces. The Bosnian government now represents only one community that, however well-armed, will not be able to impose its will on the Bosnian Croats and Serbs.

But the situation, bad though it may be, is not wholly discouraging. The U.N. forces now on the ground have established themselves as not simply a fresh belligerent element, which a NATO expedition would be. And the leaders of the three Bosnian communities have at least signed accords calling for demilitarization and a negotiated settlement.

There is still a chance of reconstructing an independent and pacific Bosnia, so long as the outside powers act with this ideal in mind. I'm writing these lines in Ireland, and a glance at Ireland's own version of Bosnia evokes two important points.

In the end, a solution to the Northern Irish crisis will come via greater integration of both Britain and Ireland in a larger European community, with ensuing devolution within the old sovereign national framework of such regions as Ulster, Scotland or Wales.

By the same token, all former Yugoslav republics could be offered associate status in the European Community, with the promise of generous economic help conditional upon negotiations and demilitarization. One of the great accelerators of the breakup of Yugoslavia was the quest of the first separatists—Slovenia and Croatia, encouraged by Germany—to gain fast-track access to the E.C.

Looking again to Northern Ireland, suppose that instead of the British Army entering Ulster at the end of the 1960s, a U.N. peacekeeping force had arrived and, over the near-quarter-century that followed, built up a non-sectarian police force and fostered reconciliation.

In this analogy, the U.N. Protection Force in Bosnia could be encouraged to foster those local authorities in Bosnia that have been most mindful of the rights of minority communities. To this end the U.N. force could itself enroll multiconfessional auxiliary militia and police forces that, under U.N. command, would help to secure and enforce negotiated settlements and the physical security of all citizens of Bosnia.

Alexander Cockburn writes for the Nation and other publications.

L.A. Times

5-4-93

Fight for a moral low ground

Intervention by
the military in
Bosnia will serve
only to satisfy
a lust for blood

What is the *moral* thing to do in Bosnia? The British government is preparing to support American plans either to bomb Serb supply lines or to end the official embargo on arms shipments. This means the end of aid convoys and will require the probable withdrawal of the 2,400 British troops in Bosnia. This must be as completely immoral as a policy could be.

Nobody in Bosnia appears to believe that bombing Serbs (and now Croats?) or rearming Muslims will do anything but escalate the civil war. Neither policy would push Serbs or Croats out of newly occupied villages or reduce their military effectiveness. Both would stiffen resolve in Belgrade and Zagreb to give their fighters more support. Bombing would wreak death and destruction on already wretched Bosnia. The risk to aid convoys would condemn to disease and starvation refugees now being supplied. The sole purpose of

this change of policy would be to "relieve pressure on Western governments". It is supremely wrong.

Let us remember again. The only hope of outsiders stopping this or any civil war is with hundreds of thousands of troops. Such an army could not realistically reverse the partition of Bosnia. It would merely police that partition and protect some Muslim enclaves while it chose to stay. But that is not proposed. We are being offered the most cowardly gesture of all: sending bombers into the sky to make us feel good. We stop the aid that saves lives. Instead we join in the killing. We will say we are "killing to stop the killing". We know that such limited and always temporary interventions do nothing of the sort.

That is only half the immorality. The other half is the manner in which Western (and soon Eastern?) governments are being goaded into military action. No distortion of truth, no travesty of history, no selective reporting is too outrageous to be harnessed to the cause. I must sympathise with the philosopher, William James, who suggested at the turn of this century that we seem to need to "reinvent war to redeem life from flat degeneration". Our ancestors had bred pugnacity into our bone marrow and a thousand years of peace will not breed it out of us, said James. "The popular imagination fairly fattens at the thought of wars." Daniel Pick's *War Machine*, published this week,

should be read by every Bosnian interventionist.

The ending of the Cold War is afflicting us in mysterious ways. We found a sort of comfort in the existence of an Evil Empire, a Tolkienian land of hobgoblins beyond the Wild Wood. It absorbed our aggressive instincts and appeased our militarism. That empire is gone. New monsters have had to be found. First Saddam Hussein and now Slobodan Milosevic cannot be seen as they are, as essentially local dictators riding bloody tigers of ethnic conflict. They must be elevated as modern Satans. They must be called Hitlers — as Britain called Nasser "Hitler" in 1956. Their followers must be "nazis". Killings under their aegis must be a "holocaust".

This global homogenisation of terror is historically naive, stupid and dangerous. It exaggerates tinpot autocrats and diminishes the far greater outrage of the Holocaust. Yet how small are the voices of sanity. How many heard this week the UN's Cedric Thornberry in Bosnia? He was pleading against "Rambo-style military interventions" that would exacerbate the war. "More arms simply means more war," he said.

Who has read Misha Glenny's measured study, *The Fall of Yugoslavia*, which reminds us of how this war began: with the West's casual disregard of state integrity by recognising the Slovenian, Croatian and Bosnian

The Times April 24, 1993

→

Simon Jenkins

secessions? The message given to the ethnic minorities of central and eastern Europe was "try your luck and the West might come to your aid". The message to ethnic majorities was the opposite, "get to work before that happens".

Outsiders do not stop such wars by taking sides, however great may be the differential atrocity. They do so by laboriously helping the former community countries build prosperity and democracy, to relieve the causes of ethnic friction. In Yugoslavia that is too late. We must now pick up the pieces of past failure. But there is no lack of frictions elsewhere in Europe, in Slovakia, in Moldova, in the Baltic states. As Mr Glenny says, the outer rim of Russia has "a potential for unpredictability and violence which far outstrips that of the former Yugoslavia". Do we ignore them now — and bomb them later?

Margaret Thatcher wondered in Poland last week whether the West has the will to do what is morally right in Bosnia. She sees "no such

thing as society" in home affairs but fiercely espouses a collective will overseas. In my view the West, with great pain, is now doing right in Bosnia. Common humanity demands that it help relieve suffering even if it cannot realistically help end the war. The refugee camps and supply dumps of Sarajevo and Tuzla testify to this — unexciting and unsung by the media. Perhaps we should do more. Certainly we should stand ready to help rebuild whatever divided countries emerge from the war.

What is immoral is to stop this aid in the pious hope that by escalating the conflict, by bombing one side and arming the other (which soon means bombing and arming both) we can end the war. Civil war has its own logic. It conforms to Macaulay's dictum that "moderation in war is imbecility".

This is a Balkan struggle for territory. It is not a war of ethnic or even tribal extermination, however horrific the revenge killings of civilians. Nor is it a war to conquer and hold in subjugation foreign states. It is a war to assert sovereignty over long-disputed land, following an unresolved secession. To equate it with Hitler's war is meaningless.

Washington (and now Whitehall) would have no trouble turning Bosnia into a testing ground for arms manufacturers and liberal crusaders. We can goad the Russians into

backing the Serbs. We can goad Turks and Iranians into backing the Muslims. Aircraft carriers can take our ever more bridges, more power stations, more villages, "bombing Serbia into the middle ages". Reporters can gasp as high-technology cameras show buildings exploding from within. We can if we want make this nasty but limited civil war a vast regional apocalypse.

But why? Last week's eruption of fighting between Croats and Muslims is precisely what analysts such as Mr Glenny have predicted. Until the Croats and the Serbs have redrawn a new border across Bosnia, Muslims will go on being crushed between them. Maps come at the end of wars. Drawn before the end, they prolong them. And bad maps start now wars witness the Treaty of Versailles.

There is no "moral war" that the world could at present fight in Bosnia. There is no morality in gestures. But there is an immoral war. It is President Clinton's ambition, apparently supported by Britain, to end humanitarian aid and start bombing. It was at just such a moment in Vietnam that one of his predecessors promised, "We seek no wider war" ... and then sought one.

"He's a cheery old card," grunted Harry to Jack.

As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack ..

But he did for them both with his plan of attack.

The Daily Telegraph

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April 24, 1993

Lethal gestures

FOREIGN ministers of the European Community will meet in Denmark this weekend under the shadow of what could prove a monumental folly in Bosnia-Herzegovina. After much waverling, President Clinton appears to have decided to respond to the latest Serbian atrocities by bombing their supply lines and artillery positions. Escalating the conflict will be regarded with deep misgivings by European countries, in particular Britain and France, which have large contingents of troops involved in the distribution of humanitarian aid. Nevertheless, they will probably swing reluctantly behind Washington, because of the importance they attach to the preservation of solidarity between the United States and Europe. Neither the British nor the French government believes in what it is likely to be asked to do. It is a sad reflection on the state of the Atlantic alliance that its European half should be dragged against its will, and at some risk to its forces on the ground, into the business of military gestures.

The bombing of selected targets, like the earlier air drop of humanitarian supplies, is designed to assuage American consciences. It reflects the execution not of a coherent policy but of a limp-wristed obeisance to the supposed wishes of American television viewers. It is unlikely to deflect the Serbs from the goal of consolidating their conquests in Bosnia. It might even stiffen their defiance and result in further atrocities against the Muslims and attacks on UN personnel. The pressure on the international community to become more deeply involved will grow.

Mr Clinton's objective is to show his administration's concern about Bosnia, without committing American ground forces. We have consistently argued that, if the United Nations is to emerge with any credit from the Yugoslav disaster, only two courses of action are open to it. The first is to

maintain humanitarian operations, while at the same time tightening sanctions and seeking to prevent the Serbs from turning on Kosovo and Macedonia. The decision on sanctions has been made and will come into force next week, as soon as the Russian referendum is over. By contrast, the few international monitors in Kosovo and Macedonia are unlikely on their own to dissuade the Serbian expansionists. They need to be reinforced.

The second course is to impose an impartial settlement by a large-scale and open-ended commitment of ground troops. All the options between these two alternatives, including the lifting of the UN arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims, represent self-delusion. This week's reports of atrocities by the Croats, who have in the past attracted strong support from some British Conservatives, including Lady Thatcher, should be a powerful disincentive to adopting any policy which favours one faction over another.

There remains a glimmer of hope that in the days ahead European governments will persuade President Clinton, before he initiates any military action, to make clear its goals. It is a cardinal error to embark upon such operations without a firm programme for seeing them through to whatever conclusion proves necessary. But in London and Paris today there is a gloomy belief that Washington is determined to make its chosen gesture without the slightest intention of following it through. When President Clinton was inaugurated, we expressed fears for his presidency. It is alarming how speedily the worst predictions are being fulfilled. In foreign policy at least, Mr Clinton is showing an alarming fondness for the empty gesture. This may be forgiven in a candidate seeking election. It cannot be in a president who needlessly puts lives at risk.

COLUMN LEFT/
JOHN R. MacARTHUR

'Liberals' Take a Shameful Pro-War Turn

■ U.S. action against Serbia
would be Wilsonian but wrong.

Since last summer, I've noticed a growing number of liberals, by definition America's anti-war camp, demanding some form of U.S. military intervention in Bosnia. So I wasn't entirely surprised when I was asked recently to sign an open letter to President Clinton calling for removal of the arms embargo on behalf of Bosnia. What did surprise me was that the signatories included some of my closest associates in the peace movement—activists who have long opposed military adventurism, jingoistic foreign policy and the export of American weapons.

Curiously, my dove-turned-hawk compatriots express their concern for Bosnia in the vernacular of human rights and peace, then demand military action in the euphemistic Pentagonese of the Vietnam era: Besides "lifting the embargo," they want to "send a message" to the Serbs with "limited" or "focused" "air strikes," enforcement of "no-fly zones" and the commitment of U.S. infantry to a "multilateral" "peacekeeping" force. This is nothing less than a call for war against Serbia.

Why do post-Vietnam liberals want to get America mixed up in another bloody civil war overseas? In part, they remain parishioners in the church of Woodrow Wilson, our first "liberal" internationalist President. Unlike the blatant jingo Teddy Roosevelt, who unashamedly proclaimed the superiority of American civilization and the tonic effect of war, Wilson asserted his global ambition in Calvinist sermons about America's mission to redeem the world. His homilies about "making the world safe for democracy" still appeal powerfully to the unfortunate American tendency, inherited from the Puritans, toward evangelical self-righteousness. "What America touches, she makes holy," was how Wilson's biographer, Lord Devlin, summed up his subject's foreign policy.

The Founding Fathers warned against foreign crusades, preferring that this country provide an attractive example for the world, not a moral code enforced by bullets. The Constitution, as Robert Nisbet has written, is "only too obviously a charter for peace, not war." But ever since World War I, it is Wilson's global moralism, not Jefferson's more modest Republican vision, that has captured the imagination of Americans who hunger for a role on the international stage.

The Vietnam War, which was launched with a small contingent of military "advis-

Congress might increase our
pitifully low quota for Bosnians
seeking asylum here,
something we failed to do for
the Jews of Europe.'

ers" and prosecuted by two "liberal" Democratic presidents, supposedly changed all this. Blind faith in American power and moral superiority was repudiated not only by our military and political defeat, but also by our savagery against civilians. Liberals in intellectual opinion-making circles were among the first to understand that U.S. policy-makers, infected by the notion of American "exceptionalism," had grossly misread the Vietnamese people and their relationship with China and communism in general. The Vietnam disaster, many liberals hoped, would shrink our Wilsonian arrogance—and innocence—to manageable levels.

Twenty years later, here are many of the same liberals pushing for military intervention in a country less cohesive than Vietnam, in a region wracked by violent religious and political factionalism that most Americans barely comprehend. Here are today's liberals shamelessly parroting the long-discredited domino theory: that if we don't stop the Serbs in Bosnia, they'll overrun Albania, Macedonia and maybe Istanbul before you can say *Munich*.

(These liberals favor Munich as their historical and moral trump card, conveniently forgetting Croatian and Muslim collaboration with the Nazis and the Italian Fascists.) Here are liberals bellowing about American "honor" and "resolve" as if Bosnia were the final battleground for the soul of Woodrow Wilson's America. Here are liberals urging that we send our soldiers—men and women who signed up to defend the United States—to "keep peace" amid a suicidal Balkan cross fire.

America can help the Bosnian Muslims without helping them kill Serbs. In addition to supporting the U.N. negotiations, Congress might increase our pitifully low quota for Bosnians seeking asylum here, something we failed to do for the Jews of Europe before the onset of World War II.

I hope President Clinton won't be bullied by my moralizing friends into a destructive military entanglement. The President is said to be an enthusiastic student of history, literature and the Constitution. He should quickly reacquaint himself with the thoughts of Jefferson and the Vietnam-era insights of his first political mentor, Sen. J. William Fulbright. And he should ponder Graham Greene's remark on the purity of American motives in his Vietnam novel, "The Quiet American": "Innocence is like a dumb leper who has lost his bell, wandering the world, meaning no harm."

John R. MacArthur is the publisher of
Harper's Magazine.

March, 19, 1993

LOS ANGELES TIMES

P.S.

Edward Pearce

.....
THAT Mrs Thatcher should speak historical ignorance and sanctimonious truculence is not surprising. That people who should know better, good colleagues here among them, should follow her, one laments.

First, Tory MP Nicholas Budgen is right; the war concerns two sets of other people who hate each other and has nothing to do with us. But a war *can* involve our interests and still be wrong. The Falklands affair, hand-crafted by British fiddle-diplomacy and involving 1,250 deaths for a sheep-run, was wrong from first headline to last post.

Second, the Bosnian war is horrid in the way that wars generally are horrid. Cities are shelled, innocent people die. During the Gulf war petrol vapour weapons were used; they asphyxiate those not scorched to death. The cryers-after that war now mourn shelled Balkan cities.

Third, there are other wars happening at this moment: in Mozambique, Angola and Azerbaijan, and in Palestine something so close to a war that it kills people all the time. It is not proposed that we intervene there. And why not? Perhaps black and brown people count for less in the trembling breasts of war-orators; kinder to say that those wars get less publicity in a remoter, more occasional focus. So people thinking with the solar plexus see less on television to stir their organ of thought.

These are arguments for a rational avoidance of any war not threatening our own quiet continuance of life. But one point specific to this war suggests we should stay out of it. All publicity and opinion has been systematically anti-Serb. The Serbs, it seems, are monsters and fascists preparing a holocaust. They are no such thing.

This fighting, for God's sake, grows in the soil of the German creation in 1941 of Greater Croatia (all Croatia enlarged with all Bosnia) and in the murder, chiefly over not much longer than a year, of a sixth of the Serbs of Croatia and a sixth of the Serbs of Bosnia. The cruelties of war now fought there are inflicted out of hand-to-hand family hatred, while G7 countries effect their cruelties through clinical but promiscuous high technology.

Yet Germany, reluctantly followed by Britain, crassly recognised first independent Croatia, then independent Bosnia. Bosnia had been redrawn by Tito in 1946 as a province, and Bosnia has never been anything but a province: Yugoslav, Austrian or Turkish. As a province it works, as a state it is a geographical expression.

In high legal form we required the Serbs to surrender the third of the population in Bosnia and the fifth in Croatia which *are* Serbian, to a German-sponsored Bosnia and Croatia when in the lifetime of a middle-aged man, Serbs were ploughed under in those places like bonemeal!

Instant pronouncement thrusts history aside for the charm of outrage. We *need* history and the south Slavs need a new map.

Q & A: Diplomacy and Force In Facing the Balkan Conflict

John D. Scanlan, U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1985 to 1989, recently returned from Belgrade, where he was Prime Minister Milan Panic's foreign affairs adviser. He spoke with Heather Green about the situation in the Balkans.

Q. Is there a dynamic either in Yugoslavia or around Slobodan Milosevic [the president of Serbia] that makes the expansion of Serbia inevitable?

A. I never believe in inevitability. Mr. Milosevic has played on the legitimate interests of the Serbian people to promote his own political career and his desire to remain in power. I think the world should recognize that the Serbian people do have legitimate interests, especially the right to self-determination for the 3 million Serbs living outside the borders of Serbia and Montenegro.

Q. After your role inside the Yugoslav government, how would you describe its nature?

A. The regime is self-serving. It serves the interests of Mr. Milosevic. The regime preaches militant activism and creates an atmosphere of fear to stay in power. Power is the name of the game. They will hold onto political power as long as they can, whether for another year, another month or another day.

Q. Why did Mr. Panic seek the prime ministership?

A. He sincerely believed that he could make a difference. He sincerely believed that there was a need for somebody who could offer a peaceful alternative to the Yugoslav people and to the Serbian nation. He had the good fortune to emigrate to the United States, to become successful and wealthy, and he believed that he had a duty and an obligation to try.

Q. Was the effort worthwhile?

A. Yes. He brought hope to the Serbian people, he mobilized the best of them in his campaign. As a result of that they still have hope that they will prevail in the end and restore Serbia's good name.

Q. Does the peace settlement in Croatia have a chance of lasting?

A. It will stand as long as we in the West want it to stand. It depends on the resolve of the United Nations. I think that it has to last until a permanent arrangement of some kind is established which will permit the Serbs in Croatia to feel sure

about their security. It is up to the Croatian government to make them feel comfortable.

Q. What is the likelihood of the violence spreading to Kosovo or Macedonia?

A. That scenario has been somewhat overstated. Mr. Milosevic's regime does not need any additional problems, either within Serbia, in Kosovo, or anywhere else. My own view is that we in the West should establish a relatively strong military presence in Macedonia, with the agreement of the Macedonian government, as a deterrent. The troops should be stationed as close to the border as possible to make it quite clear to Mr. Milosevic that the United Nations would be ready to move.

Q. What is the significance of the U.S. airdrop?

A. Very significant in terms of providing the element of hope. It has made it quite clear that the United States is not indifferent to the plight of the people in those enclaves.

Q. What about the UN presence in Bosnia?

A. What the United Nations can do depends on the rules of engagement. The UN forces were put in there merely to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid. If the rules of engagement restrict your ability to fire when fired upon, it is difficult to establish the kind of credibility that might give greater pause to those who want to continue the hostilities on both sides. You need a much larger UN force plus rules of engagement that make it quite clear that they will return fire with everything they've got.

Q. What policy planning in the West led to the hesitancy on the part of Europe and the U.S. to become involved?

A. The main problem was the failure to anticipate the intensity and the brutality of the conflicts. Beyond that, I think that there was a failure of consensus and will on the part of European nations to become actively engaged. If you are going to be engaged militarily it is easier to do it up front, before things get out of control.

Q. Did the Europeans have the capability to enforce a diplomatic plan?

A. Europeans certainly do have enough military force to handle this and they could have if they had acted more firmly and consistently up front and had been more evenhanded. The Europeans were not evenhanded and that undermined their credibility.

International Herald Tribune March 22/93

12 March, 1993

The Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036

Dear sir,

John Burns deserves the highest praise for risking his life daily while reporting from Bosnia. His recent report from Gorazde, however, may have been misleading (International Herald Tribune, March 10).

Mr. Burns appears to accept the assertion that "Serbs [in Gorazde] who are not fifth columnists have nothing to fear. They live as the rest of us [Muslims] do, and nobody touches them as long as they obey the law." This remark is inconsistent with reports from other areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina. For example, Patrick Bishop of *The Daily Telegraph* reports that "Serbs in the Muslim-dominated city of Tuzla have been living in a climate of intimidation and fear and are clamouring to leave" (March 10). According to Victoria Clark of *The Observer*, in Croat-controlled Rascani "some 240 Serb women and children have been living under village arrest for the past year" (February 28).

Mr. Burns's interview with 27 captured Serbian soldiers was reminiscent of last November's "Borislav Herak" farce. He accepts at face value the statement from one of the soldiers that "we haven't been mistreated in any way." What does Mr. Burns expect the soldier to say? The fact that "no Bosnian officials" were present during the interview would not have allayed the soldier's fear of retribution.

During the past year, *The New York Times* has led the way in the demonization of the Serbs by publishing numerous one-sided anti-Serbian diatribes. Although the Serbs are the main culprits of "ethnic cleansing" and the Muslims have suffered the most, the plight of Serbs trapped behind enemy lines cannot be disregarded. To suggest, as John Burns does, that they are living in harmony with Bosnia's Muslims and Croats is truly grotesque. At the very least, you should allow these innocent Serbs to suffer with dignity.

Yours sincerely,

Perils of arming Bosnian Muslims

From Mr Steve Anderson

Sir, Returning from a three-week tour of central Bosnia, covering the war between Muslims and Croats for BBC TV News, I have been intrigued to read of the imaginative schemes that the Americans have for arming the Muslims.

Whichever clever little policy adviser in Washington dreamt up the idea of using Gulf Arab money to buy Eastern bloc weaponry for the Muslims (report, May 10) should be aware of one stark, simple prospect: arming the Muslims may well turn out to be a spectacular own goal.

Croat forces in central Bosnia are convinced that they rather than the Serbs will be the target of any newly created Muslim arsenal. Instead of waiting to be bombed, the Croats will get their retaliation in first and attack Muslim communities. Where the Serbs and Muslims face each other, a similar reaction can be expected from Bosnian Serb forces under the command of General Ratko Mladic.

It would be yet another peculiarly Bosnian tragedy — thousands of innocent Muslim women and children dying because their men have won the right to bear arms.

Yours faithfully,
STEVE ANDERSON (Producer,
BBC TV News & Current Affairs),
Television Centre, Wood Lane, W12.
May 18.

The
Times
May 21, 1993

Is Serbia just another victim in the Balkans?

WHEN the German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, announced his intention of "bringing Serbia to its knees", he and others who call for military action should have considered earlier efforts to bully or punish this stubborn people. Few modern politicians have even heard of the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis of 1875-78, which started as a revolt of the Orthodox Christians, or "Serbs", against the rule of the Turkish empire. The neighbouring Orthodox Christian states of Serbia and Montenegro joined in by attacking the Turkish army and shelling towns inhabited by their fellow Slavs who had converted to Islam. Russia sent an army of volunteers to help the Serbs, then invaded Turkey in Europe.

The British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, fearing a Russian capture of Constantinople (Istanbul), proposed to enter the war on the side of the Turks. The Tory mob bellowed for action against the Russians and Serbs, chanting the new music-hall song: *We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do! We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.*

The Liberal Party and press took the side of the Christian Orthodox peasants, and William Gladstone came out of retirement to thunder about the "Bulgarian atrocities" and the plight of the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, the archaeologist Arthur Evans, who went on to win fame and a knighthood as the excavator of Knossos, reported the rape of Serb women by Muslim Slavs in the Turkish gendarmerie, a subject that led to angry debates in the House of Commons. Unlike most modern journalists, Evans understood that the

RICHARD WEST reviews the history of an ancient and bloody conflict that could end in another world war

warring parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina were ethnically and linguistically identical, divided only by their religion into Muslims, Orthodox Christians (Serbs) and Roman Catholics (Croats).

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the great powers banded Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, causing another revolt by the Orthodox peasants, this time joined by the Muslims, with only the Roman Catholics pleased by the new order. The Bosnia-Herzegovina problem flared up again in 1887 and 1908, on both occasions nearly causing the world war that finally broke out when the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip shot the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914; the Serbs' day of mourning for their defeat by the Turks at the Battle of Kosovo on June 28, 1389.

Although the Serbian Government had no part in the murder, the plotters were armed by members of the "Black Hand" secret society in Belgrade. A frenzy of anti-Serbian hatred swept through Austria-Hungary, Germany and even Britain, where the *Manchester Guardian* opined that Europe would be a better place if Serbia could be towed out to sea and sunk.

The Austro-Hungarian Government issued an ultimatum to Serbia, demanding among other unacceptable conditions that its own police should investigate the murder in Belgrade. The Serbs refused, and so, in the words of the old ditty: *An Austrian army awfully arrayed!*

Boldly began bombarding Belgrade.

In the war that followed, Serbia and Montenegro lost a fifth of their population, proportionally two-and-a-half times as many casualties as France. The attempt to punish Serbia also brought about the fall of the Austro-Hungarian, German, Russian and Ottoman empires.

After the First World War the largely Serbian Government of the new Yugoslavia put up a plaque in Sarajevo in honour of Princip, thereby commemorating, in Winston Churchill's phrase, "his infamy and their own".

Adolf Hitler, who hated the Serbs only slightly less than he did the Jews, demanded in March 1941 that Yugoslavia sign a treaty allowing the Germans to launch an attack on Greece. Three days after the signature, on March 27, 1941, a group of young Serb officers staged a coup d'état, threw out the Regent Prince Paul, and scrapped the treaty with Germany. A brilliant mob in Belgrade wrecked the German tourist office and tore up the swastika flag.

Winston Churchill at once proclaimed: "Today Yugoslavia has found its soul." Hitler swore to "cauterise the Serbian ulcer", and ordered a bombing attack on Belgrade, killing 12,000 people in one day. Hitler set up an independent state of Croatia, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, under the Ustasha terrorist leader Ante Pavelic, whose policy towards the Orthodox Serbs was: "Convert a third, expel a third and kill a third." The Usta-

sha, aided by Muslim cut-throats, succeeded in killing at least 350,000 Serb men, women and children. The Serb Chetnik guerrillas in Bosnia-Herzegovina retaliated against the Croats, and still more against their historic foes the Muslims, slaughtering whole villages.

Since Serbs were the majority in both the Partisan and the Chetnik armies, they suffered heavy casualties fighting the Germans and their domestic foes. Their act of defiance on March 27, 1941, probably cost the Serbs about 800,000 dead.

Serbs and Montenegrins in the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party provoked the quarrel with Russia in 1948. The dispute went back to October 1944, when the Soviet Red Army, during and after the liberation of Belgrade, raped and murdered more than a thousand Serb women. The hot-headed Montenegrin Milovan Djilas not only complained to the Soviet military representative but compared the behaviour of the Russians unfavourably with that of the British liaison officers.

Stalin raked up this incident in the quarrel that led to the ultimatum to Tito on March 27, 1948, the seventh anniversary of the doomed defiance of Hitler. The Montenegrin Djilas, the Serb Alexander Rankovic and the Belgrade Jew Moshe Pijade steered the Croat Tito in his rejection of Stalin's ultimatum.

Stalin himself boasted to Khrushchev: "I shall lift my little finger and there will be no more Tito." He

pointedly issued his first public condemnation of the Yugoslavs on June 28, the anniversary of the Serb defeat at Kosovo in 1389, and also of the Sarajevo assassination. Yugoslavia did not collapse, and Moshe Pijade made a speech to a cheering Belgrade crowd in which he is said to have told Stalin where he could put his ultimatum.

Five years later I heard Pijade utter an equally rude speech in Belgrade. It was October 1953, when the British and the Americans had handed to the Italians the city of Trieste, which was also claimed by Yugoslavia. The mob in Belgrade smashed the windows of the British and American reading-rooms, beating or threatening individuals such as myself who could be blamed for the loss of Trieste.

It chanced that I was in Belgrade in August 1968 when Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia. The Serbs, who have a historic affection for the Czechs, once more gathered into a vast crowd, from which were heard noisy and probably drunken cries of "To Moscow!" The Yugoslav army was mobilised against an invasion, in which eventually it was planned to retreat to the mountain fastnesses of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

History should have taught us that the attempt by Croatia, backed by Germany and the Roman Catholic Church, to break up Yugoslavia would lead first to armed rebellion by the Serbs in Croatia, then to a three-way religious slaughter in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and finally, if we are not very lucky, to the third world war.

Richard West is writing a life of Tito, which is to be published next year, by Sinclair-Stevenson.

Peter Simple will be back next week.

Sunday Telegraph 16.v. 93

British camp in crossfire of Croat onslaught

FROM MICHAEL EVANS
IN VITEZ

A FEROCIOUS "ethnic cleansing" operation by Croats using mortars and machineguns against Muslim families was carried out at dawn yesterday, under the noses of the British camp here.

For two hours, from 5.30am, the whole area around the camp was screaming with high-velocity rifle fire, rocket-propelled grenades, mortar shells, and 12.7mm machinegun fire.

Within minutes the small Muslim community known as Bazen, next to the Croat-owned house where I am staying opposite the British camp, was filled with burning homes. The nearest house to mine was hit by a mortar shell fired from a Croat militia position near a church on a hill south of the British camp. One mortar shell destroyed a house only 50 yards from the main gate of the camp beside the road leading out of Vitez.

An armoured Warrior patrol, which went to investigate later in the day, discovered a house that had been hit by an RPG7 rocket-propelled grenade. The grenade had gone through a barn and struck the house, skimming across a ceiling and exploding as it hit a wall.

The Times
May 20 1993

A pool of blood spread across the intervening courtyard. The body of a man lay around the corner.

A British medical unit drove into the area amid the sound of heavy machinegun fire, and retrieved the body, which had been wrapped in a blanket. They placed it in a body bag.

Only one Muslim was confirmed dead by the British, but there may have been up to four others killed and several injured. Four houses were burnt, and six more ransacked. Two others appeared to have been set alight later in the day.

Five families from the community of Bazen on the outskirts of Vitez escaped from the Croats and joined about 200 Muslims who have taken refuge in four houses to the east of the camp.

One man, whose 23-year-old son had been killed by machinegun fire the day before, and whose body had been dumped by the camp, said the Croats had been threatening to cleanse Bazen of Muslims for a month.

Muslim snipers, who have been firing on Croat snipers for several days, opened fire from two houses on a hill to the east of the camp, adding to the noise over the base.

One Muslim woman said: "My house was torched by the Croats. They were looting and burning the houses."

Within 15 minutes of the gunfire starting, five British armoured Warriors were deployed up and down the main

road separating the camp from the houses under fire. There were no retaliatory shots from the British soldiers, and no incoming rounds landed in the camp.

Last night, after a warning from the Croat militia to the Muslims to stop firing, an anti-aircraft weapon opened fire on Muslim sniper positions. An outbreak of fighting between Muslims and Croats in Vitez had been threatened for days, with constant sniper fire. One Croat sniper appears to be a neighbour of mine, three houses away.

Soldiers from the Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire aimed their weapons in the direction of the gunfire in case they were aimed at Lieutenant Colonel Alastair Duncan, the commander of the new battalion group in Bosnia-Herzegovina, said: "I can't interpose between the two sides. But the local commanders know that we have an agreement that there should be no military

action within 500 metres of the camp."

Lieutenant Colonel Duncan said: "My most important concern is the safety of my own troops. The camp is secure. Our actions are limited, although we do as much as we can to stop the fighting."

Earlier, a British military spokesman said: "We can't join in. There's no point in us becoming a fourth side in the civil war."

Muslims flee to British base

Chris Stephen in Vitez

MUSLIM homes were attacked by Croats and one civilian was killed in fierce fighting yesterday near the British Bosnian base of Vitez.

The Croats launched a furious dawn assault on a group of Muslim homes on the other side of the street from the base, blasting walls with rocket-propelled grenades and raking buildings with machine-gun fire.

Muslim families ran across the road to the safety of the base, while Muslims on a hill on the other side of the base gave them covering fire. This triggered fresh shooting from the Croats who used mortars fired close to a church on a hill overlooking Vitez.

Several hours of pandemonium followed as Croats used anti-aircraft guns and anti-tank guns on the houses and other Muslim positions. Four houses were set ablaze and a further six ransacked by Croats.

As fighting died down later, British patrols were sent into the small Muslim district in what is a predominantly Croat town. In the courtyard of one house they found the body of a man lying in a pool of blood, his

head destroyed by either a bullet or a rocket-propelled grenade.

The five Muslim families living in the houses fled to a group of buildings near the British base which already contains more than 200 Muslim refugees forced from their homes in recent weeks as local Croats accelerate their own ethnic cleansing.

The Muslims defending the small hill to the east of the British base said they gave covering fire to save the lives of those attacked by the Croats. One of the defenders, Shazovic Hasib, said the Muslims in the area were being pushed into ever smaller pockets by the Croats.

"I think we can see who is conquering territory. We can see who is attacking and who is ethnically cleansing."

The British sent five Warrior armoured vehicles into surrounding streets to try and calm the fighting, while officers sought out Croat leaders who had previously agreed with the Muslims that there would be no fighting within half a mile of the base.

The British commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Alastair Duncan, said the British were sticking to their rule of not returning fire unless fired upon.

The Guardian
May 20, 1993

Plea for weapons 'a Muslim strategy

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

Speak to a Muslim commander in Turbe, Travnik or Srebrenica and his message will be the same: "Give us weapons and we will fight our own war against the Serbs." This has been the Muslim cry ever since the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina began more than a year ago.

The Muslims have always had to fight the Bosnian Serbs at a huge disadvantage. Armed with Kalashnikovs, limited stocks of ammunition, second world war anti-aircraft guns, mortars and a

ARMS

handful of ancient artillery pieces, they have been relatively defenceless against the big guns that surround their surviving enclaves.

Their Bosnian Croat "allies" have more weapons but have made no moves to share them. In some Muslim defence lines, Kalashnikovs are so scarce that soldiers have to exchange them between shifts.

The appeal to arm the Muslims was first taken up by Baroness Thatcher last year but her words failed to have the same impact as

yesterday's emotional denunciation of Western policy. It has always been an option, though opposed by most Western governments. The new American administration is an exception, but even President Clinton has not yet adopted the proposal as policy.

There would be huge obstacles. First and foremost, it is difficult to imagine the Russians agreeing to support a United Nations Security Council move to lift the arms embargo in favour of the Muslims. A Russian veto because of their ties with Serbia would scupper the proposal.

However, if a partial lifting of

the ban was agreed — with Russia abstaining — the West would have to find ways of moving artillery into Muslim enclaves. Light guns, with a 105mm calibre, could be slung under helicopters.

Heavier guns would require low loaders. Either way, the West would have to commit personnel as well as equipment, both for training the Muslims and for keeping the ammunition supplies flowing. Jonathan Eyal, director of studies at the Royal United Services Institute, said that this was the strategy behind the Muslims' appeal to the West to supply arms.

to draw in Western troops'

"They ask for arms in the full knowledge that this is the one way to draw Western forces in."

To provide the Muslims with the arms they need to counter the Serbs, which would include tanks as well as artillery, shiploads of equipment would have to enter the Adriatic. Smaller arms could be flown in to Tuzla, in northeastern Bosnia. However, the risks would be high. Tuzla has been shelled on many occasions by Serb artillery. Even before Western arms arrived, the Serbs would undoubtedly preempt any such intervention by increasing their assault on the remaining Muslim enclaves in

eastern Bosnia: Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde. The result would be even greater slaughter.

The logistic challenge alone makes the proposal impractical. So why are the Americans — and Lady Thatcher — considering the option? A senior American diplomat explained that the US had a different perception of the war. "In Europe, the feeling is that this is a civil war but in the US there is a greater sense that it is a war of aggression and, for the Muslims, it's not a fair fight because they don't have the weapons."

The diplomat said that, unless the Muslims had the means to

defend themselves and to recover territory, the Serbs "will not negotiate sensibly". He admitted, however, that there were sound arguments against lifting the arms embargo. Arming the Muslims could lead to a "weapons free-for-all", with countries such as Iran joining in: a move that would not be welcomed in Washington.

Dr Eyal said: "Arming the Muslims might salve the conscience of the West but it would achieve nothing except more slaughter. Would it expiate the West's guilty conscience to see Serbian children as well as Muslim children being killed?"

The
Times

April 15, 1993

312-755-0994
PHSE 003

UN glosses over role of Croats in war

FROM TIM JUDAH
IN BELGRADE

BATTLE LINES

PORING over United Nations reports from Srebrenica yesterday, a senior UN official said: "Look, the Muslims have put their artillery behind the hospital. It seems that they began the shooting and the Serbs, being the tough guys on the block, blasted back with all they had."

The result was 56 dead, among them 15 children. In response the Serbs claimed that the Muslims had killed 43 Serb soldiers, 12 of whom, they said, had been "finished off with pitchforks and mallets".

Other UN officials are unsure whether the Muslims shot first on Monday but, even if they did, the official pointed out: "Who is going to shout about it? It just makes things too complicated. We are supposed to know who are the good guys and who are bad ones."

Masked Bosnian Croats with swastikas on their helmets yesterday waylaid UN aid trucks on their way to Muslim-held Travnik but, because the war must remain simple, the UN Security Council does not make the threats or demands that it does when the Serbs do the same. Some UN officials also believe that

no-fly zone reports are filtered by the UN headquarters in Zagreb to play down the number of violations by Croat planes. These are normally on missions to deliver arms or on reconnaissance runs.

Another example of a complexity of the war which is regularly ignored is the fact that, while the Serbs are told that they must dismantle their Bosnian Serb republic under the terms of the Vance-Owen plan, the Croats are consolidating their own mirror-image state.

The Zagreb-controlled puppet state, based ostensibly in Mostar in western Herzegovina, permits no dissent from its Muslim minority and its Serbs have been "ethnically cleansed" or killed. Those Muslims who have complained that their government is in Sarajevo have had their villages burnt down just like those of their co-religionists in Serb-conquered eastern Bosnia.

Meanwhile, in the north, another war is being waged. The Croats, still allied here to the Muslims, keep up their pressure on the two-mile-wide corridor linking Serbia to Serb held territories in northern Bosnia and beyond in Croatia.

The Times April 15/93

Out of 24,000 member Serbian Community in Mostar, only several hundred remain - as virtual prisoners. Don't expect to read about this in the Times.

There are some
good articles in here

AB

Bosnian Serbs' concern for security

From Dr Radovan Karadzic, Leader of the Bosnian Serbs

Sir, David Howell, MP (letter, April 14), is misguided in believing that a political solution to the inter-ethnic war in Bosnia-Herzegovina can be imposed. The key destabiliser in this conflict is the unequal application of pressure on the Bosnian Serbs, together with policy developed in the West in response to television and newspaper images.

This conflict is not about expansionism, it is about security. The Bosnian Serbs have consistently said that they have no intention of retaining all the territory they currently control once a political solution is reached. We recognise territory taken for strategic reasons will have to be returned but that we do have a right, as an indigenous part of the Bosnian population, to have some of our fears and aspirations recognised.

While the Vance/Owen plan may be, in Lord Owen's words, "the only plan in town", it is important to remember that it is not the first plan. Indeed the original Carrington plan proposed that the Bosnian Serbs should have 55 per cent of the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina and that the republic should be split into three ethnic cantons.

This plan is the only one that all three sides agreed upon. It is ironic that the international community did not apply the same pressure now directed against the Serbs when the Muslims reneged on their commitments and refused to implement the accord that they had accepted.

The Bosnian Serbs accept two thirds of the Vance/Owen plan and we accept much of the remaining portion. We cannot accept any settlement that does not allow us a psychological and physical umbilical cord with parts of the territory that would otherwise be isolated.

Refusing to recognise this leaves an all-out conflict in which the international community is forced to defeat the Serbs militarily as the only solution. This would almost certainly

spark a wider conflict which could well lead to broader Balkan conflict. It is time to deal with the real issues, to realise that by demonising the Serbs we cannot move an inch further towards peace.

I would ask David Howell and his colleagues in Parliament and government to accept that all three communities have an equal right to self-determination and that, if a single state is ever to work, that right cannot be given in greater measure to one indigenous part of the Bosnian population than to the other.

Yours faithfully,
RADOVAN KARADZIC,
Pale, Sarajevo, Bosnia.
April 15.

The
Times

April 16, 1993

we feel better They die so that

The Times
April 17, 1993

The West's pointless intervention in Beirut should be remembered by those now urging action against the Serbs.

History is a bad tutor, but sometimes nothing else will do. Where else to turn when Hitler, Holocaust and appeasement are in the air, when Gallup declares that two-thirds of Britons want to go to war in Bosnia, when heartrending pictures drive us from the house of reason up into the hills of hysteria?

The date that we should remember this weekend is September 18, 1982. The place is Beirut. The seven-year-old civil war has escalated, with weapons pouring in on all sides. The killing fields are level. An Israeli army has invaded the country to secure peace and has failed. An American-led force has helped send the PLO leadership into exile, but militias, tribes, villages, families remain at each other's throats.

That September day, an appalling massacre occurred in the Sabra and Chatila camps in Beirut, packed with Palestinian refugees from the fighting. Whole families were dragged from their homes and butchered in the streets. To this day, nobody knows how many died, possibly more than a thousand.

The world did not stand idly by. President Reagan decided upon what an adviser later called "an emotional response to a tragic event". Within ten days, American marines landed, followed by a peacekeeping force of French and Italians. It was the third time since decolonisation that foreign troops had landed in Beirut. A 115-strong British contingent arrived in December. Their objective was to "keep the peace" while talks between the warring factions took place.

The reaction in Beirut was euphoric. Nobody had to compromise any more. Everybody could misbehave. No peace was kept. No productive talks took place. Fighting continued. The Americans sent more troops and began shelling Chouf villages from the USS *New Jersey* offshore. Peace-

keeping became self-defence and then murderous aggression. The Americans suffered terrible reprisals, including a car bomb that killed 250 marines. This broke their spirit.

The adventure lasted a year. On February 8, 1984, British troops left. The foreign secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, declared that they "could no longer fulfil their peacekeeping role in such dangerous conditions". The Americans departed on February 26, admitting "it hasn't worked". The war reverted to the *status quo ante*, and its horrors dropped from the headlines. Never was outside intervention more fruitless. It postponed the resolution of local rivalries required to end any civil war. The West's conscience was briefly eased, but at a

terrible cost in lives. There followed another six years of conflict, until Lebanon's factions finally exhausted themselves. Today, at last, peace has returned to Beirut.

Lebanon is not Bosnia. But Western reaction to Bos-

*Simon
Jenkins*

nia is beginning to resemble Western reaction to Lebanon. We must do something to stop the killing. We cannot stand idly by. We are part of the most powerful alliance in the world, with the biggest weapons, the best bombers, the moral suasion of the United Nations. We can do anything. Yet we are becoming, in Baroness Thatcher's phrase, "accomplices to a massacre". Let us declare who is wrong and go to war.

Even if there were a feasible military objective in Bosnia — perhaps the fortification of Sarajevo as a "UN protectorate" — I cannot see a political one. Muslims and Christians will one day have to make their own peace in Sarajevo, as in Beirut. Overly arming the Muslims would merely encourage the East to give yet more weapons to the Serbs. I do not believe either Russia or the West means to risk the tragic escalation that followed Sarajevo 1914. But





what lunacy is not possible when President Clinton, Paddy Ashdown and Lady Thatcher want to shake their fists at Slav revanchism across the mountains of Bosnia?

Some interventionists still claim air power alone can halt the Serb advance. This is irresponsible. To imply that bombers, the most overrated weapons of limited war, will do anything but cause embarrassment is absurd. Bombing has no more relevance here than it had in South Vietnam or Beirut, or indeed in the attempts to topple Gaddafi or Saddam.

All military intelligence rejects bombing as wholly ineffective in this theatre. Either those who now preach armed intervention are hypocrites, or they really mean to commit ground troops. Nothing is more otiose than to attack governments for doing nothing and then add "but I am against sending troops".

Hindsight in war is senseless. Policy must address the now, not the then. One thing in Bosnia is certain: a change in the status of the United

Nations to that of combatant would kill more people. It would instantly bring an end to the humanitarian convoys. Serbia would regard all UN activity as hostile, and would retaliate accordingly. Britain and the West would be associated with any anti-Serb atrocities — of which there would be plenty — in the revitalised civil war. Ground troops would be vulnerable to guerrilla attack. Sooner or later their political masters would tire of the killing, the inconclusiveness, the shame. As in Beirut, they would retreat, their objective unattained. Whatever territory had been secured from the Serbs would revert to its previous insecurity.

I do not believe the British troops in Bosnia at present are presiding over a massacre or a UN humiliation. The maxim that charity should never carry a gun is a sound one and served the aid agencies well in Ethiopia. The Cheshires and the Royal Engineers took a huge risk in escorting the convoys, but they have fulfilled their remit immaculately. They have helped relieve the casualties of war without becoming parties to it. They have

been neither participants nor referees. They have been the first aid tent.

Wars end when one side is beaten. Most of the killing takes place between the moment when defeat is certain and the moment when the defeated accept it. Outside intervention usually prolongs that killing gap as I fear is the case in Srebrenica. As in Beirut, outside peacemakers offer the defeated a brief reprieve from reality. They also enrage the impending victor. Lady Thatcher should know this. She was enraged by Mr Reagan's peacemaking attempts as she approached her Falklands victory.

The Muslims are not going to win this ghastly war. It is irresponsible for the outside world to help prolong it, however grotesque the Serbs' behaviour. There is a role for intervention, but it is a difficult, unspectacular one: the provision, wherever possible, of humanitarian relief. That worthwhile task is now being sacrificed in a mad stampede to military action. We all want somebody else to die to show how much we care. This is obscene. After ten years, nothing is remembered, nothing learnt.

Fresh fighting also broke out in central Bosnia when Croat fighters — perhaps chancing that the eye of the world was on Srebrenica — started bombarding Muslim positions. In Vitez, 50 people were reported dead when Croat fighters started shelling the predominantly Muslim town centre. 'It seems to have degenerated into a series of revenge killings. We have reports of whole families killed in their own homes,' said a senior UN spokesman in Zagreb.

He told *The Observer* that he had no idea which factions were involved in fighting that has raged around the town, but said battles have broken out in many parts of Bosnia. 'I think everyone is fighting everyone else. It's becoming a very ugly situation. There are outbreaks of fighting across the whole of central Bosnia, some in places where we haven't had reports of fighting for several months.'

The Croat-Muslim fighting will give succour to those in the British Government who argue against Western military strikes against the Serbs.

The
Observer
April 18/93

The Daily Telegraph
April 16/93

Churchill doubts on intervention

SIR — While Lady Thatcher is entitled to her views on the appalling situation in Bosnia, she should not support her argument by the belief that Churchill would have supplied arms to the Muslims, which is implicit in her comparison of the present inaction with the courage of Churchill during the Battle of Britain.

To pray in aid what Churchill might have done does not support her case. It is quite clear from *The Gathering Storm* that he favoured neutrality in the Spanish Civil War despite the horrors which he recounts.

He did not agree with the policy of non-intervention because it was not observed by some of the Great Powers. He stated: "It would have been more reasonable to follow the normal course and to have recognised the belligerency of both sides as was done in the American Civil War from 1860-65."

The British Government must support the efforts of the United Nations in supplying humanitarian aid. It must not take sides or offer military support to either party.

G. W. F. ARCHER
Oxford

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Applying sense to Serbia

SIR — Mark Almond asks whether I am saying that "ethnic cleansing" is "justified" (Peterborough, April 15). The question is misleading.

I am simply saying that as long as the fighting in Bosnia is in full career there is no chance of patching up some kind of peace settlement; and that this will become possible only when the fighting ends in a new equilibrium of power.

The quickest way to a new equilibrium of power as things stand is for the Serbians to finish off the process of taking all the territory they want.

The most effective way of delaying such an equilibrium of power, and with it the chances of peace, is to aid the Bosnian Muslims, thereby prolonging the struggle.

This is a matter of the dynamics of war: "justice" or "justification" do not come into it.

I accused Mr Almond of "sheer Pli-gerite bleeding of the heart". Now we have Lady Thatcher, fierce of eye, telling us that the Serbian atrocities make her "angry".

But when did anger serve as a

sound guide to judgment? If we put in air strikes, what would the Serbs do in response? And what would we do in response to that?

Clausewitz pointed out that in war action provokes reaction, which in turn provokes further action, and so on in a continuous process of sharpening the conflict towards extremes.

Either we put limits on what we do and accept failure and futility, or we finish up with an international army group of 100,000 men. These would be fighting a prolonged campaign in difficult country and with enormous complications in terms of logistics and lines of communication — all because of a Balkan civil war that does not threaten the security of the United Kingdom, the European Community or Nato.

I profoundly hope therefore that the Government will continue to be guided by sober appraisal of operational realities, and not give way to popular gut emotion.

CORRELLI BARNETT
Cambridge

e18 FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1993 * * *

The Daily Telegraph

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Small screen, big wars

THE SUFFERINGS of the Muslims of Bosnia are providing a nightly diet of painful images, transmitted by television into every home. As the latest political eruptions surrounding the Bosnian conflict have demonstrated, television is the new wild card of international affairs. It is capable of arousing intense public emotions, perhaps beyond the capacity of politicians to control. It has become the lash under which they serve. Yet these are still relatively early days for electronic news gathering and instantaneous satellite communication, channels first dramatically exploited in the Gulf war and now let loose in former Yugoslavia.

For more than a century the conduct of war has been significantly altered by the work of journalists. William Howard Russell's reports from the Crimea and the photography of Matthew Brady from the American Civil War battlefields made an impressive impact on public opinion. Yet mere words and primitive photography did nothing to abate the enthusiasm of the Victorians for some murderous colonial wars. It is television which has become a unique force, television which appeals instantaneously to the senses. The viewer feels personally present on the battlefield.

Politicians, commentators and public opinion have yet to digest the full

consequences of the phenomenon. What might have been the effect on the outcome — indeed, what might have been the effect on the conception — had the electronic camera been on hand to record the Somme, Verdun or the wartime bombing of cities?

Sir Robin Day was among the first to suggest, after Vietnam, that in the age of television, democratic states might find it increasingly difficult to sustain the will of their peoples for war. Current experience of Bosnian coverage might argue the reverse of this proposition. It is apparent that the capacity of a democracy to wage ruthless total war has been undermined. But tyrannies, less constrained by public opinion, are less likely to be influenced in their conduct. Unless democracies become more sophisticated, the cards will henceforth be stacked in favour of dictators. One reason that the Gulf war ended when it did was the belief among Western leaders that public opinion would not tolerate further slaughter of the retreating Iraqi army. Thus did Saddam Hussein escape final retribution, and live to fight another day. Screen images are the raw material of journalism. Therein lies the power of the television report, and its peril. It is a one-dimensional medium. It sees only what stands before the camera. Policies shaped by its influence alone will likewise prove one-dimensional.

The Times April 17, 1993 Arms dilemma in Bosnian conflict

From Professor Geoffrey Lee Williams

Sir, Your judicious leader ("Taking Bosnia seriously", April 15) commends the logic of Lady Thatcher's robust suggestion (report, April 14) that the West should take action in Bosnia, but implicitly repudiates her specific proposal to arm the Muslims. You rightly prefer Lord Owen's more measured endorsement of selective military action.

The realism of Douglas Hurd should not be berated simply because it is the logical outcome of *realpolitik*. There is indeed, as your leader says, no "lack of strategic acumen" in the case against those advocating arming the Bosnian Muslims.

Surely such a course of action would inevitably put the United States and Russia on a collision course? Crudely put, does Boris Yeltsin matter more to the West than the fate of a phantom state?

Greater Serbia is now a fact. To put the vanquished Muslims before the wider interests of the West would be foolish in the extreme. It is therefore a vital Western interest to avoid undermining Mr Yeltsin in the forthcoming referendum.

Victory for the Russian nationalists would, almost certainly, result in open support for the Serbs, with the West and the Islamic states coming under increased pressure to arm the Muslims.

As Simon Jenkins argues ("Arm-chair strategists, keep clear", April 14), there is no ideological justification for military intervention — Nato or UN — beyond humanitarian help.

Yours sincerely,
GEOFFREY LEE WILLIAMS,
University of Cambridge,
Centre of International Studies,
History Faculty Building,
West Road, Cambridge.
April 15.

The Independent April 16, 1993 Bosnia: obstacles to peace.

From Mr Sydney F. Robin

Sir: Although it may perhaps be difficult for many to do so, one has to look at the Bosnian question with realism and not emotion.

The seeds of the present conflict go back a long way and reflect the age-old division of the Eastern and Western churches, as well as the aftermath of the effects of the Ottoman Empire. History shows that there is no real prospect of Catholic and Orthodox Christians living at one with each other, let alone with Muslims also, unless there is some strong overriding unifying force such as was provided by Tito for many years.

The big mistake was for Yugoslavia to be broken up in the first place. Wholly Catholic Slovenia, supported by the Catholic government of Germany, did not present a great problem. However, in the case of Croatia there was an immediate clash between the Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbs, magnified by memories of the events there in the Second World War.

When it came to Bosnia, there was an instant and predictable three-way rivalry between the factions and, to put it frankly, in the way events have developed there is no way that peace there can ever be fully achieved unless the parties are separated. That is the rationale be-

hind "ethnic cleansing" which in reality is being practised by all sides, either by accident or design.

War is always ghastly, as I well know from my own experiences. But civil wars bring their own special difficulties, as all those who remember the Spanish Civil War in the Thirties will remember. In that war, there were ghastly events and pressures on governments to intervene. Germany and Italy actually did, leading to the infamous air strike on Guernica. Now some people are advocating air strikes on Bosnia.

Clearly we must not intervene in the present conflict. That in the longer term will solve nothing, given the circumstances. We must continue our efforts to bring peace, even if this means making concessions to the Serbs by setting up some form of federal Bosnia where each faction has its own land with its own people and its own autonomy.

The old Yugoslavia was a wonderful and beautiful country. We must not pursue policies that will allow what remains of it to be destroyed.
Yours faithfully,
SYDNEY F. ROBIN
London, W8

No more Thatcher magic

The Sunday
Telegraph
April 18, 1993

PEREGRINE
WORSTHORNE'S
WEEK

MORE often than not, my mind is made up on controversial issues by noticing who the supporters are on either side. Thus I am automatically against any cause that is supported, say, by John Piger or Ludovic Kennedy, and automatically in favour of any cause supported, say, by Irving Kristol or Conor Cruise O'Brien. On the question of Western intervention in Bosnia, however, these normally reliable guidelines are worse than useless.

Last week was particularly difficult in this respect. In Monday's *New York Herald Tribune* there was an article by Anthony Lewis passionately advocating military intervention. The whole moral influence of the United States in the world would be jeopardised unless President Clinton used force to stop the triumph of Serbian fascism, he warned.

Coming from Anthony Lewis that was a bit thick, since no one had campaigned more strongly against American military efforts to stop the triumph of communism in Vietnam. With supporters like that, the cause of intervention must be suspect.

Nor did the presence of Hugo Young, of the *Guardian*, among the interventionists do anything to allay these suspicions. For his predictably specious moralistic sabre-rattling was also a turn-off.

Then along came Lady Thatcher preaching pretty

well exactly the same sermon as had stuck in my throat when preached by Anthony Lewis and Hugo Young. I do not always agree with Lady Thatcher. But I seldom feel altogether happy when disagreeing with her. For whereas Lewis and Young are always wrong, she is usually right. In any case, I want to believe in her. She is about the only politician nowadays whose words have any meaning. No, she did not convince me, but at least she stopped me being a convinced opponent of intervention. So by the end of the week I was back again among the don't knows.

To intervene or not to intervene — this is indeed a difficult question, made all the more so by the way it is being argued. Those opposed to intervention, like Government ministers, seem resigned to ceding the high moral ground to those in favour of intervention. Thus Lady Thatcher last week was allowed to appear on the side of the angels, and Messrs Major, Hurd, Rifkind and Baroness Chalker on the side of *Realpolitik*.

This is most unjust. *Realpolitik* involves subordinating moral principles to reasons of state or to the national interest. Arguably that is what Mr Chamberlain did in 1938 in respect of Czechoslovakia. Why should Britain go to war for a far-away little country, etc? This is not what Mr Major is saying. He is saying that military intervention would do no good; would indeed almost certainly add to the harm. Innocent lives would be lost, not saved. His is not a cynical *Realpolitik* argument. It is a highly sophisticated moral one: that non-intervention is the lesser of two evils.

Not for a moment does he deny that intervention would do some short-term good. But in the longer term it would do terrible evil. This is not a conclusion based on calculations of the national interest, or on opportunism or expediency. It is a conclusion reached by an honest statesman after much searching of his conscience. Why cannot Mr Major's Government get the high-mindedness of its message across?

The answer, I fear, is its near fatal lack of rhetoric.

Almost all the failures of this Government come back to the same cause: dumbness. None of them can speak. A great orator would have turned the tables on Lady Thatcher, not by brandishing cheap epithets — as Mr Rifkind pitifully tried to do — but by demonstrating with impassioned logic the evil moral consequences of intervention. Calling for intervention, as Lady Thatcher did, required no courage. It was the easy and popular thing to do. Refusing to intervene — now that does require almost heroic restraint. O what a cheer Mr Major would have received had he found the words to make a virtue of refusing to give way to her demagogic dogmatism.

But neither he nor the Foreign and Defence Secretaries, and still less the pathetic Baroness Chalker, ever do find the right words. They always fumble and falter and prevaricate. As a result, the people of this country feel uncertain and ashamed. For if a democratic statesman is to withstand popular pressure for dramatic and ill-judged actions, he must find an inspiring substitute for them in wise and noble words. Mr Major never can; and when oratory is so consistently lacking, there can be no statesmanship.

WAY OF THE WORLD

by Peter Simple

Ranting Away

ACROSS the Atlantic, Lady Thatcher bawls for the lifting of the international arms embargo for the Bosnian Muslims. Over here, according to an opinion poll, nearly two-thirds of those questioned believe an international force should be sent to Bosnia "to ensure a peace settlement" and that British troops should take part.

These people are shocked and indignant at the slaughter of the Bosnian Muslims they see nightly on television. They would not be human if they weren't. But this nightly dose of televised horror, as is the way of television, reinforces ignorance. It arouses a hysterical hatred of the Serbs, long cast by "world opinion" as the statutory villains in this ancient three-way war in which all sides have carried out atrocities. If the Serbs have carried out more, that may be because up to now they have been the strongest.

The most merciful "solution" might be for the Serbs to win their war soon and then divide Bosnia with the Croats as they have (presumably) already agreed. To explain the historical background of this "solution" would take up the whole of this column every week for the rest of its existence. But the first thing to realise is that Bosnia has never been an independent state, or anything like one, and that the decision of the United Nations to recognise its "independence" was an absurd, even criminal, act of stupidity — or possibly something worse.

The large Serb and Croat minorities were never going to tolerate the ambition of Muslim politicians to rule them. What are the Bosnian Muslims whose televised misfortunes, largely the fault of those pol-

iticians, have brought them such sympathy in English homes? They are the descendants of Serbs, mainly adherents of the Bogomil heresy, who converted to Islam when the Turks conquered Bosnia 500 years ago, and made common cause in the oppression of the Christian peasant Serbs.

Such is the hornets' nest of ancient hatred which the United Nations has stirred up. Of course it is not as simple as that. Only the susceptibility of television viewers and the inflated rant of politicians are simple, and the one-sided judgment which ensures that the Serbs, a proud and warlike people, will fight even harder to defend themselves, as they have always done, against all comers.

The Sunday
Telegraph
April 18, 1993

Fifty die on Croat 'killing field'

Simon Carroll
Split

THE remains of Muslim homes smouldered and fires lit up the night sky this weekend close to the British army base at Vitez in the wake of a Croat onslaught lasting 16 hours, according to eyewitnesses.

'I have seen many dead bodies. I am calling on both sides to end this senseless slaughter,' said Major Bob Stewart, the British commander, in a Bosnian television appeal. 'This killing must stop.' He declined, however, to say if any action would be taken by his forces, or who was to blame.

However Dutch UN soldiers who had watched the attack unfold gave a graphic description yesterday when they reached Sarajevo airport.

Reports from the scene indicate that 50 people died in the attack.

The Croats have recently stepped up their campaign to

take over control of territories which they assert are due to them under the UN-EC peace plan signed first by them, and more recently by the Bosnian government.

'It was a killing field,' said Sgt Major Gaap Aarbel of the Dutch Transport Battalion.

'We were woken by the sound of shells whistling over the camp at 5.45am on Friday, and striking 500 metres from us. Shells and gunfire were smashing into the village all through the day and into the night.

'We counted over 200 shells. We could see many houses burning - both from direct hits and from being set on fire.' The camp, he said, had itself been hit twice, but he was not aware of any injuries to UN personnel.

His group of soldiers - eight men and a woman - had driven past five corpses by the roadside as they headed for the airport. 'They were half covered but all appeared to be civilians,' he

said. 'There were absolutely no military targets in the area. It was just a village.'

A mosque had been struck by the shelling and its minaret lay smashed on the ground, he added.

Clashes between Croats and Muslims have become an increasingly obvious feature of the war. Eyewitnesses reckon the Croatian version of ethnic cleansing to be every bit as fierce as that carried out by the Serbs.

The attack so close to a UN base cast doubt on whether any of the sides in the conflict feels constrained in its violent activities by the international presence.

'It is a shock to discover that our efforts to protect the civilians and give them help are being ignored', said the Dutch soldier. 'We came here to help but it seems they don't care about each other. They just slaughter one another. It makes me wonder why we bothered.'

The Observer April 18, 1993

The Guardian

April 14, 1993

● A Croatian human rights activist said yesterday that some Serbs were victims of an "ethnic cleansing" campaign to drive them from Croatia. Ivan Zvonimir Cicak, a board member of Croatia's Helsinki Committee, said the government had done little to stop such efforts and might even be encouraging them.

The aim was to "intimidate the Serbs to the point of leaving Croatia", he said. Citing Croatian police records, Mr Cicak said that "more than 1,000 Serbian homes have been blown up since the beginning of the war in Croatia". — AP.

Armchair strategists

keep clear

The Times April 14/93

Full-scale occupation or a humanitarian disengagement were the only options ever open to the UN and the Western powers in the ravaged Yugoslav lands

On Monday an hour-long Serbian bombardment of Srebrenica left 56 people dead. The shelling was the Serbian commander's response to the enforcement of the United Nations "no-fly" zone over the former Yugoslavia. I suppose these 56 people would have died sooner or later. But since the no-fly zone has no military purpose, was enforced to appease the "do something" lobby in America, and was certain to produce a violent response, Monday's 56 corpses must have been part of its calculation. They are a memorial to the callousness of the Bosnian Serbs' siege tactics. They are a memorial also to the bankruptcy of armchair interventionism over the Balkans.

During the past six months, Western policy towards Serbia has been counter-productive. Every move has stoked the engine of Serbian aggrandisement, while making that aggrandisement more murderous and illiberal. Since the end of overt war between Croatia and Serbia there were only two choices open to outsiders. The first was to invade Bosnia with main force, to occupy, colonise and police it village by village (the Vietnam option). The second was to leave the Serbs, Muslims and Croats to redraw their internal boundaries in their own brutal way, with outsiders picking up the casualties (the Ethiopia option). In Bosnia, the best hope for minimal bloodletting and for future coexistence lay in the civil war being short.

There was never a middle way between these options. Clever commentators have contrived themselves to pretend otherwise. Last year was the UN Year of the Euphemism: "Give diplomacy a chance", "Fury the sanctions screw a bit tighter", "Bomb Belgrade to its senses". A mountain of hindsight has piled over Western legislatures and newspaper offices, to the effect that Serbia would have "come to see reason" had "tougher action" been taken at some unspecified time in the past. Since none of this pressure did the trick, the international community must appease its guilt by being seen to "do something", however counter-productive, however daft.

We are thus seeing some of the worst policy-making ever from the UN and its members. We have a bid at the security

council for even tighter (which means more counterproductive) economic sanctions against Belgrade. We have the Americans goading the Russians into doing what nobody wants, overtly backing the Serbs under Slay nationalist pressure. We have the costly no-fly zone and a pointless and devastating risk to humanitarian relief in Bosnia. We have 56 fresh corpses.

At this point I must say some obsequies over the body of the Vance-Owen peace plan. This plan posed only one question: how many Bosnians would be dead before it bit the dust? Anybody can negotiate a ceasefire. Lord Carrington proved that in civil wars, ceasefires are about regrouping, rearming, resupplying. Bosnian ceasefires simply put more bullets into guns. What was ludicrous was the idea that the Serb commanders would ever go on to accept a map that stripped them of territory

gained so bloodily. It was like asking Margaret Thatcher to hand Goose Green back to the Argentinians after the Battle of Tumbledown.

Mercifully the plan has collapsed. This has forestalled its wild proposal for a *de facto* Nato land invasion of

Bosnia to impose the new map. It was fashionable in New York last Christmas to say that Vance-Owen was "the only show in town". Even if this was true of the town of New York — not Belgrade — the signal to the Serbs could not have been clearer. They should expedite ethnic cleansing to render the map even less plausible. The only map that mattered was the one on a gurney officer's field desk.

Precisely this has taken place over the past three months in Srebrenica and other Muslim enclaves. The UN has been drawn into the bind that it most feared, and critics predicted, a year ago. Its humanitarian commitment has become biased towards the underdog. Its local commanders have become partisan — in General Morillon's case spectacularly so — but not partisan enough to make any difference. The UN's "relief" of Srebrenica was defeated by a band of unarmed Serbian women.

Already the agenda is changing. Poor Bosnia has slid from being merely a victim of its own ethnic divisions to become a symbol of America's continuing virility. From right and left come assertions that Bosnia is an ultimate test

Simon
Jenkins

The Times
April 14/93

Continued
→

an example to the world. "Nato should go into the Balkans," writes the widely syndicated American columnist William Safire, "or shut up shop." This is absurd. The vocal leader of the American war party, Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times*, announces that "the credibility of American power in the world" rests on the fate of Srebrenica. (The town is doomed: modern Americans have a genius for setting up their defeats in advance.)

We are told that diplomacy has failed in what was once Yugoslavia. It has not. Diplomacy is the projection of power by non-military means. It implies a commitment to employ leverage to achieve a political goal. Against armed might, diplomacy is relevant only if it presupposes a greater might. Britain's famous gunboat diplomacy presupposed a battleship over the horizon.

What has failed in Yugoslavia is not diplomacy but bluff. From the moment the outside world recognised Slovenia, the Serb ascendancy saw that Yugoslavia was dead and that the fight for Greater Serbia was on. That fight would be a fight for territory, and would be bloody. Sanctions, no-fly zones, bombed airports, redrawn maps and ceasefires would not stop the fight. They would embattle the Milosevic regime and push power towards the black-marketeers, nationalists and militant local warlords. Since no sane Western (or Eastern) government was going to send soldiers to garrison every village in Croatia and Bosnia against the Serbs, interventionism was a sham. Its bluff has been called, week after week.

Yet we pile on more bluff. Serbian aggression cannot be allowed to succeed, says the British government. But it is being allowed to succeed. There can be no rewarding the ethnic cleansers, says the Clinton administration. But UN trucks race around Bosnia at our expense, moving thousands of Muslims from their villages. The West is rightly not prepared to go to war with Serbia. Yet it cannot bring itself to retreat into

the humanitarian mode. It aches for the comfort of a middle way. The boundaries of Greater Serbia will be pushed to the territorial limits set by local Serb (and Croatian) commanders. Impeding these ambitions, sending arms to those defying them, impoverishing Belgrade, may delay the setting of these limits. But civil wars cease only when one side reaches exhaustion or the sea.

Since the Congo, the United Nations has sensibly kept out of places as hopeless as this. It recognised the virtue of not intervening in the internal affairs of states, as defined by their post-1945 borders. Within those borders, self-determination should apply. The principle may have left in the lurch minority rights within states; it may not always have been respected, but it played some part in decolonisation and in keeping communist expansion at bay.

The break-up of states has always sorely tested non-intervention — look at Pakistan or Nigeria. But the new American theory that countries "that fail to care decently for their citizens... forfeit invulnerability to outside political/military intervention" (*The Washington Post*) has alarming implications. Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, says the primary foreign policy task of the United States is "heading off the surfacing of long-suppressed ethnic and religious conflict" around the world.

Is this the new world order? Does any minority group merely need to run up the flag of oppression to have the US marines come running? In the old days, small countries or ethnic groups secured their survival by allying themselves to big neighbours. Should they now thumb their noses at the neighbours because Uncle Sam will come to their aid? Are the United States and the UN to police the ethnic maelstrom that will accompany the end of the former Soviet Union? This is madness.

The new interventionism has no political or ideological spine. It sees national self-interest, as in nuclear non-proliferation, as an immoral basis for foreign action. At its heart is merely a vague feeling of discomfort at man's inhumanity to man and a susceptibility to the pornography of grief. Like Gladstone's campaign against Turkish atrocities, it will evaporate. The outcome will be a spasmodic adventurism born of cynicism out of racism. It will thoroughly discredit the United Nations.

At this moment in the Caucasus, Azerbaijanis are being bloodily "cleansed" from what looks like becoming Greater Armenia. Thousands are dying. Is this the next test of American potency, of Nato throw-weight, of UN credibility, of the new liberal church militant? I suspect not. Summer is coming. Interventionism will dissipate. And as the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are finding, an atrocity is less atrocious when not committed on a European.

Vance-Owen plan must be adjusted to achieve greater equity

From Mr George Tintor.

Sir, For the second time in a year, the US and the European Community are attempting to impose their will on Bosnia's 1.5m Serbs. A year ago, the "independence" of Bosnia was recognised by the west despite the objections of the Bosnian Serbs. The Serbs, who constitute a third of Bosnia's population and inhabit 60 per cent of its territory, opposed independence prior to an agreement on constitutional principles.

Predictably, the Bosnian Serbs took up arms to resist being forcibly incorporated in an inherently hostile state. The

consequences of their rebellion have been dreadful.

Today, the West is attempting to force the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen plan. Although the Vance-Owen plan goes a long way toward recognising the rights of all three Bosnian groups, including the Bosnian Serbs, it stops short of an equitable and lasting solution. The Vance-Owen plan divides Bosnia into 10 semi-autonomous regions dominated by either Bosnia's Croats, Moslems or Serbs.

The Bosnian Croats accept the Vance-Owen plan without reservation because it gives

them far more territory than they could have possibly expected. The Bosnian Moslems reluctantly accept the plan because, at present, it represents the best prospect for foreign military intervention. The cost to the Moslems, however, is the abandonment of their goal of a unitary state.

The Bosnian Serbs object to the Vance-Owen plan on two points. First, the map leaves large numbers of Serbs in areas dominated by Moslems and Croats; and second, it denies the Serbs a land corridor between the large Serb-inhabited region in north-west-

ern Bosnia and Serbia itself. Given the present animosity between the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats and Moslems, an isolated Serb region in Bosnia would become the Nagorno-Karabakh of Europe. It is inconceivable that the Serbs will voluntarily accept this arrangement.

Adjustments must be made to the Vance-Owen plan to ensure that it is fair to all three Bosnian groups. Otherwise, the country will be condemned to decades of misery.

George Tintor,
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Financial Times April 14, 1993

Constitutional consensus the key to Bosnian peace

From Mr Aleksa Gavrilović

Sir: Tony Barber (report, 2 and 3 April) gives a good summary of problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina. His description of this tragic civil war indicates that it is more complicated than describing it just as the "Serbian aggression". He discusses the often ignored conflict between Muslims and Croats, the Croat virtual annexation of a large part of Herzegovina and he also reports on atrocities committed against Serbs.

Mr Barber writes: "Having upheld the principle of a united Bosnian state, and having identified the Serbs as the chief aggressors, the West has left itself little room for manoeuvre." In view of many statements that the West should have intervened earlier, this statement should be amplified. The tragedy is that the West has intervened early, but unwisely.

According to the constitution of the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, all important decisions had to be carried out by a consensus of Muslims, Serbs and Croats. Ignoring this, the EC was prepared to accept a referendum on independence based on a simple majority. Nevertheless, Lord Carrington's deputy, Ambassador Cutileiro, managed to get the three parties to agree a basis for the future constitution, which preserved the power-sharing concept.

On 7 April 1992 the EC recognised Bosnia-Herzegovina without making it subject to the 18 March Agreement. Ambassador Cutileiro wrote that Muslims agreed to his 18 March proposals "in order to secure a quick recognition" and that "in June, Muslims reneged on the March agreement".

In February Mr Cutileiro wrote that the central feature of the 18 March 1992 Agreement he brokered and that of Vance-Owen plan remained "vital decisions affecting any of the three nations, Muslims, Croats and Serbs", must be taken by consensus and that "no centralised, unitary state is possible".

Lord Carrington and others advised strongly against premature recognition. If the EC and US had made the recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina subject to a previously agreed constitutional arrangement, bloodshed would have been avoided.

President Izetbegović has only recently accepted the concept of power-sharing, having received some additional concessions. It is difficult to understand the unwillingness of EC/UN negotiators to offer the Bosnian Serbs some small concession on the proposed map.

Yours sincerely,
ALEKSA GAVRILOVIC
Stafford
4 April

The Independent 8 April 1993

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We enter Bosnia at our peril
Independent (IN) - Friday, April 23, 1993
By: CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN
Edition: 3 Section: Comment Page Page: 22
Word Count: 1,177

TEXT:

THIS WEEK'S news from central Bosnia should do something to slow down the drift towards Western and/or United Nations military intervention in former Yugoslavia. It should now be clear that ethnic cleansing is not just a Serbian idea. It is a fancy recent label for standard practice in a Balkan civil war. Croats and Muslims were hard at it this week, and not for the first time (though never before with such publicity). If UN forces were to intervene, they would not be able to end the civil war. They would complicate it. They would be drawn into it in various ways. They would be seen inevitably, in any given theatre, as siding with one local faction or another, and attract the murderous hatred of the faction that saw itself as betrayed. In a short time the forces would be seen as foreign occupiers, and would meet with guerrilla resistance from every ethnic group. The bodybags would start coming home, and many of those who have been demanding intervention would be calling for withdrawal. The troops would be withdrawn, leaving behind an even worse situation than that which they had been sent to clean up.

It is true that relatively few influential people are as yet calling directly for the deployment of ground troops. The demand recently has been mainly for escalation from "no-fly zones", seen as ineffective, to air strikes against Serbian supply lines. Air strikes sound safe, in terms of Western casualties, but this is a mistake. The well-informed among those who press for air strikes see them only as a stage in an escalation towards the deployment of ground troops. Even the resolute interveners, those who would not stop short of ground warfare, are reluctant to tell us just what the troops are to do after they go in, or how long they are expected to stay.

An influential American lobby headed by a retired Air Force general and former chief of staff, Michael J Dugan, calls not only for the expulsion of Serbian troops from all of Bosnia, but also for the occupation of Serbia itself. Under this scheme, the ground troops are to be supplied by Britain, France and Italy; America's contribution is to be confined to the air. Support for such ideas has been growing in America and is expected to grow further with the rising influence of an air force lobby.

As a candidate, and now as President, Mr Clinton explicitly committed himself to refrain from sending American ground troops to former Yugoslavia. If there are US air strikes and these fail to produce political and social results on the ground that are satisfactory to the US television audience, there will be pressure to commit European ground troops to a doomed enterprise.

It is important, therefore, at the present stage, for European governments to make clear that they do not support the idea of air strikes,

and that if the Americans unilaterally resort to them, they must not implement this decision until the Europeans have withdrawn the forces already deployed for humanitarian purposes, as these would then appear in a combat role for which they are not prepared. From the prudent statements this week by Douglas Hurd and Malcolm Rifkind, it would appear that the British government is indeed sending messages of this kind to Mr Clinton. I hope that this week's news from central Bosnia will give these messages more weight with the White House.

If the troops do go in, how long are they expected to stay? American and other Western interventionists cannot tell us, for they have no idea. But a statement issued this week on behalf of the Bosnian government called for an EC/UN military presence throughout Bosnia for the next 25 years. Interventionists on the outside are hoping for some kind of quick military fix. But their friends on the inside know only too well that this is not on.

Pressed to intervene, but shrinking from the cost, Mr Clinton is now reported as leaning in the direction of arming the Muslims. This is a certain way of making the civil war worse. The Muslims would then step up their own contribution to ethnic cleansing, from its present relatively modest proportions in central Bosnia. The Germans would then see that the Croats received an increase in arms also, the Russians would do the same for the Serbs, and the civil war would become worse. The British and French governments are right to resist this wild proposal.

Unspeakable cruelties have been, and are being, perpetrated, and not by one side only. It is right to try to help. But the most that outsiders can do is to mitigate the suffering. What can be done in that line is being done through the international programme of humanitarian aid. That programme would work better if the threat of a UN-imposed military solution were removed. Aggressive military intervention from the air or on the ground would not end or reduce the suffering. It would only intensify it, widen it and bring it to bear on different sections of the civilian population. And after the interveners had withdrawn, the civil war would continue until it burnt itself out.

We are told, of course, that it is not a civil war at all, but an international conflict. It was a civil war until it was artificially internationalised, and thereby intensified, through the folly of the EC, under German pressure, in recognising Croatia and Bosnia as independent states. German opinion was, and is, partial to Croatia. If Serbia's seizure of parts of Bosnia constitutes international aggression, as we are told it does, then so does Croatia's seizure of parts of Bosnia. But the Croats have got away with it so far. Their conquests in Bosnia to date were allocated to them in full, under the Vance-Owen plan, because the Germans wanted it that way, and therefore so did the EC.

The ethical contours of these conflicts are not quite so simple as the public has been given to believe. We are being told, ad nauseam, that Slobodan Milosevic is Hitler redivivus. Milosevic is a Balkan warlord and, to that extent, has some points in common with Hitler. But he is not the only Balkan warlord who practises ethnic cleansing. The Croats, under their equally nasty Balkan warlord, Franco Tudjman, do the same sort of things, but nobody compares Tudjman to Hitler, even though he goes on in a similar vein about the Jews. The Croats get a better press than the Serbs, not

because they deserve it, but because they have a powerful patron inside the Community and the Serbs do not.

Comparisons with Hitler are intoxicating, and should be avoided. It was by seeing Nasser as Hitler that Anthony Eden got Britain into Suez. John Major is in no danger of repeating that error. But John Smith has been displaying some of the symptoms. All concerned should now digest the lessons of the events in central Bosnia and draw back from a fatal Balkan brink.

(Photograph omitted)

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POLITICS & POLICY

Pentagon Advice Gives Cold Comfort to Clinton: Bosnian Air Strikes Are Risky, Alternatives Poor

By THOMAS E. RICKS

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
 WASHINGTON — The U.S. military opposes the rising sentiment for air strikes against the Serbian military, because it fears they won't stop Serbian aggression and then could leave the U.S. with a painful choice: throw in the towel or commit ground troops.

Air strikes against Serbian artillery have become the most talked-about military option in the former Yugoslavia, though hardly the only one. But the Joint Chiefs of Staff have told President Clinton that they don't see any good military options, say people who have been briefed by the Joint Chiefs' war planners.

Of all the available options, the military leaders have told the White House, the least troubling would be pursuing a two-step process of lifting the international arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims who are battling the Serbian military, and then perhaps later arming them. But that move is opposed by European allies. And the chiefs noted that even that option could have dangerous consequences.

The chiefs have presented their views to the White House in what amounts to "a recipe book on how you build this thing," according to one person familiar with their thinking. "But the bottom line was, the military payoffs are very small."

Consultations on the fighting in Bosnia intensified yesterday, as President Clinton neared a decision on possible military moves. He summoned prominent legislators to the White House, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization chiefs of staff met in Brussels and warned against acting militarily without a clear objective.

These are the military options the Pentagon has outlined:

The operational air strike: The commonly discussed option of hitting artillery emplacements is the one most feared by the military. The advantage is that it would address the problem directly: Serb forces have made artillery their weapon of choice, shelling urban populations from afar.

But that sort of talk gives the willies to experienced pilots, who say going after artillery would be far more difficult than most people realize. "Artillery tends to be buried, with only the barrel sticking out like a tree branch," said Robert Gaskin, a former fighter pilot in Vietnam who now studies defense policy at Business Executives for National Security, a Washington research organization. "It's one of the hardest missions you can have."

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Bombing from high altitudes risks being ineffective or worse. Having pilots duck under the Balkan cloud cover and spend time zeroing in on targets would likely result in many U.S. pilots being killed and taken prisoner of war, critics argue. The U.S. then would effectively be at war: Having invested those lives in the conflict, it would be enormously difficult for the U.S. to simply withdraw.

"The major loss of aircraft in Vietnam was to antiaircraft fire," Adm. David Jeremiah, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, told reporters. "If you're going to try to get in under [the weather], and on targets, you will get into antiaircraft artillery. You will take casualties."

Even if such strikes were successful at the outset, they could prompt the Serbs to disperse their artillery and shift to attacking small towns and refugee columns. What's more, if the strikes are carried out, they inevitably would kill bystanders. "This clearly is a different scenario" than the Persian Gulf War, Adm. Jeremiah said.

The message air strike: The military is somewhat more comfortable with this sort of limited, low-risk strike. The idea would be to send the Serbs a message by hitting high-profile targets such as ammunition dumps, bridges, electricity

grids, or oil refineries, either in Serbian areas of Bosnia or in Serbia proper.

The advantage is that the chances of losing pilots or inflicting "collateral damage" on civilians are lower. The question is what would be accomplished. "In Iraq, there were things you could hit and have extraordinary confidence that it would have an effect across the whole country," said one Air Force targeting expert. But



in the former Yugoslavia, it isn't clear whether punishing Serb leaders in Serbia proper actually would affect the behavior of their Serbian proteges on the ground in Bosnia.

Hitting bridges in Bosnia would certainly be easier, and would send a message — but perhaps to the wrong recipient. Precision bombing could cut Serbian supply lines, but Serbs would quickly find alternatives on backwoods paths. Meanwhile, heavier relief trucks that carry humanitarian supplies might be cut off.

Lifting the arms embargo: Feeling

forced to make a choice, this is the option the Joint Chiefs are pushing. "The Joint Chiefs have become the advocate of arming, so they won't have to do anything," says Zalmay Khalilzad, a former Pentagon policy planner who was the Bush Administration's leading advocate of aiding the Bosnians. He predicts that, because of the Joint Chiefs' opposition to an operational strike, President Clinton ultimately will choose to pursue a mix of the message-strike option and lifting the embargo.

Not that the chiefs like this option. Like America's allies, they argue that at the end of the day, pouring more arms into the region simply will provoke Serbian escalation and so raise the level of violence.

Yet in his recent rounds of talks with the allies about Bosnia, special U.S. envoy Reginald Bartholomew is said to have argued that an end to the arms embargo "at least will increase the right kind of violence" — that is, a Muslim defense against Serb aggression. Mr. Bartholomew is said to be discussing a two-step approach to this option. First, the embargo would be lifted. Then, if that didn't have the desired effect, the West might actually ship arms to the Bosnians, as well as train them and provide tactical intelligence.

But that second step raises new worries: If the arms are flown in, U.S. aircraft would again be targets. And if the arms are shipped in across Croatia, it isn't clear how many would actually reach the Bosnians — and how many might be used against them by the Croats.

Inserting ground forces: No one is actually advocating this. Intervening to impose a peace would require insertion of

tens of thousands of troops — one congressional study reports a NATO estimate of about 300,000 troops — for an uncertain duration. It would lead to far higher U.S. casualties than any of the other options.

The chiefs also have argued against establishing "safe havens" for Bosnian Muslims. Among other things, that would

require stilling Serb artillery, which leads back to consideration of air strikes.

The military's overwhelming concern in all these options is the lack of a clearly defined objective. Asked yesterday if Bosnia brought Vietnam to mind, Adm. Jeremiah said, "I think Beirut is a better analogy."

The Daily Telegraph

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April 24, 1993

Lethal gestures

FOREIGN ministers of the European Community will meet in Denmark this weekend under the shadow of what could prove a monumental folly in Bosnia-Herzegovina. After much wavering, President Clinton appears to have decided to respond to the latest Serbian atrocities by bombing their supply lines and artillery positions. Escalating the conflict will be regarded with deep misgivings by European countries, in particular Britain and France, which have large contingents of troops involved in the distribution of humanitarian aid. Nevertheless, they will probably swing reluctantly behind Washington, because of the importance they attach to the preservation of solidarity between the United States and Europe. Neither the British nor the French government believes in what it is likely to be asked to do. It is a sad reflection on the state of the Atlantic alliance that its European half should be dragged against its will, and at some risk to its forces on the ground, into the business of military gestures.

The bombing of selected targets, like the earlier air drop of humanitarian supplies, is designed to assuage American consciences. It reflects the execution not of a coherent policy but of a limp-wristed obeisance to the supposed wishes of American television viewers. It is unlikely to deflect the Serbs from the goal of consolidating their conquests in Bosnia. It might even stiffen their defiance and result in further atrocities against the Muslims and attacks on UN personnel. The pressure on the international community to become more deeply involved will grow.

Mr Clinton's objective is to show his administration's concern about Bosnia, without committing American ground forces. We have consistently argued that, if the United Nations is to emerge with any credit from the Yugoslav disaster, only two courses of action are open to it. The first is to

maintain humanitarian operations, while at the same time tightening sanctions and seeking to prevent the Serbs from turning on Kosovo and Macedonia. The decision on sanctions has been made and will come into force next week, as soon as the Russian referendum is over. By contrast, the few international monitors in Kosovo and Macedonia are unlikely on their own to dissuade the Serbian expansionists. They need to be reinforced.

The second course is to impose an impartial settlement by a large-scale and open-ended commitment of ground troops. All the options between these two alternatives, including the lifting of the UN arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims, represent self-delusion. This week's reports of atrocities by the Croats, who have in the past attracted strong support from some British Conservatives, including Lady Thatcher, should be a powerful disincentive to adopting any policy which favours one faction over another.

There remains a glimmer of hope that in the days ahead European governments will persuade President Clinton, before he initiates any military action, to make clear its goals. It is a cardinal error to embark upon such operations without a firm programme for seeing them through to whatever conclusion proves necessary. But in London and Paris today there is a gloomy belief that Washington is determined to make its chosen gesture without the slightest intention of following it through. When President Clinton was inaugurated, we expressed fears for his presidency. It is alarming how speedily the worst predictions are being fulfilled. In foreign policy at least, Mr Clinton is showing an alarming fondness for the empty gesture. This may be forgiven in a candidate seeking election. It cannot be in a president who needlessly puts lives at risk.

Bosnia - every which way but win

The Guardian 5 April 20/93

Michael Dewar

IT IS SEEMINGLY paradoxical that military experts have, on the whole, been consistently cautious about intervention in Bosnia. General Colin Powell, the US Chief of Staff, has counselled against intervention from the outset. His counterparts in Britain and France, while taking issue on points of detail, have taken the same line. But perhaps it is not surprising that military officers have been so cautious. After all it is they who understand the realities of war; it is they who understand what a blunt instrument military force is; it is they who understand how relatively easy it is to become involved, but how much more difficult it is to extricate oneself. Above all, it is they who ruefully recognise that a "military victory" does not necessarily produce a political solution.

Some politicians, including apparently President Clinton, driven by a need to respond to rising public outrage, have in the past few weeks moved closer to the military option. Notable exceptions are those who have at least some understanding of military realities, for instance Malcolm Rifkind and Denis Healey. So what are the military options?

The first is full-scale military intervention involving the wholesale occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Such an option might have been practicable a

year or 18 months ago when the battle lines were more easily defined. Theoretically it is still practicable, although occupying and pacifying every town and village in the country would involve the deployment of many hundreds of thousands of troops for many years. Even supposing the political will to undertake such an operation existed, the military victory that would undoubtedly be achieved would be unlikely — given the history of the region — to lead to a political solution. It would not be possible to eradicate guerrilla action entirely, which would certainly be encouraged and supported by Serbia, and any imposed political solution would depend on continuing occupation.

A second option is the creation of so-called "safe havens". The concept worked well in Kurdistan, where clear ethnic boundaries existed on the ground and where exclusion zones could be easily created in the air. Moreover a contiguous Nato country provided convenient military bases and temporary refuge for the displaced. The relatively open terrain allowed the allies to keep a defeated Saddam Hussein at bay.

None of these conditions pertains in Bosnia. And should safe havens be created for all the besieged Muslim enclaves, or should the intervening powers be selective? Creating safe havens amounts to partial intervention, which has a tendency to escalate to total intervention. In any event, it would

be seriously manpower consuming. To secure Sarajevo alone from artillery fire and other interference would, given the US proclivity to overwhelming force, consume at least 50,000 soldiers. Such an intervention would almost certainly mean the discontinuation of current humanitarian aid. It would be unlikely to provide a solution. It might even make matters worse.

A third option would be air strikes. The aim would be either to bomb strategic targets in Serbia to bring direct pressure on President Milosevic to use his influence to curb the Bosnian Serbs or, more likely, to bomb tactical targets in Bosnia. Although it is unlikely this could be achieved without the loss of some aircraft and their crews, there is little doubt that significant damage could be inflicted on Serbian militias.

However, air strikes, as the Gulf war showed so clearly, can only be partially effective without subsequent action by ground troops. The terrain in Bosnia is particularly unsuited to ground attack missions and the likelihood of civilian deaths would be high. Moreover air attacks would endanger UN forces and almost certainly mean their withdrawal and the consequent cessation of humanitarian operations. More important, air strikes would be unlikely to halt Serb aggression altogether, seriously deplete their weapon or ammunition stocks (they have plenty of both) or encourage the Serbs to negotiate.

A fourth option is arming the Muslims. It can be reasonably argued that the Muslim people in Bosnia have a right to defend themselves. They are presently at a serious disadvantage having virtually no heavy weapons. However Russia would be most unlikely to agree to a reversal of the UN arms embargo; even if it did, it would

take time to supply enough arms to make a difference and more to train the recipients how to use them. Arguably it would encourage the Serbs to seek more arms, though they already have more than they need.

Such a course of action would undoubtedly lead to the withdrawal of UN forces, and some argue it could lead to a widening of the conflict in the region and even to east-west confrontation.

Unfortunately there are no effective military solutions to the Bosnian crisis. Studied indifference is, of course, another possibility. That, after all, is what the West has decided is appropriate in Tajikistan, in Nagorno-Karabakh and, to a lesser extent, in Cambodia. Doing nothing might allow a "natural" solution to emerge more quickly. The Serbs have almost certainly got what they want already. UN humanitarian assistance, it can be argued, only delays such an outcome which is, in any case, inevitable.

But Western public opinion is unlikely to allow its representatives such a cynical and pragmatic escape route. Thus, while the tightening of sanctions and the continuing provision of humanitarian aid is probably the wisest course, if governments are unable to resist the pressure "to do something", then the provision of arms to the Muslims, despite the risks, is probably the most militarily efficient way to prevent further Serb aggression. But the political consequences of such a course should not be underestimated. Perhaps the unpalatable truth is that when a people are determined to fight each other there is precious little that the outside world can do to help.

Colonel Dewar is deputy director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies

Croat shelling adds to the dangers of UK troops in Vitez

By MICHAEL EVANS,
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT,
AND ADAM LEBOR
IN SPLIT

THE explosion of an artillery shell 200 yards from the British military camp at Vitez in central Bosnia yesterday highlighted the growing dangers faced by soldiers who are serving with the United Nations protection forces.

The 152mm shell, fired from the Croat howitzer, nicknamed "Nora", located about a quarter of a mile from the camp, was not aimed directly at the base, British military sources in Bosnia said. The gun has been used in the past few days as a direct-fire weapon against Muslim targets in the town.

About 800 soldiers from the Cheshire Regiment, 9th/12th Lancers, and other regiments are based at the camp. It is in a primary school at the opposite end of the town

■ The supply route for relief from Split in Croatia could be cut if the fighting between the nominally allied Croats and Muslims continues around the central Bosnian town

from the Muslims' main military positions.

Ministers in London were keeping a close watch on events in Vitez. In January, after Serbs deliberately shelled the British forward logistics base at Tomislavgrad in southwest Bosnia, the government sent a small naval task force, led by the aircraft carrier, HMS *Ark Royal*, to the Adriatic with extra soldiers and 105mm light guns, but the additional firepower has remained at sea.

Defence ministry sources said ministers regarded the latest eruption of fighting between Croats and Muslims in Vitez as part of the general escalation of violence in cen-

tral Bosnia. Originally, the British base was to have been in the mainly Muslim town of Tuzla, but the location was switched to Vitez because the supply route to Tuzla meant crossing Serb lines.

If the Croat-Muslim fighting continues in Vitez, the supply route from Split in Croatia could also be cut. A military spokesman in Split said a convoy was due to leave Split today for Vitez. Between 150 and 200 people have been killed in four days of fighting, according to a British military spokesman.

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Stewart, commander of The Cheshire Regiment, said his men were "sometimes being

shot at" during the fierce battles. Lt Col Stewart said on BBC radio that he had spoken to both local commanders and had arranged for a ceasefire to start at midnight. "The ceasefire in Vitez is spasmodic but most certainly in the area to our east there is a fierce battle taking place at the moment," he said. "We are saving lives by going to places where no one else can go and pulling out children, women, old men, and frankly anyone who is injured."

Clashes spread yesterday from Vitez to Kiseljak, 20 miles west of Sarajevo, where the UN headquarters is based. At least six civilians were killed and many more wounded, UN sources said.

The Times April 20, 1993

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin *Chief of Defence Staff 1979-82:*

"I take the military view. We have got nothing to gain and everything to lose by intervening. I can understand Lady Thatcher's feelings but she no longer has access to intelligence; she is speaking without professional advice. It is crazy to arm the Muslims. If we announce an intention of doing so the Serbs will immediately step up their action and the ghastliness will be raised by ten more notches. This is an entirely political matter, which can't be solved by military means. The politicians should get on with solving it."

Mgr Bruce Kent *Former chair of CND:*

"What has surprised me recently is the number of people advocating intervention in Bosnia who opposed it during the Gulf war. I don't understand why this is the place we have to invade when there are conflicts all over the world. I don't believe in a military solution, but in a political one. I don't think the Owen-Vance plan is the answer, as it is unacceptable to the Croats and the Serbs. We need to listen to some voices from Serbia. Partition is a reasonable answer; it has worked in Cyprus and India."

Lord Hailsham *Former Lord Chancellor:*

"I would counsel against listening to those with loud mouths and no military experience. Before I would consider intervention against the Bosnian Serbs a series of key questions would need answering: what are we trying to do; what troops are available; how would they get there; what would constitute success; and how would we get out. I agree with Lord Healey on this. We were both serving soldiers and know that war is licensed butchery. There are grave dangers in supporting those who believe that the war can be ended once the US cavalry appears."

Lord Chalfont *Foreign Office minister 1964-70*

"I am against intervention. My views have remained unchanged since the beginning of the Bosnian civil war. There should be no further military intervention in Bosnia. We got into this because there was no strategic conception of what such action might involve. No more ground forces should be committed, and there should be no air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs either. Since the end of the Cold War the UN has been going beyond the terms of its remit. It could be strongly argued that it has been interfering in the affairs of sovereign nations."

Lord Healey *Defence secretary 1964-70:*

"I am against military intervention. I have held this view from the start. I feel every bit as strongly as I ever did that air strikes would be a grave error. Innocent civilians would almost certainly be hit. We should beware the temptation to oversimplify the conflict and paint the Bosnian Serbs as the only aggressors. The UN should put peacekeeping troops into Kosovo, the predominantly Albanian enclave in southern Serbia, and Macedonia. Should fighting break out there, other Balkan nations will be drawn into a much more serious conflict."

Russia attacks UN vote against Serbia

By Andrew Gowers in Moscow

RUSSIA yesterday criticised the United Nations Security Council for showing undue haste in tightening sanctions against Serbia at the weekend. It also warned that western military intervention against the Serbs might risk provoking an all-out Balkan war, with grave consequences in Russia and elsewhere in Europe.

Mr Vitaly Churkin, deputy foreign minister and President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy, told a news conference in Moscow that the Security Council's decision on Saturday to bar all commerce with the rump Yugoslavia from April 26 had reduced the chances of achieving a peaceful settlement of the Bosnian conflict.

"We are concerned at certain military thinking and some diplomatic talk

about strikes and blows in Bosnia," he said in an oblique reference to proposals mooted in the US and by Lord Owen, the European Community mediator, that UN forces should step up the pressure on the Serbs by bombing their supply lines.

"The international community should decide: does it want a war in the Balkans or an international settlement?" he asked.

But Mr Churkin combined his warnings against further punitive action by the UN with a fresh appeal to the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen peace plan without delay, and with an "absolute minimum" of proposed changes.

While he admitted that they had some legitimate concerns about the proposed map of Bosnia-Herzegovina, under which the country would be

divided into 10 largely autonomous cantons, they could not expect to restart the negotiations from scratch. "In the next few days you must reach a settlement or you will suffer a defeat that will be a tragedy for the Serbian people," he said.

The Russian government abstained in Saturday's vote, as did China. It had been hoping that a vote on the new sanctions resolution could be delayed until next week for fear of undermining President Boris Yeltsin's position in the April 25 constitutional referendum.

In explaining the position, Mr Churkin trod what has come to be a customarily delicate line for Mr Yeltsin's government between appeasing conservative critics at home, who urge all-out Russian support for the Serbs, and seeking to calm fears in the west that Russia is on the verge of breaking

ranks on the Yugoslav conflict.

Asked by a hostile Serb questioner at yesterday's news conference why Russia had not vetoed the Security Council resolution, Mr Churkin replied bluntly: "Russia has its own foreign policy priorities. It will not enter a confrontation with the international community just because agreement cannot be reached on a map of Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Foreign policy analysts in Moscow agree that western concerns about Russia's attitude to Bosnia are probably overdone.

"Almost nobody's interested in Serbia here, but the opposition is playing it up to make things difficult for the administration, and the administration has to bow to that," said Mr Sergei Karaganov, deputy director of the Institute of Europe and a presidential adviser on foreign affairs.

Financial Times April 20 1993

Russians raise fears over role of West in Bosnia

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE

THE war in Bosnia took a sinister twist yesterday, with fighting between the republic's Muslims and Croats convulsing its centre.

The battles, which are threatening vital aid supply-lines, coincided with growing Russian anxiety about the West's role in the war.

The Croat-Muslim clashes also came as a ceasefire appeared to be holding in the Serb-beseiged town of Srebrenica, where evacuations of the wounded continued yesterday.

Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian foreign minister, called

for a final effort to secure peace in Bosnia, saying that failure could lead to all-out war in the Balkans. He proposed a UN Security Council meeting in Srebrenica or the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. He also voiced unease at the United Nations vote to tighten sanctions against Serb-led Yugoslavia.

President Yeltsin's Balkans envoy, Vitali Churkin, called the UN vote "hasty". He added: "Everybody's hand has been weakened by the vote in the security council." He also criticised Western calls for selective air strikes to halt the advance of Serbian forces.

Britain has underlined its reluctance to become embroiled in military action in Bosnia in the face of the growing public clamour for tougher action against the Serbs.

The
Times
April 20
1993

From Dr Clive Christie

Sir, The boundaries of present-day Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia are all unsustainable. Kosovo is clearly destined to break away from Serbia, and conversely the territories of Bosnia and Croatia should be reduced to meet the long-stated aspirations of the Serbs in both these states.

We all know the ethnic complexity of Bosnia and its terrible consequences, but would it not make sense for the United Nations to work towards a settlement which would cede to Serbia some Bosnian and Croatian territory that ran parallel with the Serbian boundary, while ensuring that Serb-occupied promontories reaching into the heart of

Bosnia and Croatia must irrevocably be ceded by the Serbs?

Such an arrangement would create boundaries policeable by the UN in the short term and sustainable in the long run.

Yours faithfully,
CLIVE CHRISTIE,
University of Hull,
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April 14.

From Sir Brian Young

Sir, We may bless or curse the power of television to make every home vividly aware of the horrors of war. But we must surely wonder at the very different influence it is said to have at different times.

Twenty-five years ago images of the Vietnam war apparently persuaded many viewers that it was wrong to project one's countrymen into the internal wars of other countries; now images from Bosnia apparently persuade many that it is would be right to do so. Perhaps both foreign policy and the effects of television are less simple questions than the followers of Lady Thatcher suppose.

Yours truly,
BRIAN YOUNG,
Hill End, Woodhill Avenue,
Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

The Times

April 19, 1993

V COLUMN LEFT/
ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Embracing the Carcass of Cold War

■ Candidate Clinton makes
President Bush look like a dove.

With his call for air strikes against the Serbs, Bill Clinton offers yet another important reminder that when it comes to foreign policy, the Democrats are well to the right of the Bush Administration. He achieves the difficult feat of making George Bush look good.

The Cold War is over and candidates for the presidency no longer need rattle their sabers along the campaign trail. There is, in 1992, a real opportunity to change the terms of debate. Faced with this opportunity, Clinton has shrunk back into the familiar blend of war talk and political opportunism.

If ever there was a case for avoiding partisan commitment, dismembered Yugoslavia is surely it. But Clinton now seeks to align the United States with Germany, which, with considerable success, has been trying to reconstruct the Nazis' World War II sphere of influence in the Balkans.

Anyone quite properly denouncing Serbian atrocities and "ethnic cleansing" should devote equal attention to the designs and behavior of the Croats and Bosnians, whose leaders' rhetoric has been couched at a level of nationalist and religious bigotry often outstripping that of the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic.

When the Serbs invoke the religious pogroms of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia in World War II, which saw the slaughter, in the name of Catholicism, of 750,000 to 1.2 million Serbs (along with Jews and Gypsies), their anguished memories are often treated as reminiscences of a distant past, irrelevant to the present hour.

But suppose, to take an analogy, that enclaves of European Jewry had survived in Germany after the war and were now confronted by the blood-curdling threats of a German government brandishing the Nazi flag. Would memories of wartime genocide be irrelevant? Croatia's president, Franjo Tudjman, already notorious for his defense of Hitler's racial policies, has chosen as the flag for the new Croat republic a design virtually identical to that of the old Nazi puppet republic.

Yugoslavia is a patchwork of nationalist anxiety, paranoia and religious bigotry. No ethnic or religious group, whether Catholic, Muslim or Orthodox, is immune from blame for the horrors now unfolding. Such is the mess into which candidate Clinton, seeking to capitalize on the hysterical anti-Serb tilt of the U.S. press, now urges military intervention against Serbia.

'Clinton, seeking to capitalize
on the hysterical anti-Serb tilt
of the U.S. press, urges military
intervention.'

This is not an isolated example of Clinton's instinctive recourse to war talk and Cold War posturing. His discussions of Iraq these days take the form of tub-thumping oratory about President Bush's wimpish failure to go far enough in bombing Iraqis and punishing Saddam Hussein.

Cuba is yet another instance where Clinton has surrendered to hawkishness, this time on behalf of the most violent and fanatical lobby in the United States, the Cuban exiles massed in southern Florida. Back in April, at a rally in Miami's Little Havana, Clinton publicly endorsed a bill known as the Cuban Democracy Act. This bill, sponsored by Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.) and Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), mandates U.S. economic sanctions against any country or U.S. corporate subsidiary doing business with Cuba. The bill has been opposed by the White House, in part because it violates trade agreements with Canada and Britain.

Clinton's surrender to the exile lobby was bought fairly cheaply, with a \$75,000 contribution to his campaign. In return, Clinton declared, "I think this Administration has missed a big opportunity to put down the hammer on Fidel Castro and Cuba."

This is the candidate of change?

On the issue of Israel, Clinton has carried water for the spiritual soul-mates of those fanatical Cuban exiles. At a moment when Bush and Secretary of State James A. Baker III were pressuring Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud coalition toward the conference table, candidate Clinton was howling for unconditional U.S. guarantees of the \$10 billion earmarked by Shamir for the financing of further illegal settlements.

The diplomacy of Bush and Baker materially assisted in a victory for the Labor coalition headed by Rabin. Clinton, now flanked by Al Gore, one of the Israel lobby's favorite sons, has been unerringly on the wrong, the more reactionary, side.

This is the man who promises to bring freshness and new thinking to America and its posture toward the world. Finally, judge Clinton by his posture on Haiti. Here at least is a chance for Clinton to make a convincing case for stringent sanctions and for a U.S. posture designed to restore the democratically elected leader, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. But Haitians somehow fail to excite the passions aroused by Bosnians in Clinton's heart. His pollsters probably tell him that America's "forgotten middle class" doesn't care for victims who are brown, very poor and near at hand.

Alexander Cockburn writes for the Nation and other publications.

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Harried White House greets guests for Holocaust museum

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Limousines lined up three deep and protocol officers discreetly studied cue cards to keep their world leaders straight as a swarm of foreign officials descended on the White House yesterday.

The visitors, in town for the dedication today of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, had arrived a day early to come calling on the new president.

Here's how Press Secretary Dee Dee

Myers summed up Clinton's schedule for the day:

"At 2 o'clock, he meets with President Lech Walesa. At 3:30, he has a reception for the other heads of state who are here for the opening of the Holocaust Museum. At 5 o'clock, he has yet another reception for the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and then at 6:30 he goes... for yet another reception for the organizers of the receptions."

Clinton's schedule stretched to 10 pages laying out elaborate plans for arrivals and departures and receptions and photos.

Social Secretary Ann Stock supervised a final walk-through just hours before the Real Thing. She's been running rehearsals once or twice a day all week, some featuring stand-ins for each world leader.

"We're using absolutely every entrance for something," she said.

The actual arrivals came much closer than seven minutes apart, forcing Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher, Defense Secretary Les Aspin and various protocol officials to adopt a tag team approach to the

meetings at the North Portico.

Between each arrival, the acting deputy chief of protocol, Clyde Nora, discreetly studied a stack of cue cards to keep everybody straight.

According to strict rules of protocol, the longest-serving world leaders arrived first and the rookies brought up the rear. Last in line: His Excellency Andrei Nicholas Sangheli, prime minister of the Republic of Moldova. The lineup also featured dignitaries from: Israel, Portugal, Croatia, Romania,

Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Albania.

How come two of the dignitaries - Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic and Polish President Lech Walesa - got extended private meetings with Clinton while the others got brief presidential greetings before being shuttled into the reception circuit?

They got their bids in first, White House aides said.

ИЗ РЕДАКЦИОННОЙ ПОЧТЫ

Мать-Россия, помоги!

Сербский народ на протяжении своей истории в течение веков называл Россию «Матерью-Россией». Во времена Османской империи, когда Сербия находилась под турецким игом, многие выдающиеся сербы эмигрировали в Россию и верно служили в ее институтах. Многие достигли чина войскового генерала, служа и умирая за Россию.

Возможно ли, что теперь в Боснии 39 процентов мусульман должны захватить и уничтожить 38 процентов сербов, которые сорок лет назад составляли абсолютное большинство в Боснии, тогда как эти мусульмане совместно с хорватами и немецкими нацистами убили миллион семьсот тысяч сербских граждан, чтобы этнически очистить Боснию?

Запад говорит о демократии, но не хочет позволить сербам свободно жить со своим правительством. Наоборот, хотя спустя десятилетия заставить их жить под тем же террором со стороны мусульман, с той лишь целью, чтобы иметь хорошие отношения с арабскими нефтяными странами. Почему нынешнее правительство России отступает под давлением Соединенных Штатов, которые никогда не дадут России обещанной экономической помощи.

США нужна слабая Россия. Они хотят, чтобы это была одна из их стран-сателлитов и прислужниц.

Россия и Сербия всегда были вместе, на одной стороне, поэтому сегодня весь сербский народ ждет помощи от России. То, что враги Сербии хотят сделать с ней, они хотели



бы сделать и с Россией, но страх перед ее военной мощью пока сдерживает их.

Россия сильна и одним своим «Нёти» может разом пресечь любое давление. Поэтому мы просим вашу влиятель-

ную газету сделать все, чтобы помочь сербам и не допустить их уничтожения.

Мать-Россия, помоги нам!

Сербская колония
в Аргентине.

г. Буэнос-Айрес.

Публикуемый планет с надписью «Сербия нуждается в вашей помощи» прислан в «Правду» вместе с этим письмом.

Кланяюсь низко

По национальности я сербка. В Советском Союзе живу с 1959 года. Мой муж был русским. Он не по своей воле, еще мальчиком, попал в Югославию. Мечтой его жизни было вернуться в Россию. И когда стало возможным, он это сделал. Человеком он был очень образованным, честным и, главное, что мне особенно импонировало, большим патриотом своей Родины.

В жизни никогда не был приспособленцем. В трудные времена войны он доказал это: отказавшись, как и многие русские, жившие в Югославии, «освободиться» Россией с Гитлером. Немецкие фашисты посадили его за это в лагерь со спецрежимом «для евреев, бандитов и коммунистов». Многие сербы, находившиеся в том лагере, добрым словом вспоминают мужа в своих мемуарах. Когда в 1948 году Тито и Сталин разошлись во взглядах, мой муж остался верен своей Родине, за что, власти выгнали его из Югославии. Для меня покинуть мою родину было кошмаром, но я не могла в трудной ситуации бросить супруга. Поехала с ним...

Меня пугали голодом и сибирским холодом. Но в своей семье я была воспитана в духе любви к великому русскому народу. Мои близкие родственники еще в начале века учились в России: в Петроградском университете — родная сестра моего отца, а в Казанском — его брат. Родной дядя отца, первый патриарх Югославии, учился в Киеве.

В 1942 году, когда немецкие фашисты уводили на расстрел моего отца, его последними словами были: «Да здравствуют Югославия и Россия!»

Родину нелегко покидать, но я поехала не куда-нибудь, а в родную, как мы ее называли, Мать-Россию. И ни секунды в этом не раскаивалась. Ведь как много общего между сербским и русским народами! Главное — это отсутствие чувства шовинизма. Когда я устраивалась на работу, никто не спрашивал, какое у меня гражданство и есть ли оно у меня вообще (а его у меня тогда и не было). Не требовался определенный ценз оседлости при голосовании (как теперь для русских в некоторых новоиспеченных так называемых «демократических» мини-государствах).

Что же происходит сейчас? Просто не верится. Официальная Россия согласна с санкциями против Югославии, Черногории и Сер-

бии! Той Черногории и той Сербии, которые, как на бога, молились на Россию. Той Черногории, жители которой с гордостью заявляли: «Нас и русских — двести миллионов!» Той Черногории, которая в трудные времена русско-турецких войн предоставляла свои порты на Адриатике русскому флоту. Той Сербии, чьи девушки во время русско-японской войны в одном из парков Белграда устраивали благотворительные концерты в пользу русского Красного Креста в помощь русским солдатам, воевавшим тогда против Японии.

Зачем нужны были России санкции против Югославии? Очень ловко свои имперские замашки Запад оправдывает так называемым «сербским национализмом». Но какой тут национализм, если весь народ Югославии говорит на одном и том же языке — и черногорцы, и хорваты, и боснийцы, и сербы!

Хотела бы несколько слов сказать об информации, вернее, дезинформации со стороны некоторых журналистов и публицистов. Если бы югославские журналисты позволяли себе такие же оскорбления в адрес России, как себе позволяют некоторые российские журналисты, их, вероятно, давно бы выставили из страны. Они говорят о националистах в Белграде. Но граждане Белграда веками жили в дружбе с евреями, никогда погромов не устраивали, могли не оскверняли, как это было сделано на загребском кладбище «Мирогой». Не случайно из Сараева, когда это было возможно, еврейские семьи эвакуировались в Белград. Но об этом ни Миткова, ни Остальский почему-то не упоминают.

Я очень рада, что президент Милошевич не принял Т. Миткову, по поводу чего она сетовала в одной передаче. Когда я слушаю ее и подобных ей, мне плакать хочется от горькой обиды за свою родину. Ни слова о геноциде над сербами во время войны в лагере «Ясеновац», где устали убивали сербов с благословения хорватского епископа Степинца и его покровителя папы римского.

Когда я бываю в Белграде, мы с внучкой всегда приходим на могилы павших при освобождении города советских солдат. Кланяюсь низко им, как и тем людям России, кто выступает в поддержку народов Югославии в самые трудные дни.

Бранислава БЕЛАВИНА-ПАВЛОВИЧ,
г. Красноярск.

Pity the politicians pinned down by Balkan crossfire

Lady Thatcher's call to arm the Bosnians has struck a popular chord. But ministers who balk at the appalling cost of intervention deserve our sympathy, declares MAX HASTINGS

WE BRITISH like to think that we are not a militaristic people. But we are certainly a martial one. If the Gallup poll in today's *Daily Telegraph* is to be believed, a majority of the British people want to see their forces engaged in the former Yugoslavia. Lady Thatcher speaks for most of her fellow countrymen, it seems, in demanding that we should no longer stand by while Serbs slaughter Muslims. Something must be done. Today, we are passive parties to mass murder.

Television makes impassioned spectators of us all. Douglas Hurd's justifiable but incautious choice of words about "a level killing field" may hold the same ring for history as Neville Chamberlain's "quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing". Rage towards the Serbs, whose atrocities are best-publicised, today reaches living rooms where Czechoslovakia meant nothing in 1938.

It is impossible to dismiss the would-be interventionists as ignorant and ill-informed. Among commentators, the admirable Hugo Young of the *Guardian* was among those this week who demanded international action. Our own correspondents in Yugoslavia, Robert Fox, Patrick Bishop and Alec Russell, want, to a man, to see Western forces committed. So do most of their television colleagues, such as Martin Bell of the BBC.

It needs a very hard heart not to share in a sense of guilt and shame that people are killing each other so brutally, while the civilised world does nothing effective to stop them. Yet the governments of the West, and especially that of Mr Major, deserve more understanding than they currently receive, in their passivity. They are the ones who would have to accept responsibility for committing armed forces, if armed forces are to be committed, and for all that would follow thereafter.

Mr Rifkind and Mr Hurd would have to justify the British casualties to the House of Commons. They would have to answer impassioned questions from television interviewers after British bombs aimed at

The Daily
Telegraph
April 15, 1993

Serb artillery positions were found to have killed Serb women and children. They would have to discover who would pay the huge bill for Britain's contribution. Above all, they are the men who, with the Prime Minister, would have to explain to the leaders of Britain's forces what exactly they were going into Yugoslavia to do.

This is the hardest question. We all want to see the killing halted. But the difficulties of defining attainable objectives are much more formidable.

Mr Hurd deserved more sympathy than he has received for his assertion that lifting the embargo of arms to the Bosnian Muslims would merely create a level killing field. Two years ago there was a faction in Britain — including many Right-wing Conservatives — who strongly supported the Germans in welcoming the break-up of Yugoslavia (like that of the Soviet Union) and in demanding recognition of the new republics. The much maligned Foreign Office argued that to recognise the republics without guaranteeing their frontiers was a formula for disaster. The Foreign Office was right, but the will of the Germans prevailed.

A year ago it was fashionable among some Right-wingers to argue for arming the Croats. Had that advice been heeded, weapons given to the Croats would today presumably be in action against the Muslims. There is overwhelming evidence that, while the Serbs are the principal aggressors, no faction in the former Yugoslavia has clean hands. It would anyway help the Muslims little, now, to give them small arms. To deal with the Serbs' heavy weapons, they would need heavy weapons of their own — and training and technical advice on how to use them, which could come only from abroad. If we are to embark





upon that route, of committing advisers, it is surely more honest and more responsible to commit forces ourselves.

The notion of using Western air forces against the Serbs, which Lady Thatcher has favoured, ignores the historic evidence that air power unsupported by ground forces is of the most limited value, especially without forward air control on the ground, which again only Western forces could provide.

All manner of gestures are open to the international community. Some of them, such as President Clinton's cruelly absurd parachute supply drops, have already been employed. Yet it seems the harshest blow of all to make empty gestures when so many lives are at stake. And it would be the height of diplomatic and moral folly to intervene in support of one faction, however deserving of sympathy. The sole credible basis for intervention is to restore and maintain an impartial peace.

THE only honest choice for the international community — as distinct from empty posturing — is between standing back and deploying only rhetoric and sanctions, and full-scale military intervention. This would have to be led by the British and French, because alone among European powers our nations possess the political will and military means to spearhead such an operation. The cost would be huge. The Americans would undoubtedly contribute. But the bulk of the bill would be open to international tender. The United Nations is broke. It is a nice question, how far the world would be prepared to go to contribute to massive peace-keeping operations when no oil is at stake.

There is little doubt that an Anglo-French-led force could throw back the Serbian army at tolerable cost.

The Serbs could indeed be punished in the fashion that so many people around the world desire. It is thereafter that the huge difficulties begin. History again suggests that, when foreign forces are interposed to separate warring factions, fighting recommences when they depart. If the great step of Western intervention were to be justified, those who go into the former Yugoslavia would have to accept responsibility for creating and imposing a lasting peace. It is the awesome difficulty of achieving this that makes so many politicians flinch, together with the knowledge that Western forces would have to remain for many years. Among those world politicians who are today most eager for action in Yugoslavia, President Clinton has yet to show that he understands either military power or international relations. Not forgetting the Falklands, Lady Thatcher was, when she bore the responsibility of office, remarkably cautious in many areas and heedful of the perils of dramatic armed initiatives.

It may yet be that the Serbs' outrages, and the reaction of world opinion to them, will force Western governments to intervene. If the Serbs attack in Macedonia, there would be no choice, because the threat to international stability would become intolerable. Yet today, however appalling the excesses we witness nightly on our television screens, it has to be said that Europe's politicians deserve sympathy for their trepidation.

Military action is always much easier to start than to finish. Walpole's line, about those who now ring bells, soon wring their hands, echoes down the ages. So many wars have started with cheering crowds, and ended with grieving mourners. The world is landmarked with repugnant societies in which unforgivable crimes are being committed by men against each other, from Iraq to Cambodia, Cairo to the Cape. It is right to care passionately, right to be enraged and repelled. But the hapless politicians who must explore the limits of the possible should not always be whipping boys for our horror and frustration.

Offer the Serbs a fairer land deal

*Evening Standard
London
April 8, 1993*

FOR the second time in a year, the US and EC are attempting to impose their will on Bosnia's Serbs.

A year ago, the "independence" of Bosnia was recognised by the West despite the objections of the Bosnian Serbs. Predictably, to resist being forcibly incorporated in an inherently hostile state, they took up arms. The consequences of their rebellion have been dreadful.

Today, the West is attempting to force the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen plan. Although this goes a long way toward recognising the rights of all three Bosnian groups, including the Bosnian Serbs, it stops short of an equitable and lasting solution.

The Vance-Owen plan divides Bosnia into 10

semi-autonomous regions dominated by either Bosnia's Croats, Moslems or Serbs.

The Bosnian Croats accepted the Vance-Owen plan without reservation because it gives them far more territory than they could have possibly expected. The Bosnian Moslems reluctantly accepted the plan because, at present, it represents the best prospect for foreign military intervention. The cost to the Moslems, however, is the abandonment of their goal of a unitary state.

The Bosnian Serbs object to the plan on two points: the map leaves large numbers of Serbs in the areas dominated by Moslems and Croats and it denies the Serbs a land corridor between the large

Serb-inhabited region in north-west Bosnia and Serbia itself.

Given the present animosity between the Serbs and the Croats and Moslems, an isolated Serb region in Bosnia would become the Nagorno-Karabakh of Europe. It is inconceivable that the Serbs will voluntarily accept this arrangement.

Adjustments must be made to the Vance-Owen plan to ensure that it is fair to all three groups. Otherwise, the country will be condemned to decades of misery. — George Tintor, Bishopsgate, EC2.

Constitutional consensus the key to Bosnian peace

From Mr Aleksa Gavrilović

Sir: Tony Barber (report, 2 and 3 April) gives a good summary of problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina. His description of this tragic civil war indicates that it is more complicated than describing it just as the "Serbian aggression". He discusses the often ignored conflict between Muslims and Croats, the Croat virtual annexation of a large part of Herzegovina and he also reports on atrocities committed against Serbs.

Mr Barber writes: "Having upheld the principle of a united Bosnian state, and having identified the Serbs as the chief aggressors, the West has left itself little room for manoeuvre." In view of many statements that the West should have intervened earlier, this statement should be amplified. The tragedy is that the West has intervened early, but unwisely.

According to the constitution of the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, all important decisions had to be carried out by a consensus of Muslims, Serbs and Croats. Ignoring this, the EC was prepared to accept a referendum on independence based on a simple majority. Nevertheless, Lord Carrington's deputy, Ambassador Cutileiro, managed to get the three parties to agree a basis for the future constitution, which preserved the power-sharing concept.

On 7 April 1992 the EC recognised Bosnia-Herzegovina without making it subject to the 18 March Agreement. Ambassador Cutileiro wrote that Muslims agreed to his 18 March proposals "in order to secure a quick recognition" and that "in June, Muslims reneged on the March agreement".

In February Mr Cutileiro wrote that the central feature of the 18 March 1992 Agreement he brokered and that of Vance-Owen plan remained "vital decisions affecting any of the three nations, Muslims, Croats and Serbs", must be taken by consensus and that "no centralised, unitary state is possible".

Lord Carrington and others advised strongly against premature recognition. If the EC and US had made the recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina subject to a previously agreed constitutional arrangement, bloodshed would have been avoided.

President Izetbegović has only recently accepted the concept of power-sharing, having received some additional concessions. It is difficult to understand the unwillingness of EC/UN negotiators to offer the Bosnian Serbs some small concession on the proposed map.

Yours sincerely,
ALEKSA GAVRILOVIC
Stafford
4 April

The Independent 8 April 1993

Armchair strategists

keep clear

The Times April 14/93

Full-scale occupation or a humanitarian disengagement were the only options ever open to the UN and the Western powers in the ravaged Yugoslav lands

On Monday an hour-long Serbian bombardment of Srebrenica left 56 people dead. The shelling was the Serbian commander's response to the enforcement of the United Nations "no-fly" zone over the former Yugoslavia. I suppose these 56 people would have died sooner or later. But since the no-fly zone has no military purpose, was enforced to appease the "do something" lobby in America, and was certain to produce a violent response, Monday's 56 corpses must have been part of its calculation. They are a memorial to the callousness of the Bosnian Serbs' siege tactics. They are a memorial also to the bankruptcy of armchair interventionism over the Balkans.

During the past six months, Western policy towards Serbia has been counterproductive. Every move has stoked the engine of Serbian aggrandisement, while making that aggrandisement more murderous and illiberal. Since the end of overt war between Croatia and Serbia there were only two choices open to outsiders. The first was to invade Bosnia with main force to occupy, colonise and police it village by village (the Vietnam option). The second was to leave the Serbs, Muslims and Croats to redraw their internal boundaries in their own brutal way, with outsiders picking up the casualties (the Ethiopia option). In Bosnia, the best hope for minimal bloodletting and for future coexistence lay in the civil war being short.

There was never a middle way between these options. Clever commentators have contorted themselves to pretend otherwise. Last year was the UN Year of the Euphemism: "Give diplomacy a chance", "Turn the sanctions screw a bit tighter", "Bomb Belgrade to its senses". A mountain of hindsight has piled over Western legislatures and newspaper offices, to the effect that Serbia would have "come to see reason" had "tougher action" been taken at some unspecified time in the past. Since none of this pressure did the trick, the international community must appease its guilt by being seen to "do something", however counterproductive, however daft.

We are thus seeing some of the worst policy-making ever from the UN and its members. We have a bid at the security

council for even tighter (which means more counterproductive) economic sanctions against Belgrade. We have the Americans goading the Russians into doing what nobody wants, overtly backing the Serbs under Slav nationalist pressure. We have the costly no-fly zone and a pointless and devastating risk to humanitarian relief in Bosnia. We have 56 fresh corpses.

At this point I must say some obsequies over the body of the Vance-Owen peace plan. This plan posed only one question: how many Bosnians would be dead before it bit the dust? Anybody can negotiate a ceasefire. Lord Carrington proved that. In civil wars, ceasefires are about regrouping, rearming, resupplying. Bosnian ceasefires simply put more bullets into guns. What was ludicrous was the idea that the Serb commanders would ever go on to accept a map that stripped them of territory

gained so bloodily. It was like asking Margaret Thatcher to hand Goose Green back to the Argentines after the Battle of Tumbledown.

Mercifully the plan has collapsed. This has forestalled its wild proposal for a UN NATO land invasion of

Bosnia to impose the new map. It was fashionable in New York last Christmas to say that Vance-Owen was "the only show in town". Even if this was true of the town of New York — not Belgrade — the signal to the Serbs could not have been clearer. They should expedite ethnic cleansing to render the map even less plausible. The only map that mattered was the one on a gunnery officer's field desk.

Precisely this has taken place over the past three months in Srebrenica and other Muslim enclaves. The UN has been drawn into the bind that it most feared, and critics predicted a year ago. Its humanitarian commitment has become biased towards the underdog. Its local commanders have become partisan — in General Morillon's case spectacularly so — but not partisan enough to make any difference. The UN's "relief" of Srebrenica was defeated by a band of unarmed Serbian women.

Already the agenda is changing. Poor Bosnia has slid from being merely a victim of its own ethnic divisions to become a symbol of America's continuing virility. From right and left come assertions that Bosnia is an ultimate test.

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The Times

April 14/93

Continued



an example to the world. "Nato should go into the Balkans," writes the widely syndicated American columnist William Safire, "or shut up shop." This is absurd. The vocal leader of the American war party, Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times*, announces that "the credibility of American power in the world" rests on the fate of Srebrenica. (The town is doomed: modern Americans have a genius for setting up their defeats in advance.)

We are told that diplomacy has failed in what was once Yugoslavia. It has not. Diplomacy is the projection of power by non-military means. It implies a commitment to employ leverage to achieve a political goal. Against armed might, diplomacy is relevant only if it presupposes a greater might. Britain's famous gunboat diplomacy presupposed a battleship over the horizon.

What has failed in Yugoslavia is not diplomacy but bluff. From the moment the outside world recognised Slovenia, the Serb ascendancy saw that Yugoslavia was dead and that the fight for Greater Serbia was on. That fight would be a fight for territory, and would be bloody. Sanctions, no-fly zones, bombed airports, redrawn maps and ceasefires would not stop the fight. They would embattle the Milošević regime and push power towards the black-marketeers, nationalists and militant local warlords. Since no sane Western (or Eastern) government was going to send soldiers to garrison every village in Croatia and Bosnia against the Serbs, interventionism was a sham. Its bluff has been called, week after week.

Yet we pile on more bluff. Serbian aggression cannot be allowed to succeed, says the British government. But it is being allowed to succeed. There can be no rewarding the ethnic cleansers, says the Clinton administration. But UN trucks race around Bosnia at our expense, moving thousands of Muslims from their villages. The West is rightly not prepared to go to war with Serbia. Yet it cannot bring itself to retreat into

the humanitarian mode. It aches for the comfort of a middle way. The boundaries of Greater Serbia will be pushed to the territorial limits set by local Serb (and Croatian) commanders. Impeding these ambitions, sending arms to those defying them, impoverishing Belgrade, may delay the setting of these limits. But civil wars cease only when one side reaches exhaustion or the sea.

Since the Congo, the United Nations has sensibly kept out of places as hopeless as this. It recognised the virtue of not intervening in the internal affairs of states, as defined by their post-1945 borders. Within those borders, self-determination should apply. The principle may have left in the lurch minority rights within states; it may not always have been respected; but it played some part in decolonisation and in keeping communist expansion at bay.

The break-up of states has always sorely tested non-intervention — look at Pakistan or Nigeria. But the new American theory that countries "that fail to care decently for their citizens... forfeit invulnerability to outside political/military intervention" (*The Washington Post*) has alarming implications. Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, says the primary foreign policy task of the United States is "heading off the surfacing of long-suppressed ethnic and religious conflict" around the world.

Is this the new world order? Does any minority group merely need to run up the flag of oppression to have the US marines come running? In the old days, small countries or ethnic groups secured their survival by allying themselves to big neighbours. Should they now thumb their noses at the neighbours because Uncle Sam will come to their aid? Are the United States and the UN to police the ethnic maelstrom that will accompany the end of the former Soviet Union? This is madness.

The new interventionism has no political or ideological spine. It sees national self-interest, as in nuclear non-proliferation, as an immoral basis for foreign action. At its heart is merely a vague feeling of discomfort at man's inhumanity to man and a susceptibility to the pornography of grief. Like Gladstone's campaign against Turkish atrocities, it will evaporate. The outcome will be a spasmodic adventurism born of cynicism out of racism. It will thoroughly discredit the United Nations.

At this moment in the Caucasus, Azerbaijanis are being bloodily "cleansed" from what looks like becoming Greater Armenia. Thousands are dying. Is this the next test of American potency, of Nato throw-weight, of UN credibility, of the new liberal church militant? I suspect not. Summer is coming. Interventionism will dissipate. And as the Armenians and Azerbaijanis are finding, an atrocity is less atrocious when not committed on a European.

Fresh fighting also broke out in central Bosnia when Croat fighters — perhaps chancing that the eye of the world was on Srebrenica — started bombarding Muslim positions. In Vitez, 50 people were reported dead when Croat fighters started shelling the predominantly Muslim town centre. 'It seems to have degenerated into a series of revenge killings. We have reports of whole families killed in their own homes,' said a senior UN spokesman in Zagreb.

He told *The Observer* that he had no idea which factions were involved in fighting that has raged around the town, but said battles have broken out in many parts of Bosnia. 'I think everyone is fighting everyone else. It's becoming a very ugly situation. There are outbreaks of fighting across the whole of central Bosnia, some in places where we haven't had reports of fighting for several months.'

The Croat-Muslim fighting will give succour to those in the British Government who argue against Western military strikes against the Serbs.

The
Observer
April 18/93