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FEB 23 1993

February 10, 1993

William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States
Hillary Rodham Clinton, Director of the Task Force on Health Care
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Bill and Hillary,

Having first noted your new and illustrious titles, I now feel comfortable in addressing you by your first names, believing you to be on a very friendly basis with your fellow citizens and most democratic (as well as Democratic) in spirit.

I voted for you, Bill, and was delighted when you were elected --- also vastly relieved to see an end of Reagan-Bushism in our government after twelve awful years. In these days of economizing it's also great to have "two for the price of one" -- and an even greater bargain when both of the co-partners are principled and capable leaders. I'm beginning to have that New Deal feeling all over again. You are too young to have experienced it, but, believe me, it's a good and reassuring feeling! I have hopes that you two will increasingly be to our people what the beloved Franklin and Eleanor once were. In very hard times they gave so much hope to us all --- I remember weeping when they died.

One more memory I'd like to share with you: Back in the forties when I was a young, graduate student in the University of Chicago School of Social Service, I was privileged to sit in one of the last classes on Public Assistance taught by Edith Abbott. She was a magnificent woman --- one of the Jane Addams-Hull House tribe of social reformers. Scholarly, very bright, and intense about changing the world for the better, she was formidably no-nonsense in her approach to people and to problems. She always wore a long, black dress when I experienced her rarified presence. Her hair was snow-white and her alabaster and patrician features were innocent of any make-up. She was a regal and imposing presence.

Those were the days when social workers never hesitated to communicate with Franklin and Eleanor and felt certain of being heard. E.A. told a story one day in class about one of her communications to FDR which went like this: "I called up Harry (Harry Hopkins, her protégé and also a former social worker) and said to him, 'Harry, you've got to get to the President right away and tell him he must do thus and so.' And Harry did --- and the President did."

During the lamentable Reagan years, I often thought nostalgically of E.A.'s access to FDR and realistically recognized that R.R. would never pay any heed to a social worker's opinion about anything. Not that that stopped me from frequently telling him what I thought! But now that "Happy Days are Here Again" I figure we now have a President and Partner who want to listen to all the citizens, including social workers.

Therefore, I enclose for your consideration a paper I've written about Yugoslavia. I won't say, like E.A., that you must read it. But I do say that I deeply hope you will read it. I've spent time in Yugoslavia, have good friends there, and have read a lot about Yugoslavia; and I offer this to you as a crash course on the Yugoslav war in 15 pages plus. You've been too busy campaigning for election, trying to get your new Administration in order, etc. to accumulate all the knowledge contained in these pages. I hope and believe that this information will be helpful to you as you steer your course through these troubled waters. With Vance,

Owens, and Boutros-Ghali as mentors you and your foreign policy people will have strong and wise support. In this paper I expressed some dismay about Secretary Christopher's dismal remarks about any hopes for success coming out of the Geneva talks, but his excellent recent public statement made me feel reassured that he and you are now cooperative co-workers with Mr. Vance.

My very best wishes to you and your entire Administration for a new and most hopeful era in American government.

Sincerely yours,

Helen B. Donner

Helen B. Donner
(Mrs. Frank)

Copies to several people in your Administration and the U.N.

February 14, 1993

Albert Gore, Jr., Vice President of the United States and the greatly esteemed "Ozone Man" who works to keep us green,
and
Tipper Gore, Anti-Vice Partner of Albert, who attends to our mental health needs on Hillary's Health Care Task Force and cheerily autographs leg casts on the injured at conferences

Dear Al and Tipper:

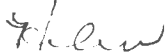
How good it is to have you two wonderful young activists helping to run our government now! Things are bound to improve. Also, they need to!

We lived in Knoxville, Tenn. for eight years in the fifties, and our three daughters were born in the East Tennessee Baptist Hospital. We had much fond respect for your good father, Al. We felt somewhat smug about the fact that Tennessee sent two of the very best senators in the country (Gore and Kefauver) to the U.S. Congress. And now that you have taken up government service, we think you are a real "chip off the old block." But perhaps that is an unfortunate way of putting it since we all want to preserve trees. We warmly applaud your pioneering work for a better environment as well as Tipper's work for a cleaner society; heaven knows pollution abounds on both levels.

I look forward to reading your book soon, Al, which was sent to us by my environmentalist sister. Except for teaching one history course each spring, she is now retired and gives most of her time to combatting incinerator burning of toxic wastes in Hammond, Indiana. Either polluters abound in unusually high numbers in Hammond or Betty is especially clever and tenacious about scouting them out and then waging relentless war on them --- probably both. She said she recently sent you a letter alerting you to Hammond's perils and received in reply a nice postcard on recycled paper (of course) and signed "Al." That is why I assumed you would not mind my addressing you by your first name; I already felt assured by the democratic atmosphere of our new Democratic Administration.

I hope you can find time to read the information enclosed on Yugoslavia. May you both flourish in your new endeavors and do much good for our country and the world.

Sincerely yours,


Helen Donner

ANATOMY OF A CIVIL WAR: THE TRAGIC DISMEMBERMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA

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ANATOMY OF A CIVIL WAR: THE TRAGIC DISMEMBERMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA

I write these words about Yugoslavia with a saddened heart. I am a woman seventy years of age. Most of my adult life I have given much time and energy to work for peace, political democracy, and economic justice. Much of this work has been as an active member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, founded over 70 years ago by Jane Addams and other noble women.

I now have a special concern about the tragic civil war in Yugoslavia where our family have friends in all parts of that suffering, war-torn country that once was beautiful Yugoslavia. Our family spent six months in Yugoslavia in 1964, my former husband at that time being on sabbatical leave from his university. We traveled through all parts of the country/and were in Belgrade about three months. I wrote a letter to selected officials (U.N. and U.S.) late last year describing the Yugoslavia we knew then -- a beautiful, peaceful land of hopeful and delightful people -- and ending with my thoughts and feelings about the war that had by then begun. I enclose that letter also -- entitled "Yugoslavia Remembered" -- as a testimony to what that country seemed like to us some years before the more recent tragic breakup.

Roots of Separatism

Separatism manifests itself in many parts of the globe today and doubtless has numerous causes. I do not pretend to any complete understanding of this phenomenon but could suggest a few manifestations that I think I've observed.

Separatism and bitter ethnic hatreds are often the legacy of imperialism -- a legacy of the actions of predatory invaders who have come in and trampled on the rights of a people in every conceivable way. And no country has been more trampled on by outside invaders than Yugoslavia. In the case of Yugoslavia the invaders were first the Ottomans (Turks) who for centuries visited all the usual unpleasant punishments on the people that occupiers habitually do, including relentlessly taxing the people into a state of perpetual economic hardship. Also, can one forget the story (told by Dame Rebecca West in her elegantly written and wonderful book, Black Lamb and Grey Falcon) of the Muslim Pasha, who lived in a palatial establishment in Yugoslavia with his harem of Christian girls, who insisted that all of the young women have their babies aborted if they became pregnant so as not to bring any more Christian babies into the world! The Serbs fought the Turks to the bitter end and were ultimately victorious. Then the Austro-Hungarian Empire invaded from the north and the Croatian government accommodated and became a compliant client state to the Austrians and Hungarians. Italy conducted innumerable raids into the Adriatic coast, biting off chunks from time to time for many years even before World War II and Mussolini's excursions into Yugoslavia. When Nazi Germany threatened Yugoslavia, the Croatian state was again compliant and established a Quisling government under Nazi control in Zagreb. Croatian fascism had its own concentration camp and was fully as cruel as that of the Nazi government -- some claim more so. Thousands were massacred, but some Croats resisted the Nazi tyranny under the most fearful conditions. When the King in Belgrade started to do business with the Nazis, the Serbs decided practically overnight that they could not permit this. They brought the King home to Belgrade and packed the royal family off to exile in Greece. They then declared themselves at war with the Nazi government of Germany. They were not naive and knew they were no military match for the powerful German war machine; most expected to die and countless thousands did. But as one of our friends in Belgrade said,

"When the resistance to the Nazis began there was joy in the streets even though the people knew the German tanks would soon be rolling in to the city." For a most moving account of this sublimely heroic stand of the Serbs, read the Epilogue in West's Black Lamb and Grey Falcon. I should like for those present day commentators on Yugoslavia who like to compare the Serbs to the Nazis to read this Epilogue and think about it.

One tactic often used by larger powers seeking to control smaller powers (or portions thereof) is to attempt to divide the smaller powers -- playing one segment of the smaller power off against the other by offering rewards to one segment and conducting propaganda ^{of real} war against the other. Germany played ~~this~~ game with Croatia and Serbia -- not only in WW II but also again more recently.

People who have had a danger-filled and troubled history inevitably carry this history with them into their present. The past horrors are not possible to forget, which is why Serbs today have tremendous fears about coming under either Croatian or Muslim governance. It is also why the outside world is so singularly unsuccessful in making them accede to something they consider so threatening to their safety and well-being. And any reasonable person might ask where it is written that we have the right to make such demands of the Serbs. A visitor to Yugoslavia (as we were) is often reminded in the course of conversation of the hovering presence of history in the Serb mind. One friend said to me, half-jokingly yet with a serious underlying note I could not miss, "We always blame all our faults on the Turks." The same friend, a professor, escorted us through a historical museum in Belgrade and discoursed on the history of Yugoslavia with an astounding degree of detail. He is a learned man, it is true (with not one but two Ph.Ds), but History is not his field; yet he knew Yugoslav history like the back of his hand. Most non-historian intellectuals in our country, no matter how learned, would probably never be able to talk at such length and in such detail about American history. I imagine, however, that African-Americans know more about their history than most other Americans because (like the Yugoslavs) of the suffering burned into their collective souls over many years of oppression.

I think that the other culprits contributing ^{to} ethnic strife and fear besides the imperialist invaders are the compradors -- the local puppets who collaborate with the invading overlords and who govern their people often heartlessly and cruelly in order to please their imperial masters and to feather their own nests, increase their status and power, etc. They behave obsequiously to the foreign overlords and they tyrannize over their own people, also often playing the divide-and-conquer game like their conquerors, discriminating against and persecuting some groups of their own people, etc. They do not govern democratically or wisely. Adorno, in his book, The Authoritarian Personality, describes the authoritarian personality of the person who courts the favor of the more powerful while also tyrannizing over the powerless who are his subjects. In the ensuing description of the beginning of the war in Yugoslavia between Serbia and Croatia contained in this paper, you will find recent examples of this phenomenon. What is certain is that the separatism, ethnic fears, hatreds, and strife rooted in imperialist oppression, combined with oppressive local puppet governance, always result in a hellish existence for those luckless people afflicted by these twin plagues.

The News Media and the War

My concern for Yugoslavia has impelled me to read carefully and widely all that I could about this dreadful war: in the press, numerous

journal articles, the Congressional Record, etc. I have also over the years read not a few books about Yugoslavia. As I have read the war news I have felt horror and deep sorrow over the present carnage, the cruelties and atrocities committed by all sides, and also rising indignation at the unfairly one-sided account of things by the media. What is really a very complex situation has been oversimplified and distorted, and many relevant facts have not been reported as they should have been. Public opinion formation has been greatly manipulated, and the cause of truth has been crushed. From the beginning, this civil war has been portrayed as a conflict between aggressive and warlike Communism attempting to build a big empire (i.e. Serbia), on the one hand, and a blameless little country only striving for its rightful independence, this country's government representing righteousness and democracy incarnate (i.e. Croatia), on the other hand. We have been subjected to a veritable blitzkrieg of misinformation and distortion of truth by a vast and highly organized Croatian Lobby while Serbia has scarcely made its case at all in our media. I think Serbia would have been wiser to try to communicate more assiduously and make its case more vigorously even though it would doubtless have had to struggle against many roadblocks put up by our media. A bit of a breakthrough came when the New York Times (11/22/91) printed an op.ed. article by David Martin. This article made very clear some flaws in the character and governance of President Tudjman of Croatia, including some quotations of his extremely anti-semitic utterances and his implied defence of the Croatian government in WW II. After the Martin article appeared, the news articles carried occasional references to Serbia's bitter experiences with Croatian fascism in WW II, but Pres. Tudjman himself remained a sacred cow, unrevealed and unexposed in all his essence, to U.S. readers. Even liberal columnists whom one would have normally expected to be disapproving of Tudjman just kept on blaming everything on Serbia and never said a disapproving word about Tudjman. A friend of mine, whom I consider to be a well-informed politically aware person, recently surprised me by asking "Who is Tudjman?" On reflection I realized she hadn't had much chance to find out from reading even the newspaper that claims to print "all the news that's fit to print." When a paper with as broad a news coverage as the NYT doesn't print many of the salient facts, American readers are hard pressed to know what is really going on. Tudjman has remained a shadowy figure, not really known to people for what he actually is, and yet he bears much responsibility for the way this war developed in the early stages.

A remarkable article appeared in the New York Review of Books (1/30/92), written by Misha Gleeney, Central European correspondent of the BBC's World Service and author of several books, including one on Yugoslavia due to come out soon. Gleeney is a painstaking and honest investigative reporter and attempts to be quite impartial in pointing out the rights and wrongs on both sides of the conflict. In the heat and passion of war terrible cruelties are inflicted by both (or all) sides on innocent civilians. The media has given unlimited attention to Serbian cruelties, however, and paid scant attention to Croatia's also gross abuse of human rights.

Early Stages of the Civil War

Gleeney's account of the war's beginnings should be an eye-opener to many who have read only newspaper accounts. He gives an explicit account of how, after being elected in April, 1990, President Tudjman took steps to discriminate against and harass Serbs living in Croatia. Before the breakup of Yugoslavia Serbs in Croatia had long enjoyed constituent nation status within Croatia, which allowed a

certain amount of autonomy in their own governance. This was taken from them by the Croatian government after Tudjman's election. The Roman alphabet was declared to be official for Serbs although they had always used the Cyrillic alphabet. Serbs were deprived of cultural autonomy, including control over their school districts. Serb police in Serb districts were replaced by Croats and Serb political leaders dismissed from administrative jobs and replaced by Croats. The Yugoslav flag's national symbol, the red star, was replaced by the red and white checkered shield, coat-of-arms of the Croatian kingdom for many years and also used by the deeply hated fascist Ustasi who had fully supported the Quisling fascist government installed by the German Nazis as rulers in WW II. All of these provocations naturally aroused intense fear and anger in Serbs who had suffered unspeakable horrors under Croatian fascism in WW II. There then began a struggle by Serbs to undo these Croatian usurpations of power in the Serbian area. The town of Glina had seen 1800 Serbs slaughtered by the Croatian Ustasi in 1941 in two horrendous massacres. Glina now faced more frightening events in the fall of 1990 when raids took place on local Glina citizens by Croat police confiscating Serbian weapons. The Croat flag was then flown throughout the town. Despite all these provocations the local Serbs tried to have regular contact with Zagreb and the local Croat police, begging the Croatian officials not to further intimidate Serbs by these forceful methods. The Zagreb government refused to change its treatment of the Serbs. However, by June of 1991 when Croatian independence was declared, Glina's Serbs (with no longer any protection of a Yugoslav federal government as existed before Croatian secession) were so fearful they joined with the Marticevci in opposing Croat attacks. In the ensuing months the federal Yugoslav Army came in to support them. Many in this country's news media have called federal Yugoslav Army involvement in protecting these Croatian Serbs an empire-building adventure by Serbia. To me it seems rather a natural reaction of being willing to offer needed and requested help and protection for their fellow Serbs who were victims of Tudjman ill-treatment. While it is true that the Yugoslav National Army began the heavy fighting, it is also clear that the Croatian government, by its harsh treatment of Croatian Serbs, had much to do with provoking the beginning of the war. In fact, one might well question whether there might have been no war had the Tudjman government treated the Croatian Serbs decently in the first place. We have no positive answer to that, but the war that developed did seem to begin with happenings in Glina.

Croatia: Human Rights and Rising Fascist Forces in Croatia

As early as August, 1991, respected Serbs in many towns and cities, including Zagreb, disappeared. Among them were a Serb member of the Croatian Parliament and the retired head of the Safety Department at an oil refinery. They ^{were} kidnapped by Croats in national uniform but never accounted for by the Zagreb government. In the fall of 1991, a massacre of Serbs by right-wing Croats in national uniform occurred in the town of Gospic in Croatia. (The NYT (1/25/92), incidentally, to its credit in this case at least, had an article about this with a picture of the corpses laid out on the ground.) People were dragged out of cellars where they had taken refuge and were never seen again. Most were professionals working ⁱⁿ Gospic's town administration. A deputy attorney and head of the Gospic prison were among them. Over 75 people (including women) were unaccounted for afterward and at least 26 were known to have been murdered. There was no explanation from Zagreb. The Zagreb government did nothing to stop the violence against the Serbs according to Gleaney. In contrast, David Martin's NYT op.ed. article (11/22/91) reported no similar mistreatment of

Croats living in Serbia. Gleeney reports that among the Croats' fighting forces are thousands of fascist Black Legionnaires, members of the Ustasi, and members of the extremist paramilitary organization called HOS. He further notes that the Tadjman government has clearly tried to avoid antagonizing these fascist groups by confronting and curbing their abuses. Gleeney observes that Croatia claims to be a democracy abiding by proper standards of human rights. However, he says, "Instead of confronting violations of human rights, the Croat government attempts to hide them in the hope that they will disappear, and escape the attention of the West. This policy cannot work for long and can only bring dishonor to the Croat cause."

The Bombing of Dubrovnik

One NYT columnist expressed the opinion that Dubrovnik was bombed because it was Croatian and was beautiful, this proving, I suppose, the natural meanness of the Serbs. Gleeney gives a different account of things: Describing the close relationship between Serbian President Miloshevic and Gen. Kadijevic of the federal army, Gleeney said that Miloshevic was extremely flexible at the Hague Peace Conference as early as mid-November, 1991 and even privately agreed to drop the demand that Serbian-controlled areas in Croatia be allowed to break off from the rule of the Croatian government. This was certainly a big concession of the Serbian government. At that point radical Serb leaders in Croatia like Milan Babic and the army's more headstrong nationalist wing publicly denounced the decision. When the document of concessions was about to be signed the rebellious nationalist army officers ordered heavy bombardment of Dubrovnik, thus undercutting Miloshevic's position. In December when Gen. Kadijevic (soon to be retired) was again close to agreement on a ceasefire with U.N. Envoy Vance that would permit U.N. peacekeeping force deployment in the area, Dubrovnik was again bombarded and the agreement undermined. Kadijevic found it necessary to apologize and order an inquiry into who ordered the bombing. Clearly the Serbian government and Kadijevic were not in real control of all the fighting forces on the Serbian side (of the irregulars and rebellious portions of the national army) even then though Miloshevic has been accused of being entirely responsible for the way in which the fighting has gone on throughout the whole course of the war. And later in the Bosnian part of the war, when the federal Yugoslav army pulled out of any further participation in the fighting in Bosnia and left the further conduct of the war there to Serbian Bosnians, the U.S. media continued to sing the same song. No one bothered to mention that Croatian army people (including Ustasi, some with "U" carved on their gun butts) were crossing over into Bosnia constantly and fighting against Serbs. And even though high level U.N. officials on the ground around Sarajevo frequently said that Serb irregulars and certain paramilitary groups were clearly "out of control" of their commanders, news reports still made it seem that Miloshevic was responsible for planning and directing every dastardly deed that was done. Incidentally, I heard Envoy Vance say of Gen. Kadijevic (with whom Miloshevic worked closely and well) on a TV program that he had found Gen. Kadijevic to be an "honorable man" and a "man of his word." Recently when Vance was asked why Vance believed Miloshevic when he said he would do all possible to get Bosnian Serb agreement to the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, Vance pointed out that when Miloshevic had earlier promised complete cooperation with U.N. peacekeepers in ending the Serbian-Croatian conflict that Miloshevic had kept his promise and used every effort to see that the Croatian Serbs cooperated. So when we hear the oft-repeated assertion that Miloshevic's promises mean nothing, we ought to remember that the facts do not necessarily support that assertion.

Deutschland Über Alles

Germany flexed its muscles and displayed its new power as never before since WW II by declaring to the European Community members that it would recognize the governments of Croatia and Slovenia no matter what the other EC countries wished or the U.N. urged. Then U.N. Secretary General de Cuellar, and U.N. Envoy Vance and British Lord Carrington of the E.C. (trying to conduct peace negotiations at the Hague) had strongly urged no premature recognition, emphasizing that recognition at this juncture would only prolong the fighting in Yugoslavia and make it harder to achieve a peaceful settlement. However, German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Guenscher arrogantly and rudely rebuked Mr. de Cuellar and ran over the other members of the EC like a Mack truck; this German aggressiveness succeeded in causing EC Members to crumble and give way to the German onslaught after only some feeble opposition. Much criticism of German heavy-handedness ensued nonetheless and prompted Chancellor Kohl to say in a news conference that Germany was now a nation of 80 million people and would have to learn to live with criticism the way it lives with the weather. The weekly Stern reproachfully editorialized in return: "Leaving Hitler aside, you have to reach far back before you find a German government leader who expressed himself so provocatively and insensitively toward the outside world on which we depend." (NYT, 2/2/92) Yugoslav reaction was of course irate. President Miloshevic excoriated the Germans and reminded the world of the role that Germany and its principal allies (Austria, Italy, and Hungary) had played in two wars against Serbia in this century (NYT, 2/16/91) Professor Mihailo Marković, a leader in the Democratic Socialist Party in Belgrade, observed to the press that apparently the EC did not believe anymore in international law and that "German might makes right." (NYT, 1/17/92) Gleaney observed in The New York Review article, previously mentioned, that Yugoslavs saw in EC recognition a revival of the old Axis alliance and that Serbs also suspected Catholic Church involvement in the recognition. The various reasons for the collapse of the EC under the German drive for recognition without delay will doubtless be more fully sorted out and revealed with time. However, anyone with a sense of history must perceive that the various countries in the EC have started down a very slippery slope indeed in bending so compliantly before German might. If the years preceding WW II teach us any lessons, it should be that allowing Germany to so control the treatment of the problems in Yugoslavia can only encourage more German attempts at erroneous control of other problems and other countries.

Bitter Fruits of Premature Recognition

The effect of recognition on the Croatian government could easily have been predicted. One diplomat colorfully described Tudjman as being "all cock-a-hoop about recognition." (NYT, 1/31/92) For he promptly evinced a renewed recalcitrance, backing off from many elements in the U.N. peacekeeping plans he had formerly agreed to. He demanded substantive changes, wanting Croatia's laws, schools, health care institutions, customs officials and new currency introduced into the three protected areas where U.N. peacekeepers would be placed. Also, Croatia proposed that these U.N. officials, Croats, and "loyal" Serbs (loyalty presumably being determined by Zagreb) be appointed to govern and administer these areas. One final, somewhat inolent note was Croatia's urging that the U.N. plan to stay in area with peacekeepers only a short time, an obvious indication that Croatia would prefer for the U.N. to leave as soon as possible so Croatia could once again run the show in its own delightful way. While Croatia was arrogantly throwing this monkey-wrench into the proceedings, the Serbian officials,

both political and military, in contrast had already sharply limited their earlier objections to the U.N. plan and were cooperating fully with the U.N.

German-Croatian Relations

But if Croatia was throwing its pygmy weight around due to premature recognition, its mightier master (Germany) now in an embarrassing position because of Tudjman's behavior and concerned with EC reaction, was pressing Croatia to abide by the original agreement without reservations. Croatia is sensitive to its duties to Germany since Germany brought recognition, Croatia and would be looked to for further help of a financial nature. In fact, the extent of the currying of favor of Germany by Croatia, for example, is seen in Croatia's refusal to permit broadcast of WW II movies showing Germans as aggressors! (NYT, 2/16/92) Germany, realizing it would have much to answer for to the EC over the recognition issue if Croatia were not brought into line, did its best to quell Croatia's exuberant aggressiveness. Guenscher was reported by the NYT to be on the phone to Vance urging quick action on deployment of U.N. forces for Croatia while undoubtedly tightening the screws on its recalcitrant client state to ensure compliance with the U.N. agreement. In a short time Tudjman backtracked from his earlier backtracking from the original agreement with the U.N. and again declared willingness to cooperate without reservations. Considering the flawed character of Tudjman, the severe problems he presents as a head of state, and his relation to the German government, one is reminded of Franklin Roosevelt's sardonic observation years ago about the former dictator of Cuba, Fulgencio Batista, when he said, "Batista is a son-of-a-bitch, but he's our son-of-a-bitch."

Tudjman Duplicity

There are a number of examples of Pres. Tudjman's duplicitous behavior. The most recent that comes to mind concerns his effusive praise for Vance at the meetings currently going on in Geneva and his warm acceptance of the Vance-Owen Plan. Now only a few weeks later Croatian fighters have attacked Serbs in the Zadar area on the Dalmatian coast, a U.N. protected area, and are refusing to obey U.N. orders to desist. This hinders the negotiation process in regard to the Vance-Owen Plan and makes Tudjman's earlier words of support seem less than sincere. But let us return to some earlier history of Pres. Tudjman's vacillating behavior. The NYT reported that Secretary of State James Baker felt bitter about what he considered to be Tudjman's betrayal of him in June of 1991. After promising Baker during Baker's June visit to Yugoslavia, that he would not take any unilateral actions, Tudjman only a few days later announced Croatian independence, news of which shocked and angered Baker. Both David Martin in his NYT op.ed. piece, previously mentioned, and Misha Gleeney in his N.Y. Rev. article, also previously mentioned, wrote about some blatantly anti-semitic utterances of Tudjman that had been quoted in the foreign press. When U.S. Congressman John Miller journeyed to Croatia in Jan., 1992 and discussed the allegations of anti-semitism with Tudjman, Tudjman soon after wrote a lengthy letter to members of the U.S. Congress to protest his innocence and give numerous examples of why the allegations of anti-semitism are not to be believed. After having supported a policy of blatant discrimination and mistreatment of Serbs in Croatia, Tudjman closed his letter by saying, "I reiterate my complete and total dedication to the fulfillment of the most essential tenets of democracy; respect for human rights and the guarantee of freedom and protection of minority rights." (Congressional Record, 2/19/92-pp. 331-32) Rep. Helen Bentley of the U.S. Congress gives further more recent information about Tudjman deceptions and attacks on human rights in

an insertion in the Congressional Record (6/5/92): One deception concerns Croatian direction of some of the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The other insertion is a copy of an article from the Washington Post (6/5/92) by Peter Maas about Tudjman's attempts to stifle expression of opposition opinions and his lack of concern for civil liberties within Croatia. On the matter of anti-semitism, there is also relevant information in the copy of a letter from a Jewish woman doctor in Belgrade which was printed in the journal, Jewish Currents (July-Aug., 1992). Dr. Klara Mandic wrote of "the traditionally good relations between Serbian and Jewish people which have existed for centuries. We Jews have always been recognized as citizens with equal rights with Serbs and have never been relegated to ghettos. " Dr. Mandic is General Secretary of the Serbian-Jewish Friendship Society founded several years ago by a group of intellectuals. She also writes of the resurgence of fascism in Croatia and Europe generally and how both Serbs and Jews feel threatened by it. She then told of a woman who was an elderly survivor of the terrible Croatian Jasenovac concentration camp in WW II only to be brutally murdered by Croats in her village of Petrinja in September of 1991. When she spoke out against attacks on her Serbian neighbors she was shot in the legs, tied to a fence. Gasoline was poured over her and she was set afire, the first Jewish victim of Croatian right-wing extremism (or fascism) of Yugoslavia Civil War. If you want to get an overview of how pervasive anti-semitism has been in Croatia throughout a long period of history, West's book (Black Lamb and Grey Falcon) will provide information.

Germany as Empire-Builder

Germany has been heavily investing economically in many smaller nearby European countries judged to be within Germany's sphere of influence. As we all doubtless recognize, economic imperialism can be just as potent a form of imperialism as military occupation. (I recall the now deceased Sociologist C. Wright Mills' book on Cuba some years back containing a detailed description of how the U.S. imposed a one-crop (sugar) economy on Cuba for many years. The U.S. found a sugar economy most favorable to U.S. needs even though Cuba would have fared far better with a diversified economy.) Big powers often make the decisions for small powers, and the latter are not free to choose their own destiny. According to a recent TV news broadcast many Czechoslovaks are already feeling very nervous about the rapidly growing German control over their economy.

Croatia has long been considered by Germany to be a sort of German appendage. During WW II this feeling was given an extra boost when the Nazis were allowed to install a quisling government in Zagreb. Large numbers of good Croatians joined the resistance movement to fascism in the Zagreb government, but that government, buttressed by strong Ustasi support, dealt out unspeakable cruelties and death to opponents and even had their own concentration camp at Jasenovac.

In addition, Germans learned to love and enjoy the beauties of climate and nature of Croatia's Adriatic coast. When our family visited that area we were told how Germans in large numbers would come to vacation there after the war was over. Ever efficient, enterprising, and entrepreneurial, the Germans would come, pitch their tents, live off the fish from the sea, and before departing for home buy large quantities of slivovitz (the potent Yugoslav plum brandy). They would take the brandy home to sell in Germany at much higher prices than they had paid for it, thus financing their Adriatic vacations. One can smile at this minor form of profiteering on Yugoslav brandy. But unfortunately there inevitably lingers in one's mind the recollection of earlier years when Germany's efficiency in exterminating

Millions of human beings and its enterprise in stealing the riches of their victims in addition to their lives, makes German efficiency and enterprise automatically suspect and less than attractive. At any rate, the Yugoslavs didn't much mind the slivovitz enterprise nor the efficiency of economical vacationing by the German visitors. However, they were utterly galled by hearing certain overbearing vacationers loudly recount their various WW II military exploits, while pointing out to each other the various scenes of their valor. After all the Yugoslavs had once endured under Nazi occupation, this loud and joyous replay of earlier German conquest was too much for them to bear cheerfully; it made them feel a little as if they were being occupied all over again. One would wonder at the callous natures of these particular erstwhile warriors -- never worrying in the least that they might be overheard by the Yugoslav natives (who had had to learn German under most unpleasant circumstances in an earlier time) and obviously not feeling at all repentant about their days of conquest.

German and Serbian relations have long been marked by strong antagonisms, a real visceral antipathy, Germany being always inclined to dominate and control and Serbia being fiercely independent and firmly resistant to being controlled. Germans tended to view Serbs as being "uppity", a people with lower natures who "did not know their place," their "place" being an inferior one in the German mind. German disdain for Serbs has always tended to be ill-concealed and the Serbs have reciprocated with the strongly held feeling that the Germans meant them no good. The German imperial mind-set, eternally dependent on orderly obedience and compliance from others for comfort, found much unease and no pleasure in the disobedient, rebellious, and uncontrollable Serbs who never showed respect for German superior managerial abilities. In fact, being managed by Germans, or anyone else for that matter, was the last thing in the world desired by the Serbs. The Serbs have had such a long history of having to defend themselves from others that, as Rebecca West says, they have a great "eagerness not to be more sinned against than sinnig if they could possibly help it, which was actually a most healthy reaction..." West further contrasts the Serbs and Croats by noting that the Croats were the lawyers and the Serbs were the poets and fighters. It has been that way in this war, too, with the Croatian Propaganda Ministry endlessly making its case to the whole world and the Serbs so intent on fighting their oppressors (both actual and potential) that they haven't taken time to state their case or explain themselves to anybody as much as it would have been to their advantage to do.

The Rise of Fascism Internationally

We see an alarming rise of fascism today in many countries. A Belgrade friend wrote to us that Croatia was the first of the European countries to see considerable fascist forces arising. Whichever country was first, we see fearsome fascist forces arising in many countries --- including our own (i.e. David Duke and followers, the KKK, neo-Nazis, and many heavily armed groups and skinheads.) In Germany these forces have assumed uncomfortably large proportions, and the Kohl government seemed for an unconscionable time to make no effort to curtail their terroristic activities. Kohl was finally jarred out of his passivity into curbing the neo-fascists to some extent after -- and only after -- much international criticism erupted and thousands of good Germans were marching and demonstrating in the streets of many large cities to force Kohl to act constructively. Tadjman in Croatia, as we have seen, has followed the same pattern of passive tolerance of fascists as his mentor, Kohl; however, there has been no alarm over fascists in little Croatia, no international outcry, and even our liberal columnists have ignored it.

These fascist groups have also seemed to take on a pattern of international cooperation. For example, an article on Chile in the NYT (1/26/92) reported that Chile's government-owned weapons manufacturers were selling Chilean army surplus weapons to Croatia despite a U.N. ban on such sales. Government officials indicated that several very high-ranking Chilean generals were "sympathetic to the Croatian cause." The generals were not named, but the Chilean army is tightly-controlled by the fascist General Pinochet, whose hands are stained with much innocent blood from the overthrow of the democratically-elected Allende government. We are also aware that Rev. Moon's neo-fascist organization spent huge sums of money propagandizing in the U.S. for Star Wars. Rev. Moon was reportedly bank-rolled by a wealthy Japanese businessman. This revelation was made in a Frontline documentary television program. I would wonder if the Japanese realize that Star Wars has been a big waste of money and a detriment to our economy and would be interested in promoting Star Wars because Japan is an economic rival of the U.S.

We cannot forget that some major world powers have for many years subsidized various fascist dictatorships and helped to keep them in power in various places over the globe as a matter of government imperialist policy. This demonstration of support for fascist governments in smaller countries by big powers has provided fertile soil for the rise and growth in increasing numbers of smaller fascist groups in many countries and within some of the major powers themselves. Wherever these fascist groups have sprung up they have often been blithely tolerated, and the establishment unconcern about them has only given them encouragement to grow and do worse and worse things.

Prelude to Civil War in Bosnia-Herzegovina

In late February, 1992, there was a vote in Bosnia on the question of declaring independence. There was a large turn-out and the majority voted for independence. The Bosnian Serbs, however, boycotted the voting; they had formed a Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and they threatened to secede from the larger, original republic of Bosnia if it was recognized as independent. Before the civil war in Bosnia started the Serbs constituted approximately 32% of the population of Bosnia and occupied about 60% of Bosnia's territory. The Serbs made clear that civil war and partition of the Republic would result and that they would defend this secession from Bosnia with armed force if necessary. Muslim President of Bosnia failed to take this threat seriously and proved his lack of ability as a prophet by expressing doubts about any real violence occurring. He said, "There may be a few isolated incidents but general armed conflict will not erupt." (NYT 3/2/92). Famous last words!! This oblivion to the potentially explosive and historically based mix of ethnic hurts, feelings, and suspicions in a situation where no group could any longer have the protection of a federal Yugoslav government, proved President Izetbegovic more eager to have the original Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent state to govern than wise in foreseeing the consequences of this push for independence. A coalition of Muslims (about 51% of the population) and Croats (about 17%) would together numerically outnumber the Serbs, and Serbs would feel at the mercy of not one but two of its historic enemies if Bosnia-Herzegovina became an independent republic. However, if Bosnia-Herzegovina remained joined to Serbia and Montenegro, the Muslims would feel outnumbered by Serbs. So trouble of a most severe sort was bound to come to Bosnia's ethnic mix of people unless there could be an arrangement of dividing the territory (with a homeland or safe haven where each group could feel safe from the others). After all the years of peacefully living together, it is a great pity that it should come to this. But the central federal government

that had a rotating presidency and once protected them no longer existed to ensure their feelings of safety.

Civil War in Bosnia-Herzegovina

During the period when Croatia and Slovenia were being considered for recognition as independent states, the Bush Administration refused to join in the push for recognition despite EC actions and pressures from some members of U.S. Congress and some people in the media. When asked in March by the Senate Commerce Committee why the U.S. was being so slow to recognize, Secretary of State Baker said quite properly: "It is not sufficient for countries to simply declare their independence and then forcefully seize border posts or custom ports, in order to implement that declaration and thereby trigger a civil war. And that's what happened in Yugoslavia."

U.N. Envoy Vance urged the U.S. and EC not to recognize the Bosnian secession in the early stages, asserting it could only produce terrible conflict in that "stew" that was Bosnia and make it harder to achieve a peace settlement. Also EC-sponsored negotiations were on the verge of creating a Bosnia where the rights of all three groups -- Muslims, Croats, and Serbs -- would be protected. These three Bosnian groups were working peacefully together to develop a system of self-governing cantons and would probably have solved the problem in a satisfactory way if left to their own devices. But Bush, although earlier he had claimed he wanted to cooperate with Vance's advice, was by now tired of being called a weak and indecisive President by many in the news media, suddenly decided to recognize Bosnia's independence before the work of the Bosnians themselves could be finalized. Bush then led the way in urging the EC to climb on the recognition bandwagon. Bush's urgent wish to preserve the image of a strong world leader mattered more to him than doing what was right and what might well have produced a peaceful, decent settlement arranged by the Bosnians themselves; the golden opportunity was lost and untold suffering for many was about to ensue. Of course the Muslim Azetbegovic felt he had U.S. backing now and lost interest in the settlement based on cantons that he had worked on with the Serbs and Croats; he could have hoped for U.S. support for his governing the entire Bosnia-Herzegovina. And so a U.S. President, more concerned about preserving a strong image than precipitating war in Bosnia, and a Muslim President who was willing to risk war despite prior Serb warnings, because of his ambition to continue to govern the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina, gave the final push toward events that would unfold into the bloodiest of wars and a degree of suffering for the innocent citizens that would make the angels weep.

Some Random Observations about the Bosnian War

Much has been written about Serbia continuing to supply arms to the Bosnian Serbs even after pulling out from participation in the Bosnian war. What is not mentioned in this regard is that there have been tremendously large stores of arms and weapons in Bosnia ever since WWII. It is doubtful if Bosnian Serbs needed more than they already had available to them right in Bosnia.

There has also been frequent media allusion to the fact that Serbia was occupying over 70% of the land in Bosnia as a result of the war whereas the Serb population constituted only a little over 30% of the population. When the apparent unfairness of all this was trumpeted far and wide there was no mention of the relevant fact that prior to the war the Serbs (being more rural people) already occupied about 60% of the land. So they had actually added only another 10% of land by warfare.

Some government and media people have spoken for some time about the need for our planes to supervise the no-fly zone, long after the Serbs had ceased using planes for military attack purposes but were using planes -- and later only helicopters -- for such things as transporting the wounded to safety.

I strongly deplore and condemn even one rape and the driving of even one innocent family from its home. Certainly many have been driven from their homes and turned into suffering refugees in the most sickening way. It has actually been done by all three factions but our media emphasized it as mainly a Serb transgression. As for the rapes one might well question the very high numbers our U.S. intelligence agencies recently claim to have determined, and also whether these hypothetical high numbers are a propaganda ruse for pushing for military intervention. A wise and fair statesman like Cyrus Vance raised similar questions, saying that the number of rapes that has been given to him was sharply lower than U.S. claims being made.

The Serbian Chetniks have had a history of violence and have also been among several groups of the most brutal in the present war. It is really unfortunate that they have been so "out of control" so often; they have not only done brutal things to other human beings they have also done great harm to the cause of the Serbs just as the Ustasi and other fascist groups in Croatia have damaged the Croatian reputation. Some people confuse Chetniks with the Partisans who fought the Nazis in WW II because the Chetniks did oppose the Nazis to a limited extent. In earlier years people who were quite anticommunist and consumed by negative feelings about Tito and the Partisans spread propaganda that it was the Chetniks who were the real heroes opposing the Nazis. A World History textbook one of my daughters used in high school was full of these lies in the section on Yugoslavia. The truth is that it was the Partisans who were singleminded and unswerving and principled foes of fascism while the Chetniks spent more time fighting the Partisans than the Nazis, and they were especially brutal fighters then as they are today.

Our Own U.S. Civil War

It is interesting to know that the British government was on the verge of officially recognizing the South as a separate nation but was prevented from doing so because of the strong antislavery sentiment of a large portion of the British working class. In these days when the working class is so spurned and treated as of no importance, it is comforting to remember that there was once a time in history when a government took note in a democratic fashion of working class opinions and desires! Can we imagine for a moment how outraged we would have been had the British government meddled into our internal affairs by recognizing the South's right to secede from the Union and become a separate state? And if the British had then presumed to compound such an outrage by dictating to us just where the boundary line between north and south was to be drawn, our ire would have known no bounds. But we were protected on the east and west by two oceans and not surrounded by other countries wanting to invade us. Also, we were strong enough to defend ourselves so that our sensitivities would have had to be respected. A small country does not have the luxury /so powerful as to be automatically respected. Also, incidentally, our Civil War, like most civil wars, was a very bloody and bitter affair. And even though it was good for our Union to be preserved by the North's opposition to the South, and Gen. Sherman was basically a decent man who hated war, his march to the sea did not exactly constitute an example of kinder, gentler warfare.

Muslim Attacks on United Nations Officials

The Muslims have often behaved in a very hateful way to various U.N. officials whenever the officials have said or done anything which the Muslims did not want them to do. When Lord Carrington came to Sarajevo some time ago and wanted to have an official from the Serbs to have safe passage in a U.N. vehicle to the U.N. headquarters the Muslims refused to promise they would not fire on a vehicle carrying a Serb to meet with Carrington. So Lord Carrington had to be driven out to where the Serbs were. President Azetbegovic has made frequent derogatory remarks about the U.N. and its officials. The Muslims seemed to have the attitude that anyone who did not agree with them was the enemy rather than a person risking his life to get aid to the Muslim people. Muslims were incensed when U.N. officials at times reported that firing on the U.N. came from the Muslim side. A few weeks ago some of the Muslim military who are gung-ho to have the West intervene militarily bombed perilously close to where they knew some of the top U.N. officials were because they were angry over U.N. opposition to military intervention. This incidentally was reported once in the NYT and then dropped like a hot potato with no further word or any reproach about the Muslims doing this to U.N. officials. It was also a terrible scene when Secretary General Boutros-Ghali and Envoy Vance recently drove in a U.N. vehicle through Sarajevo streets and citizens demonstrated fiercely against these two estimable leaders, shouting epithets such as "Fascist" and "Criminal" at them. How much of this was orchestrated by Muslim leaders I have no way of knowing, but I suspect that at least some of it was. And now President Azetbegovic refuses to come to the U.N. in New York for negotiations even though the Croats and Serbs will participate, and even though the entire EC and the Russians have endorsed the Vance-Owens Plan. This alone should be enough to cause the Clinton Administration to refuse aid to the Muslims. Clinton should send a very clear message to the Muslims we are not willing to intervene militarily by either lifting the arms embargo (which would widen and intensify the war) or start bombing Serbs to please the Muslims. Our Joint Chiefs of Staff have already made it abundantly clear that they would consider such intervention foolhardy in the extreme. Let Mr. Clinton have his differences with the Joint Chiefs on Civil Rights issues, not on military intervention in Bosnia.

The Reality About the Positions we have Taken on this War

We have said that the leaders in Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina have the right to lead their peoples to secession from the nation once known as Yugoslavia, and we have formally recognized the rights of these entities in their formation of independent states. However, we have maintained that Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia have no similar rights of secession from these newly formed states now that these states are no longer part of the federal Yugoslav government. The undisputed historical facts that Serbs have suffered unconscionable cruelties and oppression at the hands of Muslims under the Ottoman Empire for centuries and at the hands of Croatian fascists in WW II and persecution and harrassment by the Tudjman government of Croatia more recently, and that they are fearful because of no longer having the protection of a federal Yugoslav government --- all of these considerations make no difference in our thinking. We still arbitrarily say that they must continue to suffer further oppression by Croats and Muslims and have no right to secede ^{from their} governance. We also maintain that we have the right (and also the right!) to intervene and make these decisions for the Serbs no matter how fearful and damaged they feel by our decisions. We of the West (EC and U.S.) have the right to decide who can secede and who cannot secede in Yugoslavia. And where

do we get that right? Much like the old "divine right of Kings" -- we get it from our power. We do not get it from the democratic part of our heritage.

The Relation of the U.S. to the U.N.

U.S. behavior toward the U.N. has always left much to be desired. It has always seemed to be a matter of ruling or ruining the U.N., We shamefully refused to pay our bills to the U.N. during the Reagan years --- primarily, I think, because we were unable to dictate to the U.N. as much as we wished. We still have a very large, unpaid debt to the U.N. while we continue to pour our billions into such dubious programs as Star Wars, one of the most expensive boondoggles ever foisted off on the American people. We speak words of peace but spend too much of our money for war while the U.N. is starved for adequate funds to carry out its increasing important missions worldwide. Despite not paying our debts, we do not hesitate to use the U.N. and try to control its actions in every possible way. Bush really dictated far too much about the Gulf War. We have created two new posts at the U.N. and placed our people in there (Richard Thornburgh and Joseph Reed) as a means of keeping closer tabs on U.N. decisions and activities and exerting U.S. control.* And now that the U.N. is so strapped for funds it cannot finance peacekeeping forces adequately, we opt for use of NATO forces by the U.S.--- a monstrous idea if ever there was one. If NATO forces are used all the rest of world will then see the U.N. as a tool and instrument of the U.S. and EC and will no longer trust the U.N. to be the impartial and fair body it was originally intended to be. It would really sound the death knell of the U.N.'s credibility and destroy its ability to perform the tasks it was organized to perform. *For Thornburgh-Reed story, see The Nation (4/13/92, p. 478.)

And finally, time after time during this Balkan war, the U.N. has been undercut and sabotaged by the EC and the U.S.: first, when the EC bent to the German will to recognize Croatia's and Slovenia's independence prematurely, and second, when Pres. Bush impulsively jumped to premature recognition of Bosnia and urged the EC to follow immediately, for no other reason than to prove he was a strong leader. This erroneous action was soon followed by a horrendous, bloody war, a war that might have been avoided had the advice of U.N. mediators been heeded instead of ignored.

I often marvel at the dogged patience of a Cyrus Vance and consider him one of nature's noblemen and a great statesman. Being undercut is no new experience for him. He was viciously undercut by another member of the Carter Administration who seemed to labor under the delusion that he rather than Vance was Secretary of State. Vance rightly resigned on principle from this untenable situation. However, throughout this Yugoslav War he has worked steadily on trying to negotiate a peace settlement, for he has recognized that this time the principled role for him to play was to continue his work despite foolish moves of self-seeking politicians and despite a lack of support from certain journalists who claim to respect and admire him but never remonstrated against those who undercut him. During the recent Geneva peace talks whenever there were signs of progress, did our media greet them with approval? No, they were too busy reporting instead on possible plans for military intervention. Vance and Owen have both spoken strongly against pouring more fuel on the flames by removing the embargo on arms to Muslims, pointing out that it would only intensify the war with more arms pouring into the war area from all sides. Our U.S. military leaders have been rightly and strongly opposed to military intervention for some time, seeing it as only widening the conflict and considering the no-fly zone a false issue.

Even though the Clinton Administration had leaked stories that it was considering many of these military options, I was still expecting much good from Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who had earlier served under Vance in the State Department. I was appalled and dismayed when Christopher badly undercut Vance and Owen and the Geneva peace talks at a delicate point when he proclaimed strong doubts that the talks would be successful. Certainly the talks were going through great difficulties, but this kind of statement was no way to help the talks succeed. It could only give hope to the Muslims that they need not support the talks of the Plan and would ultimately be given U.S. support; also it could only encourage the Serbs to think that a top U.S. official was not concerned for the talks to succeed and was set on military attacks on Serbia.

Causes and Symptoms

Just as many doctors do not look beyond treating the symptoms of an illness and do not concern themselves about the causes, too often we also take note only of the symptoms of societal illness and have no thought for the causes.

In this Yugoslav War we have tended to concentrate exclusively on the symptoms, the cruelties and atrocities (which, in truth, could not escape notice). But even in this we have been quite selective in dwelling at such length on Serb cruelties and largely ignoring ^{American} Muslim and Croatian offenses. We have also paid scant heed to the causes of these symptoms. So long as we continue to do that, we will make little progress toward peace and more humane behavior. When we insist on solutions that ignore the causes no good will result; and we will also pile on more of the same kinds of causes that originally caused the sickness, thus inflaming the sickness more. It's very simple to lay punishments on those who refuse to change as we wish, but when a people is already chafing from centuries of injustice and punishments, these punishments we might deal out will only result in more irate resistance. For we will only convince them that we don't recognize or care what they have already suffered and that we only want to make them suffer more.

Some of the verbal attacks on Serbia remind me of the pious clucking about violence when Washington, D.C. was in flames after the murder of Martin Luther King, or the unctuous talk about how regrettable was the breakdown of law and order (read "by African-Americans") in Los Angeles in the recent riots. It is regrettable indeed when law and order break down and innocent people suffer the consequences and untold destruction occurs. But our sanctimonious ones would have had a better case for their utterances if they had earlier shown concern and protested the causes of the symptoms of these suffering people which moved them to do these things. (Shaw's play, Mrs. Warren's Profession, deals brilliantly with this same theme of symptoms and causes.)

Some of my ancestors were slaveholders, a fact in which I take no pride. My maternal grandfather was a dear, kind man -- a mathematics teacher who was trusted and respected in his community. However, as a small baby he was nearly murdered by having his throat cut by a field slave, a young man who had newly come to this country in chains. My grandfather was saved by a house slave who often cared for him. I am glad he was saved from premature death; he grew to be a very good man, and the saving of his life also made possible my later existence. And yet, I have a feeling of great empathy for this young man, doubtless half-crazed with fear and fury due to all he had suffered in the ghastly Middle Passage on the slave ship, in indignities of the auction block, the separation from the home and family that he knew, and who

knows what cruelties of the lash and other punishments from the slave masters and overseers. Though contemplating the murder of an innocent baby, he had truly been sinned against in a gross and terrible way. Dreadful causes created his fury and intended violence.

I believe the cruelties the various ethnic groups in Yugoslavia have inflicted on each other are the result of cruelties inflicted on all of the people for centuries by the imperialist invaders from outside the country and those local puppet governors who collaborated with the invaders and in many ways imitated their cruel behavior. The horrors that go on for generations are the legacy of imperialism and imperialism's local henchmen. We should address these causes with honesty, understanding, and empathy and seek to offer only the kind of help that will allow them to find peace and a good life at last.

Helen B. Donner

WAR CRIMES

Rape and Other Crimes of War

That rapes of women occur in all wars cannot be doubted. That rape should be declared a crime against humanity, and when occurring in war should be punished as a crime of war, there should be no question. The International Court of Justice would be a logical Court to hear and try the cases as being in violation of the Geneva Conventions. The international headquarters of Women's ^{International} League for Peace and Freedom has urged such action to be taken. All three ethnic groups in Yugoslavia have committed crimes, not just Serbian forces.

There are three puzzling and troubling questions concerning the rape crimes that require thorough and impartial investigation by responsible people in order to be properly answered: 1) What are the actual approximate numbers of these cases? 2) How accurate is the information contained in reports and how reliable are the reporters? and 3) Has rape as a means of warfare been made a policy by high-levels of Serbian political and military leadership?

Question I -- The Numbers

Even a small number of rapes constitutes a crime against humanity and a war crime. However, the extent of this type of crime has brought forth a bewildering array of reports as to the numbers with which we are dealing. The U.S. media at one time reported U.S. intelligence sources as putting the number as high as 70,000! Women's International League, in one of its Nov.-Dec., '92 Newsletters, reported women's groups as giving numbers of 35,000 within a six month period. This newsletter report says that it is not easy to verify the numbers given but accepts the probability of very large numbers. It then states: "The information we have comes primarily from Croatian sources." The European Community recently issued a report (NYT, 1/24/93) in which investigators estimate that 20,000 Muslim women had been raped by Serbian forces during the war, not just in six months time. Some human rights monitors have reportedly raised doubts about that number. An earlier NYT article, which I can no longer locate and date, quoted Cyrus Vance as being surprised at U.S. intelligence reports of such high numbers, saying that figures already given to him had been about 5,000. Whatever the number, these women are deserving of our deep solicitude and utmost help in their very difficult situations, as urged also by Women's International League.

Question II -- Accuracy of Information and Reliability of Reporters

In the case of "U.S. intelligence sources," no specific agencies were named, as I recall, so they could easily toss out as high numbers as they wished; and, cloaked in anonymity, no particular agency could be called on to prove or defend its claims. I note that the WILPF report of 35,000 is vague again like "U.S. intelligence sources" since only "Croatian sources" are mentioned. I would assume that the anonymous Croatian sources could well be government or government-backed. Since truth and honesty are not exactly watchwords with Pres. Tudjman and his propaganda machine, nor is a basic concern for human rights a burning passion, I would find it hardly sensible to quickly accept Croatian sources as credible and reliable. I do believe, however, that many basically honest investigators who are truly concerned about human rights crimes, could be given "information" by not-so-honest people and have no way of knowing they are not being dealt with honestly. In good faith they may pass on what they have been led to believe is true even though it may not be true.

Question III -- Is rape as a means of warfare high-level Serbian policy?

Although the likelihood of this is exceedingly hard to believe, it has been asserted, yea shouted from the media roof-tops, time and again. There are reasons to doubt this assertion. No person with wits intact would set forth official policy of this kind, knowing it would be bound to become common and widespread knowledge and be utterly revolting to most people. Serbian leaders are not stupid and would not wish to commit public relations suicide in this manner. That must be very obvious. But beyond that consideration is a more important question: Would they want to order their military men to behave in such vile ways? Those with unreasoning hatred of Serbians would probably say "yes." But I will state why I think they would not. In WW II the Croats did not hesitate to collaborate as a government with Nazi Germany, setting up one of the cruelest quisling governments ever known. In contrast, the Serbian people, and some others, fought valiantly against the Nazis against terrible odds, suffering untold horrors and exceedingly high casualties. The Serbian people found Nazi practices so repugnant that they overthrew their King for doing business with the Nazis. Many presentday Serbian leaders are either old Partisans themselves or close relatives of Partisans; many have had family members killed by Nazis. These people are principled, decent, humane people who would never behave like the Nazis they have always detested. To accuse them of being in complicity with crimes so Nazi-like in nature seems to me quite shameful.

I certainly have no knowledge whether Pres. Tudjman and his propagandists were involved in putting forth stories connecting high-level Serbian leaders with crimes of war, but I think they are quite capable of embroidering on the facts of some actual rapes in order to create a monstrous big story worthy of a Goebbels. Hitler found "the big lie" a useful device for whipping up hysterical feelings and actions, and I wonder if History may be repeating itself. Of course President Ažetbegovic has always been most forthright about linking Serbian leaders with war crimes; Tudjman tends to be more devious in his ways of working.

Tudjman and his political party have recently been under sharp attack by Croatia's fascist groups for not being sufficiently aggressive in the war. Also, an election was looming. Tudjman freely admitted that it was he who ordered the Croatian attack on Serbs at Zadar, thereby re-igniting the Croatian-Serbian war in Croatia again and effectually nullifying U.N. attempts to keep peace in the Krajina region as it had been able to do for over a year. This was an attack on the U.N. as well as the Serb forces. Tudjman has never really wanted U.N. peacekeepers in Croatia as we have seen. His action, therefore deals a blow to U.N. peacekeeping and has also enhanced his political fortunes at home. For after starting up the war in Croatia again, his party did quite well in the recent election. Should tearing down U.N. peacekeeping in Croatia and starting new hostilities be considered a crime of war?

The Muslim government has waged war of many kinds on the U.N. peacekeeping operation designed to bring aid to Muslim people. There have been unreasonable demands on peacekeepers, incessant sullen criticisms and derogatory comments about the U.N., Muslim bombings perilously to U.N. leaders in the Sarajevo region, Muslim demonstrations of a disgraceful nature directed at Boutros-Ghali and Vance in the streets of Sarajevo, and constant undermining of U.N. peace negotiations. Now Pres. Azbetbegovic attempts to smear the U.N. by implying that the U.N. is indifferent to starving Muslims in the East even though the U.N. has tried repeatedly to get food convoys through. He threatens the continuance of the whole aid program and uses blackmail tactics such as decreeing, no food from the overflowing warehouses near can go to

over

Sarajevo which is close to being devoid of food. Is it a crime of war to deliberately starve a whole city? One Bosnian citizen on TV recently said bitterly that the people of Sarajevo were never asked if they wanted food cut off from them, that it was a unilateral decision of the Ažetbegovic government; if Sarajevo citizens starve, there can be no question who is responsible.

As we deliberate about war crimes in high places let us consider all the high places -- not just Serbian high places alone. Fairness and decency demand no less.