

President Bush, Governor Clinton:

Why Take Sides in A Civil War? Instead, Be the Peacemaker in Bosnia

The UN (Report S/24029) confirms that non-Bosnian Yugoslav Army troops were withdrawn to Serbia and Montenegro over a month ago -- yet sanctions against Serbs remain.

Why are there no sanctions against Croatia?

One-sided policies have given Croatia free rein in Bosnia. One third of Croatia's armed forces are fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. With world attention on Sarajevo, the Croatian Army captured Mostar the capital of Herzegovina, slaughtering or imprisoning the Serbian population and many Muslims in the area. The Croatian Army has been shelling Trebinje for more than a month, but the State Department and most of the media have been silent about these horrors.

Saber rattling and talk of intervention have convinced Muslim leaders there is no need to compromise or negotiate.

Both the UN and Lord Carrington confirm that Muslim forces have broken recent ceasefire agreements. The war in Bosnia began after Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic went back on an EC agreement to permit each of the three major population groups a degree of self-determination. Mr. Izetbegovic and his Foreign Minister Haris Siladzic, frequent visitors to Libya, are willing to meet with the government of Muammar Qadhafi but refuse to sit down at the peacetable with the elected representatives of the Bosnian Serbs. Izetbegovic states: "There can be no peace or coexistence between Islamic faith and non-Islamic faith and non-Islamic social and political institutions." (*London Daily Telegraph*, 5/11/92)

All Sides Share Blame in the Current Conflict.

The UN confirms that all sides are involved in the detestable practice of "ethnic cleansing." Even before the war started in Croatia last year, ethnic Serbs there were driven out by force, persecution and ethnocentric laws. Last year alone, 286 Serbian villages in Western Slavonia were burned and their populations forced to flee. The first "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia was against Serbs in March, in the Bosanski Brod area of Northern Bosnia. Serbs have been eliminated from their ancestral homes in 70 Bosnian cities and villages including Mostar, Zenica and Travnik.

As Lord Carrington said recently, it's time to put pressure "on all sides." Why not bring back UN Envoy Cyrus Vance who has the respect of all sides, and a record of success, to assist in a negotiated settlement? Be peacemakers with a balanced policy.

All Americans opposed to intervention in Bosnia, and in favor of a negotiated settlement, are invited to rally at the UN Plaza from 11 am--4 pm on August 15.

(Paid For by SerbNet Inc., P.O.Box 9264, McLean Virginia 22102)

New York Times, Aug. 3, 1992