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May 18, 1992

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

The Editor  
The Times  
1 Pennington Street  
London E1 9XN  
England UK

re: the destruction of Dubrovnik,  
a tale of disinformation.

Sir:

A student of Yugoslavia since 1958 when, after taking an MA in Greek and Latin, I undertook study of the Serbo-Croatian language, I was in due time posted to the US Army 430th Military Intelligence Battalion in northern Italy. Among the duties I discharged was to translate reports submitted by one of the main figures in the "Rat Lines" that spirited Nazis and Ustashas from Europe to safe haven in Argentina, Spain, Canada, the United States, Australia etc. This was Monsignor Krunoslav Draganovic, who, until he was ordered by Archbishop Stepinac from Zagreb to Rome (to prepare the "Rat Lines"), was in charge of Croatian colonization, i.e. the settlement of Croats in property of Serbs "liquidated" in the holocaust of 1941-45 in Hitler's vassal, the "independent State of Croatia". Forced conversion from the Orthodox to the Catholic Church was part of the program. ("Kill one third of the Serbs, convert a third, expel a third", in the words of Mile Budak, after whom present-day Croatia has recently re-named streets.) Brought up by Irish parents and schooled largely in Catholic institutions, I am revolted by the genocide wrought by Croatia on Jews, Gypsies, and Serbs in World War II and being renewed today.

After this prologue, I will address the widely circulated story that the "Pearl of the Adriatic", Dubrovnik, lies in ruins. A good satellite photo would reveal it does not. Print one. A visit there reveals the same. I was in Dubrovnik on March 25, this year and have video tape of the Old City and harbors. Dubrovnik is ready for tourists today if only Croatia would return this gem of civilization to the demilitarized status it enjoyed from 1968, when the Yugoslav People's Army cleared out in order to foster tourism and economic growth. Croatia's free elections of 1990 brought to power Comrade General Tudjman & Co., a clique of "former" communists who stoke the fires of nationalism to retain their perks and immense privileges. The pro-fascist Croatia of 1991 turned the luxury hotels into barracks, charitably housing refugees in the same billets. They then opened fire on the army in order to create victims and, for themselves sympathy, for the Yugoslav army opprobrium. In December 1991 UNICEF condemned Croatia for using women and children as shields. It is not Dubrovnik that lies in ruins, but the press.

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